

PHILOSOPHY

NORTHWESTERN

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Message from the Chair



Dear Alumni and Friends,

I am delighted to write my first message as department chair at the close of a year full of new arrivals, exciting initiatives, and outstanding faculty and student achievements.

A notable highlight is the department's growth in size and strength with the addition of new colleagues. We are proud that our ranks now include Walter Dill Scott Professor in Philosophy

José Medina (PhD, Northwestern), a specialist in critical race theory, feminist and queer theory, political philosophy, communication theory, and social epistemology. We welcomed Rocío Zambrana of the University of Oregon as the 2017–18 Edith Kreeger Wolf Distinguished Visiting Associate Professor. Two assistant professors are joining us in 2018–19: Megan Hyska specializes in philosophy of language and political philosophy; Patricia Marechal specializes in ancient philosophy, ancient medical theory, and ethics. Postdoctoral fellow William Paris, a specialist in Africana, black feminist, and African American philosophy, will be with us through the 2019–20 academic year.

Through a joint initiative of our undergraduate and graduate students, a chapter of Minorities and Philosophy (MAP) has been launched on campus, connecting Northwestern to an international network of students who aim to address issues of minority participation in academic philosophy. Ongoing activities that are open to all interested Northwestern undergraduates—including the student-run groups Women in Philosophy (WiPhi) and the

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Message from the Chair, continued

Undergraduate Philosophy Society, the PhilNight minilecture series and our PhilFEST celebration, and the annual Inclusiveness Lecture and Gertrude Bussey Lecture—continue to feature prominently in our success as a department.

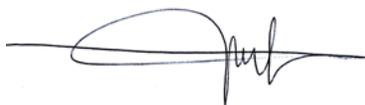
To keep our programs vibrant and productive, we constantly think about ways to build on our strengths and improve our students' experience. These include

- expecting students to meet high standards of scholarship and become adept at critically examining complex questions and communicating effectively as speakers and writers
- increasing the variety of course offerings to expose students to a range of philosophical topics and perspectives
- conferring annual awards to recognize outstanding work
- supporting undergraduate research opportunities and providing travel funds for students who participate in national and international conferences
- supporting the Undergraduate Philosophy Society, WiPhi, the new MAP chapter, and other philosophy-focused student organizations
- strengthening our students' connections to professional networks that can help jump-start their careers
- increasing opportunities for faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate majors to interact and philosophize in both formal and informal settings

The continued generosity of our alumni enables us to make the philosophy department a thriving, energetic, and welcoming environment. All donations earmarked as gifts to the department are used wholly to strengthen our programs and activities and to benefit philosophy students. Your gift of \$1,000, \$500, \$100, or even \$25 makes a considerable difference.

Thank you for your continuing friendship with us and for your ongoing commitment to Northwestern.

Sincerely,



Cristina Lafont
Professor and chair

To give online, please visit wewill.northwestern.edu/weinberg-philosophy. You may also phone in a contribution to the development office at 847-467-3737.

2017–18 Activities Roundup



WiPhi

Women in Philosophy (WiPhi), Northwestern's philosophy space for female-identifying undergraduates, has grown and thrived. In addition to biweekly meetings (always over tea) where we share personal experiences and engage in philosophical discourse, WiPhi hosted the Gertrude Bussey Lecture, an annual event that celebrates the work of a prominent female philosopher. We welcomed Agnes Callard of the University of Chicago as the seventh Bussey Lecturer, who spoke on "Frankenvaluers, Sticky Attitudes, and Stone-Swallowing: Three Objections to the Hybrid Theory of Valuing" on May 24. All year long, WiPhi benefitted from partnerships with philosophy department faculty, staff, and

*Top: Bussey Lecturer Agnes Callard
Middle and bottom: WIPHICA conference
participants Regina Hurley (left), Kate Finley
(right), and Molly Brown*

WIPHICA, our sister organization. We are especially grateful to the graduate students and others who offered their wisdom and perspective on being members of an underrepresented group in our discipline and stewarding an inclusive space for women in academia.

