

Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies

NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2010

ANN RIVES CELEBRATES THIRTY YEARS IN THE DEPARTMENT

June 10th of this year marked a milestone in the history of the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies. Thirty years ago to the day, Ann Rives began work here as a Clerk-Typist III. After many promotions, job titles, and changes of responsibility, she soon rose to her current position as Executive Assistant.

An alumna of Peace College with an Associate of Science Degree in Business (May, 1980), Ann graduated from North Carolina State in May of 2002 with a B.A. in Religious Studies *summa cum laude*. "There is no substitute for brains," writes Bob Bryan, the department head who first appointed Ann. "I suspect that Ann is the only executive assistant on this campus to hold a Phi Beta Kappa key." In 1996, she was also inducted into the Phi Kappa Phi national academic honor society.

As Executive Assistant, Ann now manages department finances, human resources and the department office, schedules courses, and assists the department head with all aspects of his job. But a list of her "official" responsibilities does scant justice to someone whose day-to-day contributions are incalculable.

How could one ever measure all that Ann has done for our students and faculty? Our students can tell you about all her help as an advocate for their interests and as a guide through the challenges of the curriculum.

For a sense of what she has done for faculty, search for "Ann Rives" on Google Books, and you will find her name in the acknowledgements of at least twenty faculty publications. Typist, indexer, proof-reader, advisor, reader, even "crisis-manager"—Ann has done it all. "Her ability to type complicated text without error is legendary," wrote Jim Vanderkam in the acknowledgements to his monumental two-volume 1989 edition of the Ethiopic Book of Jubilees. Considering that most



Ann Rives in June 2010.

of the edition was in Ethiopic script, the words "complicated text" are a gross understatement. Ann's outstanding contributions were recognized with the College's Distinguished Service Award in 1993.

Over the years, Ann has seen the comings and goings of six department heads, six college deans, eight

chancellors, and faculty, staff, and students too many to number. Very few people in the college and university can match the institutional memory, accumulated knowledge, experience and wisdom that she has gained from thirty years of hard work and sustained commitment to excellence. "Executive Assistant" might be her official title. But for all of us who have reaped the benefit of her patience, generosity, know-how and collegiality, she is far more than that. She is, as one member of the faculty puts it, "the heart and soul of the Department."

When Ann began here, her name was Ann Potter. Her husband, Mike Rives, is also a member of the North Carolina State community. Their son Rob is a rising senior at UNC-Asheville.

Thank you, Ann, for your friendship, dedication and contributions to the department, college and university community! Where (and what) would the Department be without you?

— William Adler

TOM REGAN STILL MAKES WAVES

Dr. Tom Regan, Professor Emeritus of Philosophy, is internationally famous for his work on animal rights. Although he retired in 2001, he is still active and influential.

During 2009 Tom gave several high profile lectures in Canada and Europe and his work was recognized by two major international awards and a significant citation.

In Canada Tom lectured at the University of Montreal Law School and Saint Thomas University in Fredericton, New Brunswick. He later visited Sweden, Italy, and Greece.

In Sweden Tom lectured at Stockholm University and the University of Gothenburg to mark the publication of the Swedish translation of his book, *Empty Cages*:

Facing the Challenge of Animal Rights.

In Italy Tom lectured in Rome, Genoa, and Milan to celebrate the second edition of the Italian translation of this book, which has also been published in Chinese, Portuguese, Spanish, and Turkish. In Milan he was given an international award for outstanding contributions to the animal rights movement.

In Greece Tom spoke at the Hellenic American Union, Athens, where he received an international award for exceptional contributions to ecology.

Tom was named "one of the 50 visionaries who are changing your view of the world" in the December 2009 issue of the *Utne Reader*.

Department News

DEPARTMENT NOMINEES WIN TEACHING AWARDS

All of the Department's 2009/10 nominations for College and University awards to faculty have been successful—for the second consecutive year.

Dr. Steven E. Heiner, Teaching Assistant Professor of Philosophy, has received the CHASS (College of Humanities and Social Sciences) Outstanding Lecturer Award. Over the past five years, Steve has taught nineteen sections of *Introduction to Philosophy*, with total enrollments of almost 800. In the classroom, Steve is philosophically open, relaxed, and informal, but does not shy away from being serious when appropriate. He makes the task of engaging undergraduates in philosophical thought look effortless. Unfortunately for us, Steve has now left Raleigh to pursue romance in Louisville, Kentucky.

