

focus

FALL 2008

ON THE CENTER

ANATOMY OF A FACULTY SEMINAR

EVERY OTHER FRIDAY AFTERNOON AT 4 PM, while many on campus celebrate the arrival of the weekend, a dozen or so Tulane faculty and graduate students together with four visiting Faculty Fellows, and four Graduate Fellows at the Center for Ethics, gather in 307 Tilton Hall to discuss the latest scholarship in ethics and public affairs.



After an animated two-hour discussion moderated by Murphy Institute Director Rick Teichgraeber, the group breaks but then continues conversation for another hour over drinks and appetizers in the Tilton Hall lobby. Some from the group keep the talk going through dinner, often late into the evening.

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 Richard Culbertson, *School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine*
 Steve Griffin, *School of Law*
 Graham Owen, *School of Architecture*
 Eric Mack, *Department of Philosophy & Murphy Institute*
 Jonathan Riley, *Department of Philosophy & Murphy Institute*
 Martyn Thompson, *Department of Political Science & Murphy Institute*
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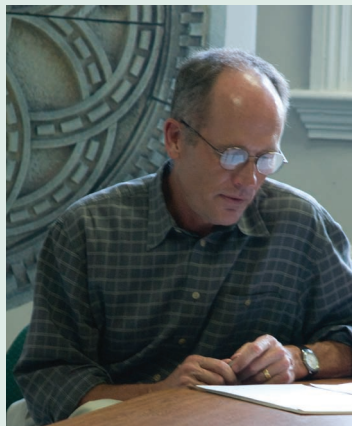
FOCUS

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letter from the director

WHEN THE MURPHY INSTITUTE LAUNCHED THE CENTER FOR ETHICS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS in 2001, its twofold mission was to forge an internal alliance among Tulane faculty and graduate programs focused on particular issues in the field of ethics and public affairs, and to move those faculty and programs from a position of highly competitive to nationally and internationally eminent.



The idea that first gave life to the Center was that Tulane should have a place where its faculty and students could rigorously examine critical issues of right and wrong, justice and injustice, citizenship and community, the ethical management of organizations, and the ethics of the professions. Because full understanding of these issues eludes disciplinary specialization, we also believed this work should be carried on as a collaboration of scholars from across the University's professional schools and colleges.

Thanks to Hurricane Katrina, much has changed at Tulane and in New Orleans since then. But the issues that the Murphy Institute was concerned with when the Center for Ethics was established are as vivid and relevant today as they were seven years ago. There also can be little question that, despite damage done by Katrina; the Center has gained national and international prominence as a "think-tank" in ethics and public affairs.

The building blocks of success have been various. Chief among them, in my view, have been the following:

■ *PPE: A Journal of Politics, Philosophy, and Economics*. The first issue of *PPE* appeared in February, 2002. Since then, according to Alex Rosenberg (R. Taylor Cole Professor of Philosophy, Duke University) the journal has become the first place many scholars look for new work at the intersection of politics, philosophy, and economics; also the first place many think about when considering where they would like their work at this intersection to appear in print.

Founded by co-editors Jonathan Riley (Murphy Institute & Department of Philosophy) and former Murphy Institute faculty member Gerald Gaus (now James E. Rogers Professor of Philosophy, Arizona), *PPE* appears four times annually. The Center for Ethics also hosts an annual *PPE* Conference in New Orleans, with papers first presented at the conference later revised and published in the journal.

PPE provides a distinctive interdisciplinary forum for discussions and debates among philosophers, economists, and political scientists on issues that, to date, have included constitutional design, property rights, the morals of the market, the welfare state, population ethics, and the evolution of norms. According to Philip Pettit, (L.S. Rockefeller University Professor of Politics and Human Values, Yale), the journal has made for a quick success because it "reflects recent developments better than established journals; it connects more effectively across disciplinary divides; and it has a greater freshness and sense of purpose."

■ Faculty Fellowships and Graduate Fellowships.

Since the fall of 2002, the Center has sponsored an international competition for Faculty Fellowships that has attracted applications from scholars not only from all over the United States, but also from Argentina, Australia, Canada, France, Germany and the United Kingdom. The Center's four Faculty Fellows are in residence at Tulane for a full academic year, and—as you will see in the lead article of this issue of *Focus*—their presence as research scholars has helped to build and grow the University's intellectual community in many ways. Their research constitutes the core of the Center's activities, with each Fellow presenting at least one scholarly paper to the Center's Faculty Seminar. Faculty Fellows also invariably take back to their home institutions very positive pictures of Tulane and New Orleans.

Along with the Faculty Fellowships, the Center also sponsors an annual Graduate Fellows Program designed primarily to support completion of dissertations by Tulane graduate students working in the field of ethics and public affairs. Graduate Fellowship appointments at the Center have not only helped Tulane doctoral students finish their degree work more quickly, they also have fostered remarkable success in job placement.

