



GORDON
COLLEGE

Philosophy

Summer Newsletter / 2015

Thoughts from the Chair

I was recently given some Hindu statuary from my grandfather's collection acquired during his travels to India, China and Japan in the early 1970s. My love for Gordon College has always been profoundly shaped by this man, Edwin Gedney, as he was instrumental in creating or developing numerous departments at Gordon, after the move from Boston to Wenham, and was Academic Dean in the 1960s. His contributions, however, in science, education and psychology (to name a few) were not directly in areas in which I work. Seeing these statues, I was reminded of the fact that he also developed a passion for understanding and engaging Eastern philosophy and religion towards the end of his long career. Having just finished teaching my course, Eastern Philosophy and Religion (PHI325), at Gordon this summer, I realized in a deeper way how the Gordon College of today and the courses we teach each year follow in the footsteps of those creative and faithful men and women from the past. I also was reminded of just how exceptional it is to be able to teach at a Christian liberal arts college that encourages students and faculty to faithfully engage the world in such expansive ways. Many things have changed at Gordon since my grandfather's time, but when I think about sitting in a seminar room a few weeks ago in our new science

center discussing the doctrine of Original Sin in light of the Confucian conception of human nature with bright, passionate and faithful students, I see the same commitment to the Christian liberal arts that has motivated Christian scholars and students at Gordon for decades. In this year in which we have celebrated the 175th year of the birth of our founder, A.J. Gordon, it is especially important to take some time to appreciate the wonderful opportunity to teach and learn at a place like Gordon.

-Mark Gedney



Mission Statement

The mission of the Philosophy Department at Gordon College is to cultivate, in ourselves and in our students, an intellectually rigorous wondering not only as an expression of our natural desire to understand, but also as an inherent consequence of our Christian commitment. The Christian emphasis is by no means "added on" as a pious afterthought, for in every age and culture Christian thinkers have engaged in philosophical reflection as they have sought to bring faith and learning into a harmonious relationship. Faith seeks understanding, and understanding—even that which is rigorous and critical—ultimately supports faith.

Department Events

Inaugural Malcolm Reid Lecture



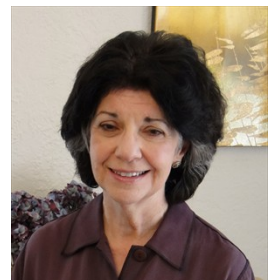
On October 23, 2014, Oliver O'Donovan, Professor Emeritus of Christian Ethics and Practical Theology at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland, gave the inaugural Malcolm Reid Lecture at Gordon College Thursday.

The lecture series was established to honor Professor Emeritus of Philosophy, the Reverend Dr. Malcolm Reid. Reid currently serves as a priest at Christ the Redeemer Anglican Church in Danvers, Massachusetts, but he was long-time professor of philosophy at Gordon and, as chair, was the leading force behind the department's success. Tal Howard, director of the Center for Faith and Inquiry, describes him as "one of the ablest and most influential professors of philosophy in Gordon's history. The lives and vocations of generations of Gordon students have been shaped by his faithful witness to the fact that belief and intellect are not at odds, but can complement one another in myriad ways for the good of church and academy alike."



The Problem of Suffering

In conjunction with the Center for Faith and Inquiry, Professor Ian DeWeese-Boyd helped organize a lecture by Eleonore Stump, Robert J. Henle Professor of Philosophy at Saint Louis University, entitled, "The Nature of the Atonement." Professor DeWeese-Boyd and colleagues working with him under the auspices of the Analytic Theology Discussion Group Grant from Center for Philosophy of Religion at Notre Dame also hosted a small conference with Professor Stump on their research project: "Practical Theodicy: Analytic Theology and the Problem of Existential Suffering."



Senior Theses

Four seniors wrote and defended theses this year. It was a diverse group of papers that showed the depth of scholarship, mastery of topic and passion for thinking that exemplifies the best philosophy majors.

- In his thesis, "Subversion and the Subject," **Zach Auwerda** critically examined Judith Butler's work on emancipation and the subject in light of Paul Ricœur's reflections on personal identity.
- **Matthew George's** "The Human Machine: Modern Technology and the Death of the Scientist" defended a view of scientific wonder and exploration against a technological conception of science.
- **Pete Heath** studied the influence of the philosopher F. H. Bradley on the later work of T.S. Eliot in his thesis, "Beginning from the End: T.S. Eliot's Failed Attempt at Romantic Redemption."
- **Michael Olszak** examined the nature of enhancements in sports and developed a moral defense for limiting regulation in his paper, "Regulating Enhancement in Sports or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Steroid."

Faculty Activities

Ian DeWeese Boyd: Beyond his \$14,000 grant from Notre Dame to study the “Practical Theodicy: Analytic Theology and the Problem of Existential Suffering,” Professor DeWeese-Boyd published a number of articles including: “Lyric Theodicy: Gerard Manley Hopkins and the Problem of Hiddenness,” in Adam Green and Eleonore Stump, eds. *Hidden Divinity and Religious Belief* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press); and “There are no Schools in Utopia: John Dewey’s Democratic Education” in *Education and Culture*; “Self-Deceptive Religion and the Prophetic Voice,” *Journal für Religionsphilosophie*.

