Annual Public Lecture in Philosophy

Visiting Professor Jeff Pelletier
Department of Philosophy

Public Lecture
Computing Science Centre
Room B2

Monday, April 15
3:30 pm

"Does Reality Track Language? Does Language Track Reality?"
JEFF PELLETIER

A long-standing practice in philosophy—dating at least from Plato—has been to draw inferences from features of natural language to aspects of "reality"; that is, to infer ontological claims from linguistic facts. This style of argumentation can be seen in many otherwise disparate philosophers. Despite the skeptical claims that have been made over the centuries, the practice continues because, well, what else can our ontologist do? Whatever reasons and justifications can be given for some ontological conclusion are themselves produced in language—as is the ontological conclusion itself.

I think the methodology is dubious, or at least difficult to apply correctly because there are various considerations that need to be appreciated when it is deployed. In this talk I will chronicle various historically notable instances of the argument style, and some of the specific objections that have been (or could be) raised against such particular uses. I then consider some more general thoughts that seem to tell against any version of this type of argument, and which point to the desirability of using different sources of data. At the end I will apply this train of thought to the linguistic phenomena surrounding the mass-count distinction and the various metaphysical conclusions that are reached from it about things and stuff.

Reception to follow: Papachase Room, Faculty Club. Everyone is welcome.
I’m delighted to be joining the University of Alberta Philosophy Department this summer as its new Chair. Though born and raised in southern Ontario, I’ve spent the majority of my academic career in the United States, attending graduate school at Cornell and then teaching at several institutions, from a large state school to a private research university to a smaller, urban university aimed at serving non-traditional students.

The University of Alberta Philosophy Department attracted me because it has so many of the features I liked about these other programs: it is nicely sized, with a breadth of faculty research interests and the teaching coverage that goes along with it. People are doing important and exciting work here. At the same time, I came away from my campus visit with the sense that teaching and serving students really matters to the faculty and staff here. That, to me, is a very good sign, and I mention it only because I’m often surprised by its absence in programs that are bigger and better known.

As a historian of philosophy specializing in the Middle Ages, I look forward to adding to the historical heft of the Department, as well as to offering a range of courses and seminars in medieval philosophy—a field so ably covered in recent years by Martin Tweedale. I’m currently finishing the Latin edition + English translation of Book III of the De anima commentary of John Buridan (c. 1300–1361), part of the critical edition of this influential work. And together with the historian of logic, Edward Buckner, I’ve just completed Time and Existence: Duns Scotus’ Commentaries on Aristotle’s Perihermenias. This is the first English translation of Scotus’ two commentaries on De interpretatione. It will appear next year with The Catholic University of America Press, which has also published the five volumes of Scotus’ Opera Philosophica.

Finally, and quite fortuitously, I recently published papers in two volumes that also happened to feature papers by University of Alberta philosophers Jenny Welchman and Martin Tweedale. Another good omen on my reading.

Professor Zupko begins his tenure at the University of Alberta on July 1, 2013
Kata Bimbó

Kata Bimbó’s main research field is logic, including philosophical, mathematical and computational logics. She has worked on a variety of topics, for example, on topological representation theorems for various non-classical logics, on designing consecution calculi for the positive and implicational fragments of the logic of entailment and the logic of ticket entailment, on purely inductive proofs of the cut theorem for the single cut rule, on proving Church–Rosser-type theorems for symmetric and dual combinatory calculi. Typing provides a fruitful connection between relevance logics and combinatory logics: an insight from dual combinatory logic provided a new understanding of the relationships between the major implicational relevance logics. Kata has been collaborating with J. Michael Dunn for many years, and in 2010 they succeeded in closing and solving the long-open problem of the decidability of the implicational logic of ticket entailment. (This logic is decidable, though the best decision procedure known at this time has a high complexity.) Earlier they co-authored a book, Generalized Galois Logics: Relational Semantics for Nonclassical Logical Calculi, CSLI Publications, Stanford, CA, 2008, in which they further developed the so-called ggl’s (i.e., gaggle theory). Kata published in some of the leading journals in her field such as the Journal of Symbolic Logic, the Notre Dame Journal of Formal Logic, the Journal of Philosophical Logic, Logica Universalis, Studia Logica, among others. She is the author of the “Combinatory logic” article in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Kata is a co-editor of a conference proceedings, and the author of the book Combinatory Logic: Pure, Applied and Typed, CRC Press, Boca Raton, FL, 2012. Currently, Kata is the principal investigator of a SSHRC SRG that concerns problems in relevance logics; earlier she received various other research awards and grants. Kata received a Research Excellence Award in the Faculty of Arts in 2012, and she has been tenured and promoted to associate professorship.