Since its founding, the Center has funded nineteen Faculty Fellowships and twenty Graduate Fellowships. Sixteen of the Center's past Graduate Fellows now have university faculty appointments.

■ The Faculty Seminar. When the Murphy Institute requested partial funding from Tulane's Wall Fund to establish the Center for Ethics, we explained that the Center would have several measurable positive outcomes. To begin with, the Center's enhanced program support and publicity for Tulane faculty whose research and teaching already focused on issues in ethics and public affairs would lead to greater national and international academic recognition for the University. By bringing together faculty with competence in moral and political thought and those with competence in professional education, the Center also would promote an understanding of ethics informed by both theory and practice.

We said, too, that the Center would help to break down curricular barriers, which typically confine systematic discussion of ethics to specific courses in philosophy and political thought or to designated courses in ethics in Tulane's professional schools. And, finally, we said that, by encouraging and enhancing intellectual community, the Center would end the geographical isolation of teachers and scholars of professional ethics from other faculty who share their interests.

It is too early to say if we have accomplished all these purposes. What we do know, however, is that the Center's bi-monthly Faculty Seminar has come to play a central role in our effort to accomplish them. The Faculty Seminar, as you will see, is the place where the Center does much of the work of encouraging and enhancing intellectual community at Tulane. It also has provided an important new source of support and publicity for Tulane faculty and graduate students whose research and teaching encompass moral and political philosophy and ethical issues in professional and public life.

Over the course of the last six years, there have been 54 individual meetings of the Faculty Seminar. And the names of visiting scholars who have presented papers at those meetings reads like a *Who's Who* in contemporary moral and political philosophy and professional ethics: Gary Pavela (Duke); Stephen Macedo (Princeton); Thomas Pangle (Chicago); Thomas Hill (Duke); Ann E. Tenbrunsel (Notre Dame); Dennis Thompson (Harvard); Thomas Pogge (Columbia); Sharon Lloyd (USC); Joseph Raz (Oxford); Marcia Baron (Indiana); Joshua Margolis (Harvard); Cheryl Misak (Toronto); Lawrie Balfour (Virginia); Stuart White (Oxford). The list could go on.

Other program activities at the Center (and more details on those mentioned above) are described in the pages that follow. All Tulane faculty and staff affiliated with the Center are very grateful to the Tulane Murphy Foundation for its continuing generous support during trying economic times.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "RF Teichgraeber III". The signature is stylized, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent. The middle name "Teichgraeber" is written in a cursive script.

Richard F. Teichgraeber III, Director

August, 2008

FELLOWS 2008-2009

FACULTY FELLOWS

RUTH ABBEY
University of Notre Dame

JENNIFER CULBERT
Johns Hopkins University

DOUGLAS PORTMORE
Arizona State University

OLIVER SENSEN
Tulane University

GRADUATE FELLOWS

JENNIFER BEERS
School of Liberal Arts (Philosophy)

RICHARD CONWAY
School of Liberal Arts (History)

LISA SINGLETON
School of Liberal Arts (History)

FELLOWS 2007-2008

FACULTY FELLOWS

ELIZABETH BRAKE
University of Calgary

JONATHAN PRITCHETT
Tulane University

DAVID SHOEMAKER
Bowling Green State University

STEVEN WALL
Bowling Green State University

GRADUATE FELLOWS

MARLA BASKERVILLE
A.B. Freeman School of Business (Organizational Behavior)

MANUEL GRAU
School of Liberal Arts (Philosophy)

MARK LENTZ
School of Liberal Arts (History)

FELLOWS 2006-2007

FACULTY FELLOWS

JILL LOCKE
Gustavus Adolphus College

KARL WIDERQUIST
University of Reading

DAVID WEINSTEIN
Wake Forest University

GRADUATE FELLOWS

SHANE COURTLAND
School of Liberal Arts (Philosophy)

(SOPHY) QIAN WANG
School of Liberal Arts (Philosophy)

CATHERINE WILKINS
School of Liberal Arts (History)

Elizabeth Brake

DOES MARRIAGE HAVE A DISTINCTIVE MORAL SIGNIFICANCE? What do liberal principles of justice imply for marriage law in contemporary liberal societies? Should there be legal recognition of marriage at all? These questions frame Elizabeth Brake's current book on marriage in moral and political philosophy.

"I argue that, from a liberal feminist perspective, a just law of marriage will be 'minimal,'" says Brake, "allowing individuals to select from a list of current marriage rights and responsibilities and exchange them with whomever they want." With "minimal marriage," Brake seeks to bring legal structure to personal relationships while removing much of marriage's patriarchal structure.

Same-sex marriage debates sparked Brake's interest in the moral features of marriage, as they relate to its legal construction. "Marriage is widely regarded as having a distinctive moral value," says Brake, "but, outside of specific religious doctrines, it's not always clear what that value is." At the Center for Ethics and Public Affairs, she sought to clarify that value.