David Aiken: Professor Aiken contributed to the Faculty Forum program on “Community and Creative Fidelity” and led a very successful workshop on Bernard Lonergan’s famous book, *Insight*, at the annual Lonergan workshop in June.

Brian Glenney: Professor Glenney was busy publishing new work such as “Perception and Prosopagnosia in Mark 8:22-26,” Co-author John Noble, *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*; “Adam Smith on Sensory Perception: A Sympathetic Account” Propriety and Prosperity” in *New Studies on the Philosophy of Adam Smith*; and “Perception by Sympathy: Connecting Adam Smith’s ‘External Senses’ to his ‘Sentiments’” *Adam Smith Review*. He also was part of an art installation at the Museum of Modern Art in New York entitled, “This Is for Everyone: Design Experiments for the Common Good,” with Sara Hendren and Tim Ferguson-Sauder. He spoke at a number of conferences including a talk called, “Pharmaceuticals for Soul Care” at the Dallas Willard Memorial Conference at Boston University. Glenney rounded out his busy year developing new courses for the Graduate Education Department: Contemporary American Literature: David Foster Wallace and Street Art: A Culture of Political and Social Change.” If you would like to catch up with what Professor Glenney is doing check out his website: www.brianglenney.com.

Lauren Barthold: Professor Barthold had a busy year with invited presentations and publications. The biggest highlight was Palgrave Publishing accepting her manuscript, *A Hermeneutic Approach to Gender and other Social Identities*, for publication. She also published articles in *Hypatia* (“True Identities: From Performativity to Festival”) and a book chapter, “If enhancement is the answer, then what is the question? A hermeneutic approach to bio- and genetic enhancement,” in *Inheriting Gadamer: New Directions in Philosophical Hermeneutics*, forthcoming from the University of Edinburgh Press. She also spoke in conferences at Stony Brook University, the APA Pacific Division and UMass Dartmouth.

Mark Gedney: Professor Gedney returned from sabbatical after participating in the inaugural Balkans Semester (see below) by teaching a class, “Secularism and Religion” and presenting a paper at the conference that concluded the semester. His book-length research project is nearing completion and is entitled, *The Uncanny Desire for Mutual Recognition*. During the academic year, he participated in two panels (“Reflections on the Balkans Semester” and “Community and Creative Fidelity”) for the Faculty Forum series.

Pre-Law

The Pre-law minor at Gordon is led by both the Political Science and Philosophy Departments. The past few years have seen dramatic growth and change in the minor, and it is important to recognize and report on what our pre-law minors accomplished this year. The most significant development was the Mock Trial Club. Anna Obert and Ezra Tandela started the club in the spring of 2014, but things really took off this year. In the fall, the club began preparations to compete in the local and national competitions of the American Mock Trial Association. Mark Gedney served as the faculty representative for the club, and Gordon alumnus, Michael Tucker, a seasoned litigator for Healey, Deshaies, Gagliardi & Woelfel, spent hours helping them prepare. In the fall, the students put on a demonstration of a mock trial competition with Judge Herman Smith (retired associate justice from the Massachusetts Superior Court, Gordon alumnus and long time trustee) graciously presiding. Judge Smith also spent time afterwards giving advice from his long career on the bench. In the spring, the members of the club competed in national competition. While they did not advance, they gained lots of experience that will set them up for next year.

Pre-law students also had a wonderful opportunity to meet and get career advice from David Skeel in the spring. Professor Skeel is the S. Samuel Arsht Professor of Corporate Law at the University of Pennsylvania Law School.



Alumni News

The Balkans Semester for the Study of War and Peace, an interdisciplinary, humanities-based program centered around the themes of war and peace, conflict and reconciliation, led by Gordon alums **James and Petra Taylor** (James was a philosophy major), successfully concluded its second semester. They will be expanding the program by adding a fall semester this year. Professor Gedney taught in the first semester and will be returning in December 2015. For more information you can follow this link:

www.gordon.edu/balkans



Our majors continue to impact the world in many important ways. Here is just selection from the past few years:

Stephen Armandt (2009), after finishing an M.Div. from Gordon-Conwell, is now chair of Biblical Studies and Chaplain at Boston Trinity Academy, while he is continuing further graduate work.

Ryan Daley (2012) is a health care specialist at Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital in Bedford.

Pete Heath (2015) will be pursuing graduate work in philosophy at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland in the fall.

Jennifer Soerensen (2008) is pursuing a Ph.D. in philosophy at Marquette University after completing her masters at Loyola Marymount University.

Manny Gomez (2008) is clerking for the U.S. District Court in South Florida after completing his law degree from Fordham Law School.

Scotland Huber (2008) is now Communications and Marketing Manager at the Codman Square Health Center.

David Hicks (2014) is an executive assistant for Oxford Analytica in Washington D.C.

Kenneth Hallenbeck (2012) continues his Ph.D. work in Pharmaceutical Science at the San Francisco campus of the University of California.

Many folks continue in graduate programs at Boston College, Boston University, the University of Lethbridge, Harvard Medical School and many others across the country, while others are busy in jobs in ministry and business.

We would love to hear updates from folks! Send a quick email to mark.gedney@gordon.edu when you have a chance.



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