Marie-Eve Morin

Marie-Eve Morin is associate professor of philosophy and specializes in 20th-century European philosophy. Her primary research interest is phenomenology, more specifically the development of the phenomenological method, and the broadening and criticism of the concept of intentionality in German and French phenomenology after Husserl. One of the central criticisms of the concept of intentionality is that it fails to account for radical otherness, or radical exteriority. Her first book, Jenseits der brüderlichen Gemeinschaft (Ergon) was an attempt to provide a phenomenological description of the inherently paradoxical notion of a community of singularities, using the conceptual tools found in the work of Jacques Derrida and Jean-Luc Nancy. Marie-Eve’s second book, Jean-Luc Nancy (Polity Press) presents Nancy’s work on questions of ontology, religion, community, politics, and art, by following the guiding thread of an essential rift at the heart of any “self” by which this self is exposed and relates to itself and others. Nancy’s thinking thereby undercuts dichotomies between individual and community, interior and exterior, matter and spirit, in order to propose a thinking of the “limit” or the “edge” between self and other as the locus of sense. Marie-Eve has also co-edited (with Peter Gratton), Jean-Luc Nancy and Plural Thinking (SUNY Press). Her current research focuses on two themes: the spatial turn in phenomenology insofar as it is linked to questions of globalization and social justice, and offers an alternative to temporal historical conceptions of emancipation as a future goal to be worked toward; and the question of the relevance of phenomenological analyses of first-person experience in the face of the “linguistic turn”. Can phenomenology provide us with a way of critiquing linguistic idealism without appealing to an inaccessible thing-in-itself? This requires, she thinks, that we work out an enveloping concept of intentionality that is sensitive to its constitutive limits and paradoxes.
Major Philosophy Department
Faculty Grants and Awards

Kata Bimbó: SSHRC, Standard Research Grant, "Investigations into Problems in Relevance Logics: Some Extensions and Decidability."

Ingo Brigandt: SSHRC, Standard Research Grant, "Integrating Different Biological Approaches: a Philosophical Contribution."

Cressida Heyes, (Political Science/Philosophy): SSHRC, Standard Research Grant, "Practicing Bodies: Feminism and the Subject of Freedom"
  — CIHR, "Sexual Orientation and Gender in the Context of Healthcare: The Experiences of Queer Young Women and their Primary Care Providers"
  — Hooker Distinguished Visiting Professor, McMaster University

Jeff Pelletier: (Visiting Professor) NSERC, Standard Research Grant, "Theories and Computation."

Geoffrey Rockwell, (Philosophy & HUCO) (selection): SSHRC, Major Collaborative Research Initiative, Co-applicant (with Ray Siemens, principal investigator, University of Victoria), "Implementing New Knowledge Environments (INKE)"
  — National Centres of Excellence Grant, Network Investigator (grant led by Kellogg S. Booth University of British Columbia), "Graphics, Animation and New Media"
  — SSHRC, Insight Development Grant (grant led by Dr. Stefan Sinclair, McGill University), "Voyeur Notebooks: Investigating the Feasibility of a Literate Programming Model for the Humanities"
  — SSRHC Knowledge Synthesis Grant, Co-applicant (with Sean Gouglas, principal investigator, University of Alberta), "Computer Games and Canada's Digital Economy"
  — Kule institute for Advanced Study, The Quest Creating a Gaming Community Platform Driven by Students in Real World Classrooms (led by Sean Gouglas, University of Alberta)

Alexander Rueger: Visiting Professor & Fellow in Philosophy of Science, University of Bielefeld

Amy Schmitter: SSHRC, Standard Research Grant, "Passion and Representation in Early Modern Philosophy."