While Brake accepts the 18th-century German philosopher Immanuel Kant's claim that institutions can be morally transformative, she rejects the idea that legal rights compel virtue—at least not in the short term. She also disagrees with contemporary marriage defenders who argue that coercive legal institutions can be justified by the virtue they purport to promote.

For this project, Brake investigated interdisciplinary issues, such as legal theory (including the transfer of independent rights and responsibilities), the consequences of marriage law to women and the vulnerable (including children), and the economics of marriage markets. Brake's work also incorporates the doctrine of liberal neutrality — that is, that treating citizens as equals requires the state to be neutral between competing reasonable moral and religious views.

Brake is Associate Professor of Philosophy at the University of Calgary and has published articles on Kant, Hegel, and Rawls in venues like *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*, *Kantian Review*, and *Women's Philosophy Review*. While much of her work focuses on love, marriage, and feminism, she has also written about freedom in Dylan's lyrics for *Bob Dylan and Philosophy* (2005).

"Marriage is widely regarded as having a distinctive moral value, but outside of specific religious doctrines, it's not always clear what that value is."



profiles of faculty fellows



The first-ever Faculty Fellow from Tulane, Pritchett is driven mainly by empirical questions: How did the slave trade market operate? Where did these slaves reside before they were brought to New Orleans?

Jon Pritchett

JON PRITCHETT DID NOT HAVE MUCH TROUBLE ADJUSTING to New Orleans, Tulane, or the Center. After all, he has been in Tulane's Department of Economics since 1985. The first-ever Faculty Fellow from Tulane, Pritchett is driven mainly by empirical questions: How did the slave trade market operate? Where did these slaves reside before they were brought to New Orleans?

Since his area of research is the economic history of the American South, and the interregional slave trade in particular, New Orleans was the perfect setting for his sabbatical year. New Orleans, after all, was one of the primary centers of the U.S. slave trade.

Pritchett spent a considerable portion of his fellowship year in the New Orleans Notarial Archives, since under French law all slave sales had to be notarized. Thankfully, the archives escaped flood damage during Hurricane Katrina, despite being in the basement of the Civil District Courthouse. In their new location on higher ground, Pritchett was also able to find certificates of origin for slaves sold in New Orleans after 1829.

After taking a course in Geographic Information Systems mapping in the fall, Pritchett mapped the origin of the slaves sold in New Orleans. His intention now is to provide a quantitative, statistical analysis of slave sales—complementing the work done by historians in this field, such as Steven Deyle, Michael Tadman, Robert Gudmestad, and Walter Johnson.

Pritchett's project complements three others he has underway: a co-authored article with Charles Calomaris and Larry Schweikart titled "*Quantifying Political Events Surrounding Slavery, 1830-1863*"; a study of the incentive effects of delayed manumission, using a comparison between the prices of slaves held for life with the prices of term slaves (in the Baltimore, Maryland market); and an article (co-authored with Kevin Lander, a Tulane undergraduate), contending that "the pecuniary benefits of health care increased with the market value of the slave" in 1850s New Orleans.

Pritchett first became interested in the economics of slavery at the University of Chicago, where he studied with Robert Fogel. He has since published articles in *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, *Journal of Applied Econometrics*, and *Explorations in Economic History*.

FELLOWS 2005–2006

FACULTY FELLOWS

RICHARD DAGGER
Arizona State University
ALISON DENHAM
St. Anne's College, Oxford University
ELAINE STERNBERG
University of Leeds
JONATHAN QUONG
University of Manchester

GRADUATE FELLOWS

JONNY ANOMALY
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (Philosophy)
JILL BRADLEY
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (Psychology)
SUZANNE CHAN-SERAFIN
A.B. Freeman School of Business
ANDREA HOUGHARD
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (Philosophy)

FELLOWS 2004–2005

FACULTY FELLOWS

ERICA BENNER
Central European University
ERIC CAVELLERO
Southern Connecticut University
JULIAN LAMONT
University of Queensland
ROBERT TALISSE
Vanderbilt University

GRADUATE FELLOWS

HANS GRUENIG
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (Philosophy)
WILLIAM GLOD
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (Philosophy)
REBECCA LIVINGSTONE
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (History)

David W. Shoemaker

BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY ENCOURAGED DAVID SHOEMAKER TO ACCEPT a Center Fellowship, so that he could get some significant research done before becoming Chair of the BGSU Philosophy Department. He is delighted he came.

“New Orleans is one of the greatest cities in the world,” Shoemaker said, “giving me something to look forward to at the end of the work day, along with providing much needed social and physical respite from the pure life of the mind.”

At the Center, Shoemaker surveyed the numerous strands alleged to exist between identity and ethics for a Broadview Press book and an entry for *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. He has come to believe, however, that “these alleged dependency strands between identity and ethics are mostly absent. There is usually some other non-identity relation doing the relevant work.”