Dr. Karey A. Harwood, Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, has received a CHASS Outstanding Teacher Award and been named a member of the NC State Academy of Outstanding Teachers. Seven of the Department's nineteen full-time faculty are now members of the Academy. Karey has broad interdisciplinary interests and teaches one course a year in the Women's and Gender Studies Program. Within our Department, she teaches *Introduction to the Study of Religion*, *Biomedical Ethics*, and an advanced seminar on *Religion, Gender & Reproductive Technologies*, a topic that is central to her research specialty. She recently introduced a web-based distance education version of *Biomedical Ethics*, which has been a great success. Students admire Karey for being responsive to their needs and receptive to their ideas, as well as for her positive outlook, which one student describes as "infectious."

Dr. Jason C. Bivins, Associate Professor of Religious Studies and Associate Head of the Department, has been named an Alumni Distinguished Undergraduate Professor. He has

been a member of the NC State Academy of Outstanding Teachers since Spring 2006. Jason specializes in the religions of the United States, in particular the intersections between religion

and politics since 1900, and teaches several courses in the field. He is a passionate teacher, and students find his classes challenging, exciting, and entertaining.



Faculty award winners (left to right): Jason C. Bivins, Steven E. Heiner, and Karey A. Harwood.

NEWSBITES

Three of our junior faculty members have been awarded tenure and promoted to the rank of Associate Professor, effective August 2010: **Anna B. Bigelow**, PhD (California, Santa Barbara), Religious Studies; **Catherine M. Driscoll**, PhD (Rutgers), Philosophy; and **Karey A. Harwood**, PhD (Emory), Religious Studies.

Two members of the faculty celebrate major long-term service anniversaries with the Department this year: **David D. Auerbach**, thirty-five years, and **Barbara B. Levenbook**, thirty years.

Two members of the faculty have been awarded research leave—in the form of Off-Campus Scholarly Assignments (OCSAs)—during 2010/11. **Ronald P. Endicott** has an OCSA for Fall 2010, when he will be conducting interdisciplinary research on the evidential status of the hypothesis that some nonhuman animals, such as primates, have a "theory of mind"—which crucially involves a capacity to respond to mental states of conspecifics. **Karey A. Harwood** has an OCSA for the full academic year, which she will devote to research on how new developments in feminism interact with reproductive issues, focusing on the donation of human eggs for reproduction and research. The project will build on Karey's work in women's and gender studies, but will also incorporate an analysis of the role of religion.

The Department has recently added three **new advanced courses** to its slate of offerings: LOG 437/537, *Model Theoretic Semantics*, taught by Johannes Hafner, PHI 447/547 *Philosophy, Evolution & Human Nature*, taught by Catherine M. Driscoll, and REL 471/571 *Darwinism and Christianity*, taught by Mary Kath Cunningham.

Our students do us proud. Two of our nineteen **Spring 2010 graduates**—Alex Barrett and Robert El-Jaouhari, both BA in Philosophy with Honors—were NC State Valedictorians. Four students, including the two Valedictorians, graduated Summa Cum Laude, three Magna Cum Laude, and three Cum Laude. Seven of our graduates completed second majors in other departments and four completed one or more minors. Four students graduated with departmental honors, which is a new record.

Our annual **Logic and Cognitive Science Initiative Award**, which includes a prize of \$500, goes to the best senior majoring in the BS in Philosophy with a Concentration in Logic, Representation and Reasoning. This year's winner is Jay Hodges, who will be completing his degree in the summer. In Fall 2010 Jay will join last year's winner, Melissa Schumacher, in the philosophy PhD program at MIT, where he will concentrate on logic and related fields. Jay was also admitted to nine other doctoral programs that are recognized leaders in his areas of interest, including the programs at Berkeley, Brown, New York University, Oxford, Princeton, and St. Andrews.

NAME CHANGE

The banner of this *Newsletter* reflects a recent change in the Department's name. Previously the Department of Philosophy and Religion, in August 2009 we became the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies.

This change serves to emphasize that the Department provides a home to two independent disciplines—Philosophy and Religious Studies—each with its own faculty and programs.