Chloë Taylor (Women’s and Gender Studies and Philosophy), SSHRC, Standard Research Grant, Co-applicant (with Alain Beaulieu, Laurentian University of Sudbury), "Le tournant éthique du dernier Foucault et les usages de sa pensée."

Jennifer Welchman: SSHRC, Standard Research Grant, "Environmental Stewardship."

Robert A. Wilson: SSHRC, Community Research Alliance Grant, "Living Archives on Eugenics in Western Canada."
  — Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund at the University of Alberta for the project "Building Collaborative Communities for Critical Inquiry."

SPECIAL MENTION

Kata Bimbó: Kata has been awarded a Faculty of Arts Research Excellence Award. These awards were created to recognize outstanding contributions to research and/or creative excellence in the Faculty of Arts. Three such awards are bestowed every year, one for each academic rank. Kata received the award for assistant professor.

Bernie Linsky: Bernie is 2012 winner of the Bertrand Russell Society Book Award for his monograph The Evolution of Principia Mathematica: Bertrand Russell’s Manuscripts and Notes for the Second Edition, which was published in 2011 by Cambridge University Press. The prize is given to a scholarly publication that deepens our understanding of Bertrand Russell’s life and work.

Marie-Eve Morin: Marie-Eve has been awarded the 2013 Kathleen W. Klave Prize for Excellence in Teaching of Large Classes. This award is available in odd years to an instructor from the Faculty of Arts and in even years to a Faculty of Science instructor. Valued at $1,000, the prize is awarded to a person who has proven to excel in the teaching of a large class.

Jeff Pelletier: Jeff was awarded an Anneliese Maier Research Award from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. He is among the seven humanities and social science scholars to obtain the award this year, which is valued at 250,000 Euros. The Anneliese Maier Research Award is awarded to excellent international scholars and will fund research cooperation with colleagues in Germany for a period of five years. Jeff will use the prize to conduct a project on mass and count nouns in English, in collaboration with Prof. Dr. Tibor Kiss of the Linguistics Department at the Ruhr University at Bochum.
The Philosophy for Children Program (P4CA) is an international program that gives students from K-12 the opportunity to explore the philosophical questions that they are already discussing amongst themselves. This exploration is structured so that it promotes a skill set that is important for both critical thinking and living in communities.

The founder and current Director is Professor Rob Wilson. The current Program Administrator and Director of EUREKAMP! is Dr. Jason Taylor. P4CA has continued to expand its reach to the community through a number of collaborative partnerships. Through these partnerships hundreds of teachers, senior citizens, and graduate students were exposed to the program through hands-on workshops at various venues. Some highlights from the past year:

- Eurekamp, Summer 2012
- Philosopher in Residence: St. Maria Goretti, Nov 2012
- Uschool Volunteering: Approximately twice a month practitioners of the P4C program have run 90 minute interactive sessions for Edmonton and area school classes.
- Ongoing Presence at both major Teacher Conventions (GETCA & NCTCA).
- October 2012 Teacher Training Workshop: A 3 hour workshop for teachers in both Edmonton Catholic & Edm Public school systems.
- Festival of Ideas for Kids: P4CA was the only Humanities-based group providing programming at this portion of the festival.
- “Ideas” at the Senior’s Association of Greater Edmonton: bi-weekly discussion groups have been held at SAGE for 8-12 participants each session.