In other words, Shoemaker understands ethics to be grounded independently of the metaphysics of personal identity, despite what many philosophers have thought.

In developing this thesis, Shoemaker investigates both moral responsibility and bioethical issues (e.g., abortion, definition of death, and advanced directives)—building on the work of Derek Parfit (in *Reasons and Persons*) and discoveries in the field of applied ethics.

Shoemaker also works on the nature of autonomy and moral responsibility. In a current paper, he defends the view that autonomy is a sufficient condition of moral responsibility from recent attacks by Susan Wolf. He is also developing a view of moral responsibility that accounts for those with certain cognitive disabilities.

Shoemaker has twice been nominated for the American Philosophical Association Article Prize. His work has appeared in *Law and Philosophy*, *Social Theory & Practice*, *Mind*, and *Ethics*, among other journals. He also has a second book just out (in addition to the one under contract with Broadview Press) called *Knowledge, Nature, and Norms* (2008), which he co-edited with Mark Timmons.



“... these alleged dependency strands between identity and ethics are mostly absent. There is usually some other non-identity relation doing the relevant work.”

Steven Wall

LIKE DAVID SHOEMAKER, STEVEN WALL HAILS FROM BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY.

At the Center, he worked to expand upon his book, *Liberalism, Perfectionism and Restraint* (1998), in which he argues that individual autonomy is a central component of a good human life. His current scholarship engages with normative democratic theory in order to further clarify his case for democratic perfectionism.

According to Wall, “many commentators today, both academic and non-academic, tend to overstate the virtues of democratic government.” His more skeptical approach does not rely on one master argument to justify democracy. “Instead,” says Wall, “it identifies a range of considerations that provide support for democratic government, but argues that none of these considerations on their own can vindicate democracy.”

Wall believes the classical conception of political authority is morally justified if it successfully executes three loosely defined tasks: enforcing justice, providing public goods, and encouraging good behavior while discouraging bad. Consequently, it “inclines toward an instrumentalist approach in assessing political decision-making procedures” and not necessarily toward democratic political institutions.

A purely instrumentalist approach, however, does not allow for some of the advantages of democratic government: namely that participation engages an important aspect of freedom, promotes virtue and self-development, and supports the ideal of equal treatment. Wall argues that “none of these arguments, taken on their own, can justify political institutions,” but taken together they emerge as a normative ideal, not just a decision-making instrument.



“Many commentators today, both academic and non-academic, tend to overstate the virtues of democratic government.”

“The principal function of government,” says Wall, “is to assist people in leading valuable lives. To discharge this function successfully, a government may need to favor some ways of living and discourage others because some are judged to be objectively better than others.” According to Wall, acceptance of these claims commits one to perfectionism—although some measure of democratic restraint is necessary to account for the unfair treatment of minority groups.

Wall has co-edited two books, *Reasons for Acting* (with David Sobel, forthcoming) and *Perfectionism and Neutrality: Essays in Liberal Theory* (with George Klosko, 2003); published articles in *Ethics, Law and Philosophy*, and *The Journal of Political Philosophy*; and contributed a chapter (“Perfectionism in Politics: A Defense”) to *Contemporary Debates in Political Philosophy*. He was also awarded a Laurance S. Rockefeller Fellowship at Princeton University’s Center for the Study of Human Values in 2002-2003.

profiles of graduate fellows



MARLA BASKERVILLE

Are expressions of sexuality at work harmful or beneficial to women? Baskerville believes that such expressions “may influence objective and interpersonal outcomes differently,” depending on the context. The more sexualized the environment, according to Baskerville, the more likely sexualized behavior from women will negatively affect their objective outcomes (e.g., promotions)—even if their likeability rises.

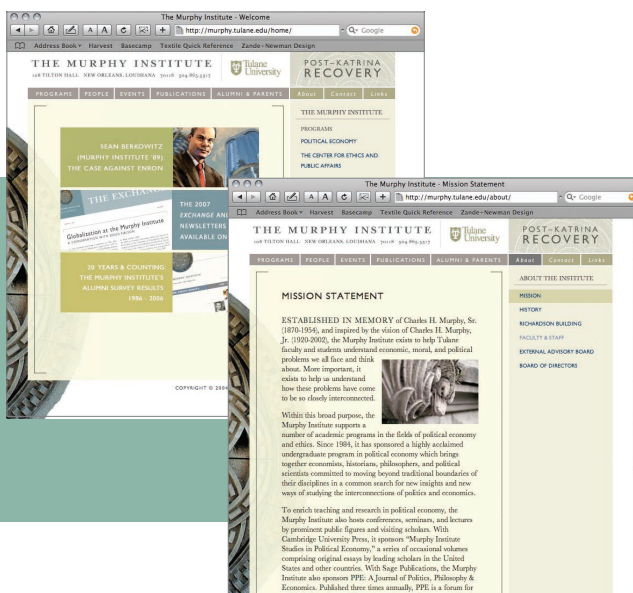
Rather than follow the path of extant literature, centering on sexual harassment, Baskerville focuses on “those engaging in, rather than receiving, sexualized behaviors.” She challenges the common assumption that women can use sex to gain an advantage, citing gender differences in earnings for men and women holding the same position.