The change also reflects a trend among departments that specialize in Religious Studies in major universities. In recent years, many of these departments have changed their name from "Religion" to "Religious Studies" to signal that they do not seek to advance the practice of religion or any particular religion, but to study religion objectively as a significant human phenomenon. The same applies to the NC State faculty in Religious Studies, as one would expect in any good public university.

Department News

FEATURE EMERITUS: DR. W. LAWRENCE HIGHFILL

Dr. William Lawrence (Larry) Highfill, during his thirty years in our department, was central to its transition into a full-fledged academic department—a transition now marked by our recent name change from Philosophy & Religion to Philosophy & Religious Studies (see p.2).

Larry arrived at the NC State College of Agriculture and Engineering as a faculty member in 1956, just in time to help usher the college into a university with humanities departments.

Larry's specialty is Asian religions, especially Buddhism. Over the decades, he taught courses in World Religions, Hinduism, Buddhism, as well as Religion and Ethics.

Larry remembers with particular fondness the Danforth Associates program. He and his wife, Hilda, hosted students for dinner and academic discussions. Larry has always stressed the crucial importance of informal discussion and dedicated advising in students' lives.

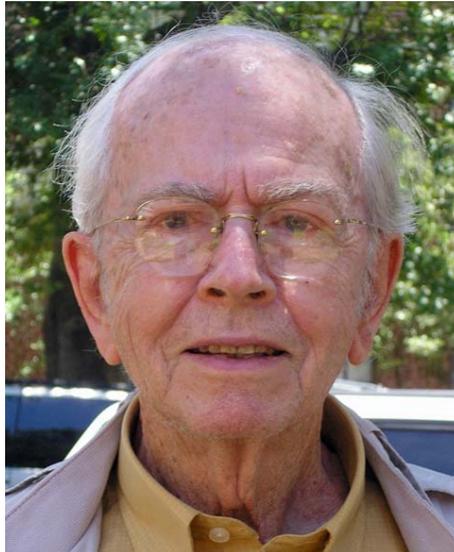
Larry was president of the NC State chapter of the American Association of University Professors at the very significant moment of, as he puts it, "the Speakers Ban fiasco." That fiasco started in June 1963 in the last hours of the state legislative session when, without debate or public hearing, the legislature banned known communists and others regarded as subversive from speaking on state university campuses. It ended with a judge's order in 1968.

This ban came well after the years of McCarthyism. The national AAUP responded to the ban with lengthy televised testimony, and resolutions that the "freedom to hear" was "an inseparable part of academic freedom."

In his retirement years Larry has traveled extensively, assisted in the founding (and served on the board) of the Emmaus House, a transitional home for men in downtown Raleigh who were formerly homeless, incarcerated, or struggling with substance abuse.

And, of course, Larry has "read many books, and more books."

— David Auerbach



Dr. W. Lawrence Highfill on campus in May 2010.

WORK IN PROGRESS: BIVINS ON JAZZ AND AMERICAN RELIGION

Jason Bivins, Associate Professor of Religious Studies and Associate Head of the Department, is working on his third book, *Spirits Rejoice! Jazz and American Religion*. Jason gives a brief overview of his project in the following article, the first in a new series on faculty work in progress.

Ralph Ellison wrote that much of American life is "jazz-shaped." *Spirits Rejoice!* is my attempt to understand how this is true for American religions.

While Jazz Studies has emerged as an important discipline, it often overlooks religion or treats it cursorily. Likewise, jazz is rarely acknowledged in accounts of American religious music. Even the exceptions focus on famous individuals like John Coltrane rather than developing a sustained analysis.

My aim is to construct a framework for engaged listening to and analyzing American religions and jazz, drawing heavily on my own experiences as both jazz critic and improvising musician.

When consulting what Ellison called the "lower frequencies" of American culture, we find that jazz registers in unexpected but meaningful places.

Jazz music has not just been in conversation with American religions or served as their musical accompaniment, but has also contributed to and participated in them. The stories of jazz are integral to the stories of American religions in the last century.

But we also see that, once we look and listen, we cannot understand jazz without religion. Jazz musicians have sounded out relationships with various divine beings and spirits, have explored and constructed cosmologies of sound, developed rituals in performance, and established spiritually-oriented communities to pursue musical and cultural self-determination.