### Adventures in Ideas for Curious Children

Eurekamp! offers week-long summer camps for children ages 5-14 that begin July 8th and are offered until August 2nd. Developed in collaboration between students and professional educators, each camp is geared towards getting children excited about learning by prompting questions through play. Inspirational themes are taken from disciplines such as math, science, language, drama, art, music, and ecology and are explored outdoors and indoors through experiments, games, adventures, presentations, and camper-led discussions. In each camp, children and youth build confidence, a love of learning through enquiry and play, and gain exposure to a world of ideas. Those interested in learning more about the specific themes of each camp offered in 2013 are encouraged to visit our website [http://p4c.ualberta.ca/eurekamp](http://p4c.ualberta.ca/eurekamp) and click the “programs” tab.

**Summer 2013 registration is now open.**

### Living Archives on Eugenics in Western Canada

The ideas and practices aimed at improving “human breeding” known as eugenics were influential across North America in the first half of the 20th-century. The Western Canadian chapter in the history of eugenics, however, remains under-studied. The Living Archives on Eugenics in Western Canada is a five year Community-University Research Alliance (CURA) project funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, with a research team of 30 scholars, sterilization survivors, and 12 community partners. The research team is working to create a range of academic and public resources—what we call living archives—for investigating this history. These resources will increase knowledge of past social practices and policies, and will deepen discussions of current issues that were also central to the eugenics movement, such as those concerning disability and reproductive freedom. Currently we are in our third year, about to start our fourth year, with a projected completion date of February 2015. Upcoming events in 2013 include a visit from guest scholar Rob Sparrow, April 8–10, during which Prof. Sparrow will give two talks and meet with graduate students. The Living Archives will be having its semi-annual team meeting in May 2013. This event is open to members of the public. For complete information on this project, including updates on our activities, see our website [http://eugenicsarchive.ca/](http://eugenicsarchive.ca/).
Department of Philosophy
Graduate Students

PhD acceptances

Megan Dean (2013) Philosophy, Georgetown University
Elliot Goodine (2012) Philosophy, University of Texas at Austin
Taylor Murphy (2012) Philosophy, Neuroscience, Psychology program, Washington University at St. Louis
Grace Paterson (MA expected 2013) Philosophy, Stanford University
Miranda Pilipchuck (2012) Philosophy, Villanova University

The Publication Support Group

The Publication Support Group ("PSG") is a weekly forum run by graduate students for graduate students that provides them with an opportunity to present and discuss their work in progress among their peers. All are welcome to attend. Normally, meetings are held at 3:30 pm on Fridays in Room 2-02A, Assiniboia Hall. If you are interested in presenting, attending, and/or in having your email included in the group e-mail list that announces PSG events, contact psg.philosophy@gmail.com.

For the upcoming talks, see the Department’s website: www.philosophy.ualberta.ca/Events%20and%20Activities.aspx

The University of Alberta Philosophy Graduate Conference on Disagreement
May 10 - 12, 2013

The PSG Committee (Emma Chien, Grace Paterson, Juan Santos Castro, Yasemin Sari, Andrew Tedder, and Emine Hande Tuna) is organizing the University of Alberta Philosophy Graduate Conference on Disagreement, which will take place between May 10-12, 2013. The keynote speakers will be Adam Morton (University of British Columbia) and Thomas Christiano (University of Arizona).

All are welcome to attend. This event is funded by the University of Alberta Faculty of Arts, the Graduate Student Association, and the Departments of Comparative Literature, English and Film Studies, Philosophy, and Psychology.