Since organizational leadership is often associated with masculine characteristics, the display of women’s sexuality (if it is perceived as feminine) leads to diminished leadership expectations and opportunities. In fact, these women may not be taken seriously at all.

In addition to surveying literature in her field, Baskerville arranged two field studies—one at a private southern university and the other focusing on female lawyers from different firms. The first confirmed many of her hypotheses; the second is still in progress.

Baskerville’s dissertation, “Sexuality as a Double-Edged Sword: The Relationship between Expressions of Sexuality, Positive Mood, Interpersonal Relationships, and Objective Work Outcomes among Women,” was co-chaired by Adrienne Colella in the A.B. Freeman School of Business and Arthur Brief, George S. Eccles Chair in Business Ethics and Presidential Professor, University of Utah.

This fall Baskerville moves to Boston, where she has a tenure-track appointment as Assistant Professor of Management at Northeastern University.



Visit The Center for Ethics and Public Affairs
at the Murphy Institute website

murphy.tulane.edu



MARK LENTZ

In 1792, in the city of Mérida, an assassin threw a spear into a carriage and killed Lucas de Galvez, Yucatan's Spanish Intendant. Twenty years of trials and appeals followed, all of which seemed to reveal a complicated power struggle between the priests and friars and Spanish colonizers, with the Maya majority deeply involved in the entire process.

Yucatan historians typically depict a sharply divided society in which ethnic background determined one's station in life and social network—Maya in rural areas, Spaniards in cities. Lentz's research suggests things worked differently.

On his reading, the survival of Yucatec Maya language and culture, resistance of clergy to reduced privileges, and Yucatan's distance from Spain (and proximity to British and French territories) made for a uniquely integrated society and contentious legal framework.

Lentz uses court cases to illustrate that Mérida's upper class, in particular, was not united. They used household identity, fictive kin ties such as godparenthood and *compadrazgo*, religion, work-related ties, and common language to form interethnic, multi-class factions and galvanize political support against their rivals.

Since 2003, Lentz has conducted research in Seville, Mexico City, and Yucatan (with the benefit of a few History Department Summer Research Grants). Lentz completed his dissertation, "Murder in Mérida, 1792: Factions, Violence, and the Law in Yucatan," under the direction of Professor Susan Schroeder in the History Department.

This fall Lentz begins a tenure-track position as Assistant Professor in the Department of History & Geography at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.



MANUEL GRAU

Classical logic accepts the Law of Excluded Middle: Every proposition is either true or false. Intuitionistic logic rejects that law, but maintains its double negation: There is no proposition that is not true or false.

Intuitionist logicians believe, in other words, that the outcomes of some propositions simply aren't yet determined.

Grau is building a system of logic in which there are propositions that are not true or false.

"The motivation for such a system," says Grau, "is that a discourse about paradoxes or propositions that are provably undecidable just can't be represented with classical or intuitionistic logic. Consider Goldbach's Conjecture—that every even number larger than two is the sum of two primes. What if somebody proves not that the conjecture is true or false, but that it is improvable and irrefutable?"

According to Carnap's Principle of Tolerance, different content calls for different systems of logic. While classical logic is well-suited for realism (everything is true or false, as dictated by the outside world), Grau believes that his model provides important flexibility for content that is unusual. Truth, he and intuitionist logicians argue, is only that of which we have proof.

Grau's working title is "Less than Minimal: A Logic Weaker than Minimal Logic" and he is advised by Graeme Forbes, former Tulane Philosophy Professor now at University of Colorado, Boulder.

seminars

OCTOBER 5, 2007

ELIZABETH BRAKE

Associate Professor of Philosophy, University of Calgary, and Center Faculty Fellow
An Argument for 'Minimal Marriage'



LAURENCE KOTLIKOFF

OCTOBER 19, 2007

STEVEN WALL

Associate Professor of Philosophy, Bowling Green State University, and Center Faculty Fellow
Democracy and Respect

NOVEMBER 9, 2007

DAVID SHOEMAKER

Associate Professor of Philosophy, Bowling Green State University, and Center Faculty Fellow
Responsibility without Identity



CHESHIRE CALHOUN

NOVEMBER 30, 2007

THOMAS HILL

Kenan Professor of Philosophy, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
Torture and Kantian Values



MICHAEL ROSEN

JANUARY 25, 2008

MICHAEL ROSEN

Professor of Government, Harvard University
'The Shibboleth of All Empty-Headed Moralists': The Place of Dignity in Ethics and Politics



REX MARTIN

FEBRUARY 8, 2008

RICHARD ARNESON

Professor of Philosophy, University of California, San Diego
Luck Egalitarianism: A Primer



RICHARD ARNESON

FEBRUARY 22, 2008

MICHAEL E. ZIMMERMAN

Professor of Philosophy and Director, Center for Humanities and the Arts, University of Colorado, Boulder
The Singularity: A Crucial Phase in Divine Self-Actualization?