Such themes resonate, along with the sounds of the music, in American history. Instead of focusing on specific individuals, institutions, recordings, or periods, this thematic approach allows us to see and hear what is religious in jazz in ways that I hope are as fluid and expansive as the music itself.

IN PRINT: Books and Select Articles Published During the Past Two Years

- William Adler**, "Early Christian Historiography," in *Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies*, Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Anna B. Bigelow**, *Sharing the Sacred: Practicing Pluralism in Muslim North India*, Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Jason C. Bivins**, *The Religion of Fear: the Politics of Horror in Conservative Evangelicalism*, Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Marina F. Bykova** (co-editor with M. Solopova), *Essence and Word: Collection of Research Papers on the Anniversary of Professor N. V. Motroshilova* (in Russian), Moscow: Phenomenology-Hermeneutics, 2009.
- John W. Carroll** (with Ned Markosian), *Introduction to Metaphysics*, Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Gary L. Comstock**, "Intuitive Level System Rules," *Science and Engineering Ethics* 14, 2008.
- Catherine M. Driscoll**, "Grandmothers, Hunters and Human Life History," *Biology and Philosophy* 24, 2009.
- Johannes Hafner** (with Paolo Mancosu), "Beyond Unification," in *The Philosophy of Mathematical Practice*, edited by Paolo Mancosu, Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Karey A. Harwood**, "Egg-Freezing: A Breakthrough for Reproductive Autonomy?" *Bioethics* 23, 2009.
- Timothy J. Hinton**, "Rights, Duties and the Separateness of Persons," *Philosophical Papers* 38, 2009.
- Michael Pendlebury**, "Facts and Truthmaking," *Topoi* 29, 2010.
- Christine M. Pierce**, "No More Mrs. Nice Gay," *Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy* 25, 2010.
- Tony K. Stewart**, *The Final Word: the Caitanya Caritamrta and the Grammar of Religious Tradition*, Oxford University Press, 2010.

NEW CHANCELLOR

Dr. Randy Woodson, previously Provost of Purdue University, took over as Chancellor of NC State in April 2010. Among Woodson's top priorities are bolder decision-making, raising the university's endowment to \$1 billion, and increasing the size of the faculty to accommodate enrollment growth and make NC State more competitive with its peers. Woodson is committed to improving the standing of the university and recognizes the need to strengthen the humanities in order to advance this goal.

Time Flies

ALUMNI NEWS

Thomas E. "Ed" Bremson, BA in Philosophy '80, MFA in Creative Writing (National University of California '09) has recently published two volumes of poetry, *A Sanctuary Green* and *Poet in the Mall*. Another volume, *The Scars*, will appear later this year.

Theresa Bunce Stephenson, BA in Philosophy '81, JD (Campbell '86) has been a Worker's Compensation Judge with the NC Industrial Commission in Raleigh since 1996 and travels the state hearing workers' compensation cases and tort claims against the state. She is married to James B. Stephenson II, an attorney in Cary, NC. They have two daughters.

Catherine M. Mitchell Fuentes, BA in Philosophy '94, PhD in Anthropology (Connecticut '05) is a lecturer in Anthropology at UNC Charlotte. In April 2010 she received the Public Anthropology Eleanor Roosevelt Global Citizenship Award. This award recognized her for inspiring university students to take part in the global community and think critically, respond intelligently, and act responsibly as global citizens. "This honor is based on her exceptionally effective participation in Public Anthropology's Community Action Online Website Project as well as her wider activities in the public sphere," says Professor Rob Borofsky, director of the Center for a Public Anthropology at Hawaii Pacific University. Catherine also serves on the NC Governor's Crime Commission and is now vice-chair of the Crime Victim's Services Subcommittee. The GCC advises the Governor and the Department of Crime Control and Public Safety on crime and justice issues.

Scott Shelton, BS in Philosophy '95, is a Software Development Manager at Teradata Corporation in Raleigh, leading people in North Carolina, China, and India. He is also a professional magician and is now writing a book about creativity in magic. Scott lives in Apex with his wife and two children. (<http://www.scottshelton.com>)

Megan Stone Gray, BA in Religious Studies '00, MDiv (Duke Divinity '04), is an ordained elder in the United Methodist Church. She lives with her husband, Rev. Brad Gray, in Columbia, SC. Megan is the campus minister of Epworth Children's Home, a group home for abused and neglected children, where she preaches every Sunday to a lively group of young people. Her husband is pastor at Greene Street UMC in downtown Columbia. They are the proud parents of Isaac, born in December '08.