For more information, please contact us at: uofaphilconference@gmail.com
Department of Philosophy
Graduate and Undergraduate Students

Graduate Student Awards 2012-2013

Emma (Peng) Chien: President’s International Doctoral Award (Renewal)

Catherine Clune-Taylor: Queen Elizabeth II Graduate Scholarship, Doctoral

Chris Johnson: Profiling Alberta’s Graduate Students Award

Rachel Loewen Walker: Andrew Stewart Memorial Graduate Prize & Profiling Alberta’s Graduate Students Award

Luke McNulty: Queen Elizabeth II Graduate Scholarship, Doctoral

Kristin Rodier: Queen Elizabeth II Graduate Scholarship, Doctoral

Marc Workman: SSHRC Doctoral Fellowship & President’s Doctoral Prize of Distinction

Jay Worthy: University of Alberta Doctoral Recruitment Scholarship

Yuan Chieh Yang: President’s International Doctoral Award

Justin Zylstra: Queen Elizabeth II Graduate Scholarship, Doctoral

Emily Douglas: Queen Elizabeth II Graduate Scholarship, Master’s & Dr. John Macdonald Scholarship in Philosophy

Grace Paterson: Queen Elizabeth II Graduate Scholarship, Master’s

Connor Morris: Queen Elizabeth II Graduate Scholarship, Master’s

Joshua St. Pierre: Joseph-Armand Bombardier Canada Graduate Scholarship, Master’s (SSHRC) & Walter H. Johns Graduate Fellowship

Andrew Tedder: Queen Elizabeth II Graduate Scholarship, Master’s

Graduate Student Teaching Award

Chris Johnson has been awarded a 2013 Faculty of Arts Graduate Student Teaching Award. These awards are given to graduate students who have proven to be excellent teachers, dedicated to enriching the undergraduate student experience and committed to fostering student engagement.

Undergraduate Philosophy Club

The Undergraduate Philosophy Club usually meets on Friday afternoons at 3:00pm in the student lounge of the Philosophy Department (Assiniboia Hall 2-30). All are welcome to attend. For information on the Philosophy Club and its activities, contact Michael Gaber mgaber@ualberta.ca

Recent Graduations

Megan Dean (MA), "When Knowing Better is Not Enough: Experiencing Bodies, Feminist Critique, and Foucault," supervisor Cressida Heyes

Elliot Goodine (MA), “Of the Standard of Sentiments: Hume on Virtue and Beauty,” supervisor Amy Schmitter

Sara Kundrik (MA), “Smells in the library: A moral perspective on the homeless and library policy,” supervisor Howard Nye


Matthew Small (MA), “Matter, Extension, and Intellect in Aristotle,” supervisor Phil Corkum

Evan Stait (MA) "Escaping "Oblivion": Rethinking Heidegger’s Challenge through the Metaphysics of St. Thomas Aquinas," co-supervisors Marie-Eve Morin and Matthew Kostelecky


Undergraduate Student Awards 2012-2013

Adrianna Forest, The Karen Pilkinson Memorial Scholarship in the History of Philosophy

Michael Lang, The William Irvine Memorial Prize in Ethics

Katherine Orobio, The Honors Medal in Philosophy

Patrick Rippon, The Marilyn R Love Scholarship in Philosophy

Honours Theses 2012

Elizabeth Flaming, “Kierkegaard and Anxiety” (sup. Robert Burch)

Nikhil Jayadevan, “Philosophy of Humour” (sup. Marie-Eve-Morin)

Katherine Orobio, "Nietzsche's Woman" (sup. Robert Burch)

Patrick Pasha, “Hard Intuitionism” (sup. Jeff Pelletier)

Donations kindly requested for Essay Awards Initiative

To celebrate the critical thinking and exemplary writing that philosophy fosters, the Department of Philosophy is requesting donations in support of two new essay prizes for students in our philosophy courses.

Donations received will provide the winners with a monetary token of recognition to accompany their award.

The essay prizes will be awarded each year for the best undergraduate and the best graduate student essay written for a course in the award year.

For information on donating contact
Joanne McKinnon, 780-492-0130, joanne.mckinnon@ualberta.ca

‘Bios: Feminist Philosophies of Life’

Annual meeting of philoSOPHIA.
May 2–5, 2013 in Banff

Organized by Chloë Taylor, philoSOPHIA: A Feminist Society will hold its 7th annual meeting on May 2–5, 2013 in Banff, Alberta. Dedicated to the topic Bios: Feminist Philosophies of Life, the conference will feature Kelly Oliver, Mary Rawlinson, Hasana Sharp, and Cynthia Willett as plenary speakers.