FEBRUARY 29, 2008

EDWARD MCCLENNEN

Professor of Philosophy, Syracuse University
Rational Bargaining

MARCH 7, 2008

REX MARTIN

Professor of Philosophy, University of Kansas
The Social Recognition Thesis: Constitutional Rights and Human Rights

MARCH 11, 2008

LAURENCE KOTLIKOFF

Professor of Economics, Boston University
On the General Relativity of Fiscal Language

APRIL 11, 2008

CHESHIRE CALHOUN

Professor of Philosophy, Arizona State University
What Good is Commitment?

APRIL 25, 2008

GARY WATSON

Professor of Philosophy, University of California, Riverside
The Trouble with Psychopaths

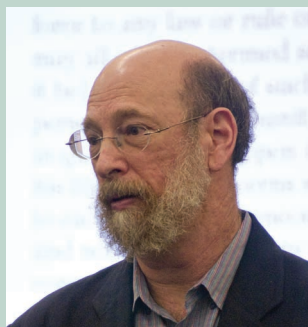
lectures



SEPTEMBER 27, 2007

SIMONE BATEMAN

Senior Researcher in Sociology, Centre de Recherche Sens, Ethique, Société, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique and Université Paris Descartes
Human Embryonic Stem Cell Research: Scientific Inquiry and Ethical Controversy



JANUARY 17, 2008

STEVEN KUHN

Professor of Philosophy, Georgetown University
Morality, Social Pressure, and Advocacy Games

FEBRUARY 21, 2008

JAMES BLAIR

Chief, Unit on Affective Cognitive Neuroscience in the Mood and Anxiety Disorders Program, National Institute of Mental Health, National Institutes of Health
Emotional Outcomes, Moral Decision Making and Psychopathy



MARCH 6, 2008

ERIC VAN YOUNG

Professor of History, University of California, San Diego
Was Mexico's Greatest 19th-Century Conservative a Trimmer?: Lucas Alamán and the Law



PHOTO BY TAMARA GRAYSON

conferences

MARCH 28-29, 2008

**PPE CONFERENCE:
ON THE DIVISION OF LABOR AND
SCIENTIFIC/ECONOMIC INQUIRY**

HARTMUT KLIEMT
Frankfurt School of Finance and Management
PPE as Hobbesian Life Science

ALAN HAMLIN
University of Manchester
PPE as a Research Program

GEOFFREY BRENNAN
Australian National University
PPE: Some Reflections

FRED D'AGOSTINO
University of Queensland
*From the Organization to the
Division of Cognitive Labor*

DOUGLAS MACLEAN
University of North Carolina
Preferences and Norms

MARTYN THOMPSON



According to Martyn Thompson, Associate Professor of Political Science, “The format of the Center for Ethics Faculty Seminar offers the closest approximation our mundane modernity can offer to the glorious satisfactions (I always imagine) of a Socratic symposium.”

The Faculty Seminar

Naturally, a seminar of this kind—which first began meeting in the fall of 2002—does not assemble of its own accord. Behind the scenes, Teichgraeber and Assistant Director Meg Keenan go to great lengths to ensure that meetings of the Faculty Seminar run seamlessly.

To begin with, applications to the Center for appointments as Graduate Fellow and Faculty Fellow must be assembled and reviewed. “In the case of faculty fellowships,” said Teichgraeber, “we look for promising scholars who have interests in common, but the main concern is the quality of individual applicants.”

Competition for Faculty Fellowships is open to scholars around the world, and the competition is keen. In 2007-08, the proportion of awards to applicants was approximately one in ten.

The main object of discussion at each seminar meeting is a scholarly paper distributed to all participants well in advance. While Tulane faculty regularly present papers, the bulk of presentations come from Faculty Fellows and from visitors invited by Tulane faculty and the Faculty Fellows. Each Fellow is invited to

handpick one eminent scholar whose work is germane to his or her own research project. So seminar discussions are often enriched by the thematic and methodological interconnectedness.

Because all participants are expected to read papers in advance of the seminar meeting, initial presentations are limited to fifteen or twenty minutes. The format is designed to leave ample time for a full airing of arguments presented in the papers.

As moderator, Teichgraeber manages a queue of questioners and makes sure discussions don’t devolve into an intellectual free-for-all. “Philosophers in particular tend to be pretty forceful in voicing their disagreements,” said Teichgraeber. “I suppose you could say I’m there to encourage all participants to speak their minds, without making their differences personal. And that’s almost always the way things go.”