Rev. Barry Chance, BA in Religious Studies '02 and BS in Business Management '02, MDiv (Union Presbyterian Seminary '05) has been pastor of St. Andrew Presbyterian Church in Shreveport, LA since 2005. He also serves on the board of Friendship Ministries developing

Bible study curricula for adults with intellectual disabilities. Barry and his wife Katie had their first child, Jonah, in February 2010. He regularly takes the Bonhoeffer he learned from Dr. Cunningham into the pulpit with him. (barrychance@cmaaccess.com)

Ashley Lyons, BA in Religious Studies '07, MA in South Asian Languages and Civilizations (Chicago '09) is a doctoral student at the University of Chicago. She is interested in the Sanskrit literature of medieval Vaishnava devotional movements in South Asia, including Indo-Persian Islamic love poetry and the history of Islam in India. She is a Teaching Assistant in Intermediate Sanskrit and will be a Lecturer in Academic and Professional Writing in 2010/11.



The Department was housed in Harrelson Hall between 1961 and 1981. Harrelson is slated for demolition during the next few years.

IN MEMORIAM

It is with great sorrow that we report the deaths of two former departmental faculty members within hours of each other on November 15, 2009.

Bob Hambourger died of cardiac arrest after a long struggle with lymphoma. He was 65. He had retired as Associate Professor of Philosophy only six months earlier after twenty-seven years of service to NC State. Bob was a passionate and principled man who loved teaching, writing, music, and family. He is survived by his wife Lynda, two sons, a daughter, and two grandchildren.

Paul Bredenberg died at Mayview Convalescent Center in Raleigh at the age of 86. He joined the Department as Assistant Professor of Philosophy in 1950 and retired as Professor in 1986. Paul contributed immeasurably to the growth and development of the Humanities at NC State. He also served as chair of the Committee on Academic Freedom of the American Association of University Professors and was active in the Wake County chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union, which he helped to establish. Paul is survived by his wife Gladys, two sons, and six grandchildren.

THE WAY IT WAS

George McDaniel, BA in Philosophy '74, is Acquisitions Editor at SAS Press. His daughters Katie (BA in Psychology '05) and Sarah (BA in Spanish '09) are both NC State graduates. You can read his blog at jamesguyroberts.com. He reminisces here about his time as a philosophy student at NC State.

As a member of the class of 1974, I had the good fortune to be an undergraduate in philosophy during the early years of Robert Bryan's tenure as department head. My very first philosophy class (Intro to Philosophy) was with Tom Regan, who had only recently begun his now-legendary career. Drs. Regan, Bryan, Don VanDeVeer, Robert Metzger, and Paul Bredenberg, just to name a few, were an inspiration to me during my undergraduate years.

An unforgettable member of the department was Charles William Thompson, better known as Tommy Thompson, the extraordinary songwriter and musician who founded the Red Clay Ramblers. A bearded bear of a man, Thompson was as learned as he was musically talented. It was a pleasure to have him for Metaphysics before he turned to music full time.

All philosophy classes in those years were in Harrelson Hall, which even then had a dubious reputation. In good weather we all preferred holding class on the grassy area in front of the library, under a pleasant grove of trees.

In May 1974 a sad observance was held there, following the untimely death of Professor George Lear, who had been my professor in Ancient Philosophy. Lear's death had shocked us all. To remember him, Dr. Regan and others organized an hour of silence beneath the trees, where Lear had spent many hours. On that day we gathered in a large circle, quietly meditating and remembering Dr. Lear. It was a fitting tribute to a contemplative man.

My own philosophical leanings, then as now, were toward political philosophy and libertarianism. As lovers of freedom, some of us claimed the old "Freedom Shrine" in D. H. Hill as our favorite place to study. With some political science undergrads, we formed a libertarian discussion group and debated the ideas of Ayn Rand, John Hospers, and others. We were delighted by the campus visit of Dr. Thomas Szasz, which gave us an opportunity to meet and talk with that libertarian icon.

Of course, the study of philosophy touched all other areas of learning: history, literature, politics, the sciences and math, you name it. Those of us in philosophy thought we were at the center of it all, and I think we were right.

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