The Department of Philosophy of the University of Alberta is co-sponsoring the event, and several department members will present at the meeting: Professor Cressida Heyes, graduate students Catherine Clune-Taylor, Rachel Loewen-Walker, Kristin Rodier, Yasemin Sari, and Joshua St. Pierre. Former graduate student Megan Dean will likewise present and undergraduate students Brittne Tink and Bianca Knull will be moderating sessions.

For a detailed program:

Department Colloquium Series

In the 2012-13 academic year the Department hosted 18 colloquium speakers.

www.philosophy.ualberta.ca/Events%20and%20Activities/Colloquium.aspx

Colloquium talks take place usually on Thursday at 3:30 pm in Assiniboia Hall 2-02A.

If you wish to be included on our email list announcing talks, contact Bruce Hunter (bhunter@ualberta.ca)
We are sincerely grateful for continued donations to the Department of Philosophy. Such donations help in vital ways to sustain and improve the life of the Department and to support philosophical activities and events that, for want of such support, would have to be foregone.

We would like to thank our 2012-13 donors: Anonymous, Amanda Baril, Richard & Janice Blaskovits, John Jervis & Lorraine Stewart, Marika Warren, and in memory of Isaak Kornelsen, various donors from the Department of Cell Biology.

Thank You to our Donors!

IN MEMORIAM

Aristotle Hadjiantoniou, who died on March 2, 2013 after a painful struggle with cancer, used his degree in mathematics for decades as a bored and disobedient administrator for the Alberta government. He would have been hell to supervise: too original, too funny, so great a reluctance to have anything to do with computers. When eventually he escaped with a pension he wondered what to do with his time and decided that since he had always wanted to know more philosophy he would take an MA. So he did, charming and irritating the Alberta department and frustrating its attempts to get students through in good time. He was enjoying himself, so why should he hurry? He was fascinated by mediaeval philosophy but did a thesis in logic, on the relation between many-sorted and free logics. Unfortunately the completion of the MA meant that he was no longer an official student, so he became a very visible unofficial one, as a staple of the equally unofficial logic discussion group. He had to stop attending this when he became ill, and then it became clear to his philosophy friends how many others were devoted to him, in the Arts scene and elsewhere in Edmonton. He will be missed for his irony, his many quirky interests, his inimitable mangling of English phonetics, and his weirdly sane attitude to life.

Isaak Kornelsen died tragically in a collision on August 27, 2012 while biking to work along Whyte Avenue. He was a double major in Philosophy and in Science, Technology, and Society. Isaak was known by his teachers as a gifted and dedicated student, “outstandingly brilliant,” as one of his professors remarked, “one of those people you just love to hang out with, love to chat with, every time you saw him you just smiled.” Isaak was also an accomplished member of the University of Alberta’s track team and counted among his achievements winning bronze in the 4x800m relay and finishing 6th in 600m event at the Canada West championships in 2010. Exceptionally talented in many areas, Isaak’s work ethic and humility were an inspiration to all. He was passionate about running, learning Swedish, vegetarianism, and his job as a server and cook at Café Mosaics. An excellent student, lifelong runner, gifted musician, creative spirit, and thoughtful, loving friend, Isaak will be greatly missed by his family, friends, teachers, fellow students and teammates.

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How to Donate

If you are interested in donating to the Department of Philosophy, or would simply like more information about donating or department activities, please contact:

Joanne McKinnon, Assistant Chair
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2-46 Assiniboia Hall, (780) 492-0130
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Please make cheques payable to the University of Alberta. Alternately, you may donate via Electronic Fund Transfer (bank withdrawal, void cheque) or credit card (Mastercard/VISA/Amex).

Donations to the Department of Philosophy are tax deductible.