What’s the immediate purpose of the Center’s Faculty Seminar? To examine arguments made in the papers in great detail, according to Bruce Brower, Associate Professor of Philosophy. Who benefits? “For graduate students,” answered Brower, “the give-and-take of the faculty seminar gives them a clearer sense of how the profession really works; for visitors, it provides worthwhile feedback; for those of us attending, it provides high-level discussion and provokes our own thought if we happen to be working in the area,” said Brower. “For those who attend regularly, the seminars also provide a background set of arguments and ideas to which we can refer in our teaching and research.”

Intellectual Inspiration and Truth

It is hard to tell who benefits most from the seminars: presenters or participants. According to Brower, presenters usually leave with better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of their arguments. Most participants leave with new knowledge and inspiration for their own work. Others think the rigorous intellectual exercise provided by the faculty seminar its own reward.

“Hearing Oliver [Sensen]’s paper [about Kant and the problem of dignity] and listening to him respond to the many questions and counter-arguments that ensued was a bit like watching Roger Federer play tennis at

OLIVER SENSEN (LEFT) AND BRUCE BROWER



Wimbledon,” said Sam Ramer, Associate Professor of History. “I went away determined to attend as many of these seminars as possible if only because they did so much to remind me that the life of the mind was the reason that I originally chose to enter the academy.”



ALISON DENHAM AND OLIVER SENSEN

Alison Denham, Associate Professor of Philosophy, appreciates how the seminars bring together faculty from different institutions and disciplines (Political Theory, Philosophy, Economics, History, Literature, and Psychology) to “pursue questions lying at the intersection.” According to her, “It is a unifying activity—socially and intellectually.”

“It is nice to have theoretical and philosophical conversation that is not governed by a particular school or shared set of assumptions, other than dedication to finding the truth,” remarked Richard Velkley, Celia Scott Weatherhead Professor of Philosophy.

Professional Preparedness and Connections

For the Center’s Graduate Fellows, joining in the intellectual gymnastics at Center seminars can be a bit daunting. But they understand it is part of what professional academic life is all about. Former Graduate Fellow and historian Catherine Wilkins says her participation left her better prepared for “the types of informed questions that might be expected at a job talk or academic conference.”

The quality of seminars is notable, but so is the quantity. Over the last several years, Tulane faculty members have been exposed to a remarkable number of leading scholars working in their fields—more so than they would have encountered at most peer institutions. The Center’s Faculty Seminar and Faculty Fellowship program has attracted scholars not only from throughout the United States, but

also from Australia, Canada, France, Germany, and the United Kingdom.

“I have had access to the latest research,” Assistant Professor of Philosophy Oliver Sensen said, “and I’ve also spent a great deal of time with major figures who are doing that work.” As a result of his seminar comments and questions, Sensen adds, he also has been quoted in books and secured new contributions to a collection of essays he is editing for publication.

Denham also plans to take advantage of seminar connections she made this year. Of NIH psychologist James Blair’s presentation on the developmental bases of anti-social and psychopathic personalities, Denham said, “His experimental work has fascinating implications for questions in ethics that philosophers have long pursued from the armchair.” She hopes to collaborate with Blair in the future on an NIH grant and expects that both Blair and Cheshire Calhoun (who presented a paper on the “good” of commitment) will appear in her own bibliographies in the coming year.

Tulane’s Academic Stature

Tulane University’s academic reputation also has benefited from having the likes of Columbia’s Joseph Raz and Penn’s Sam Freeman present their work in the Faculty Seminar. Visits by such high-profile scholars serve to draw other leading scholars to campus and make the University more attractive to potential hires.

“There is no question that visiting presenters bring back to their home institutions a very, very positive picture of Tulane, and that is good for the Philosophy Department, the Center for Ethics, and the University,” said Brower. “A senior seminar presenter recently told me that the seminar presented the best question-and-answer session she had ever had.”

Teichgraeber shared a similar sentiment: “Since its inception, the Faculty Seminar has hosted dozens of the leading names working in the fields of ethics, moral philosophy, and political theory. Add their names to the now long list of outstanding scholars we have had in residence as Faculty Fellows, and you will understand why the Center for Ethics is one of Tulane’s great academic success stories.” ■

HONORS & AWARDS BOOKS

RICHARD DAGGER (*Faculty Fellow, 2005-2006*) has accepted a new position at Rhodes College in Memphis, where he will be Professor of Political Science and Director of the Search for Values in the Light of Western History and Religion Program.



< MARY OLSON, Associate Professor of Economics was selected to serve on a Special Emphasis Panel for the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) in April 2007 that was charged with evaluating the applications for proposed Centers for Education and Research in Therapeutics, known as CERTs. The CERTs program is a national initiative to conduct research and provide education that advances the optimal use of therapeutics (i.e., drugs, medical devices, and biological products). The AHRQ, which is part of the US Department of Health and Human Services, subsequently awarded \$41.6 million to 10 research centers and a new coordinating center based on these evaluations

OLIVER SENSEN, Assistant Professor of Philosophy, was awarded the Graduate Studies Student Association Faculty Teaching Award for the School of Liberal Arts in the fall of 2007, for excellence in graduate teaching in the academic year 2006-2007.

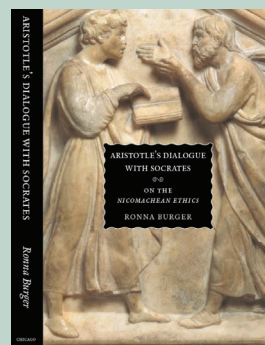


< MARTYN THOMPSON, Associate Professor of Political Science, gave the Presidential Address at an international conference on Michael Oakeshott's practical philosophy at the Friedrich-Schiller University in Jena, Germany in December of 2007.

DAVID WEINSTEIN, Professor of Philosophy, Wake Forest University, and Spring 2006 Center Faculty Fellow is the recipient of a Fulbright Senior Lecturer and Researcher Fellowship, The Simon Dubnow-Institute, University of Leipzig, Germany, for Spring-Summer 2009.

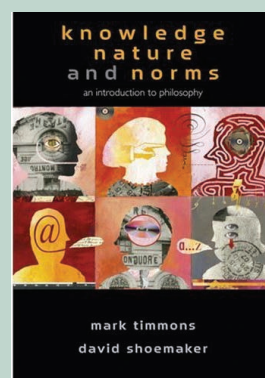
ERICA BENNER, Visiting Fellow, Department of History, Yale University, and 2005-2006 Center Faculty Fellow, has just completed a new book, **Machiavelli's Ethics**, to be published by Oxford University Press.

Professor of Philosophy, RONNA BURGER'S book, **Aristotle's Dialogue with Socrates: On the Nicomachean Ethics**, will be published by the University of Chicago Press in June of 2008. Her **Encounters and Reflections** (University of Chicago Press, 2003) appeared in 2008 in a Chinese translation.



ALISON DENHAM, Associate Professor of Philosophy, and 2005-2006 Faculty Fellow, has a new book forthcoming from Palgrave MacMillan in 2008: **Plato on Art: Classic and Contemporary Readings**.

DAVID SHOEMAKER, Associate Professor of Philosophy, Bowling Green State University, and 2007-2008 Center Faculty Fellow, published **Knowledge, Nature, and Norms**, written and edited with Mark Timmons (Wadsworth Publishing, 2008).



ROBERT TALISSE, Associate Professor of Philosophy, Vanderbilt University, and 2004-2005 Center Faculty Fellow, has a new book, **Democracy and Moral Conflict** forthcoming from Cambridge University Press in 2009.

Faculty Fellowships 2009–10

The Center for Ethics and Public Affairs at the Murphy Institute at Tulane University announces residential Faculty Fellowships for the 2009-2010 academic year. These fellowships, made possible by funds from the Tulane Murphy Foundation, are available to support outstanding faculty whose teaching and research focus on ethics, political theory, political philosophy, or questions of moral choice in areas such as, but not restricted to, business, government, economics, law, or medicine. While fellows will participate in conferences and seminars organized by the Center, they will be expected to devote most of their time to conducting their own research. Stipends will vary in accordance with individual circumstance, and will include a research allowance as well as a monthly housing supplement. Center Faculty Fellowships are open to all, regardless of citizenship.

Further information about the Fellowships and applications may be obtained from the Center for Ethics and Public Affairs website at <http://murphy.tulane.edu/center/>

or requested by contacting:
The Center for Ethics
and Public Affairs
Murphy Institute
108 Tilton Hall, Tulane University
New Orleans, LA 70118
504. 862-3236 tel
504. 862.8360 fax
mkeenana@tulane.edu

Applications must be received by
November 17, 2008.



FELLOWS 2003–2004

FACULTY FELLOWS

ULRIKE HEUER
University of Leeds
GUIDO PINCIONE
Universidad Torcuato Di Tella
LEIF WENAR
University of Sheffield

FACULTY AFFILIATE

JENNIFER MERCHANT
Université de Paris II

GRADUATE FELLOWS

BENJAMIN CROWE
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (Philosophy)
JULINNA OXLEY
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (Philosophy)
KRISTEN SMITH-CROWE
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (Psychology)
CHRISTY SUMICH
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (History)

FELLOWS 2002–2003

VISITING PROFESSORS

CHANDRAN KUKATHAS
University of Utah
DENIS C. MUELLER
University of Vienna

GRADUATE FELLOWS

MATHEW OBERRIEDER
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (Philosophy)
MICHAEL REDMAN
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (History)
ELIZABETH UMPHRESS
A.B. Freeman School of Business



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RICK TEICHGRAEBER (LEFT) AND THOMAS HILL