WIPHICA

The Women in Philosophy Workshop–Chicagoland (WIPHICA) continued to build a supportive network for women in philosophy at all levels in 2017–18, with graduate students Susan Bencomo, Abigail Bruxvoort, and Hao Liang providing organizational leadership. In the

fall, WIPHICA hosted a workshop with Rachel Jonker (Notre Dame) that examined moral disagreement, and Andrea Westlund (Wisconsin–Milwaukee) presented on relational autonomy at a December workshop cosponsored with Northwestern's Practical Philosophy Workshop. Deborah Harr (UIC) visited campus in the winter to workshop a paper on the epistemology of computer simulations. At a one-day WIPHICA conference in the spring, Molly Brown (Chicago), Kate Finley (Notre Dame), Gretchen Ellefson (Northwestern), and Liz Jackson (Notre Dame) presented works in progress on a range of topics:



Mill on social categories; selfhood and thought insertion; power and miscommunication; and pragmatic encroachment. Several attendees expressed interest in hosting similar one-day conferences at their home institutions next year, promising opportunities for further collaboration.

Ancient Philosophy Workshop

The Ancient Philosophy Workshop hosted two visiting speakers in the fall and spring quarters. Paul Woodruff, Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin and author of several translations of Plato’s dialogues, came to campus in November. Speaking on “What Is the Question in the *Euthyphro*?” Woodruff emphasized the different contexts of the main speakers, contesting the common interpretation that Socrates is arriving at some sort of definition of virtue when he asks Euthyphro what he takes to be pious or impious. David Charles presented to the workshop in April, addressing the question “Does Aristotle Avoid the Mind/Body Problem?” Charles is the Howard H. Newman Professor of Philosophy and Classics at Yale University and former Colin Prestige Fellow and professor at Oxford University’s Oriel College. At the workshop, he focused on Aristotle’s *De Anima* and analyzed the mind/body problem’s history, arguing that Aristotle’s hylomorphism and noneliminative materialist view of the soul allows for him to avoid the mind/body problem altogether.

Epistemology Brownbags

The Epistemology Brownbag Series features occasional lunchtime talks by established and emerging epistemologists. Dutch philosopher René van Woudenberg was the brownbag speaker in February. The series resumes next year, with speakers



David Charles (left) was a guest of the Ancient Philosophy Workshop in April.

including Nevin Climenhaga (Notre Dame), Nicole Garcia (MIT), Heather Spradley (Harvard), and Mike Titelbaum (Wisconsin–Madison).

NUSTEP Conference

The 12th annual conference of the Northwestern University Society for the Theory of Ethics and Politics was a model of intellectual community and philosophical rigor, thanks to the joint efforts of several graduate students and faculty organizers Kyla Ebels-Duggan, Richard Kraut, and Stephen White. In addition to two keynote talks, the March 8–10 conference featured five paper presentations by faculty and five by graduate students. Keynoting were Sharon Street (NYU) and Niko Kolodny (Berkeley). Paper topics ranged from love, friendship, grace, vulnerability, and suffering to solidarity, political corruption, and gentrification. To see the full schedule of this and past years’ NUSTEP conferences, visit philosophy.northwestern.edu/community/nustep.

Phenomenology Workshop

The graduate student–organized After-life of Phenomenology Workshop—cosponsored by the Critical Theory Cluster and the Departments of Philosophy, German, and French and Italian—hosted talks by three speakers last year: Michael Forster (University of Bonn) spoke on the origin and character of Hegel’s concept of Geist; Molly Flynn (Assumption College) discussed the intentionality of the modern concept of the state; and Guy Elgat (School of the Art Institute of Chicago) examined Kant, Schelling, and Schopenhauer’s stances on guilt and freedom.

Practical Philosophy Workshop

Since its creation eight years ago, the Practical Philosophy Workshop has provided a forum for Northwestern's philosophy community to engage with innovative works in progress in moral and political philosophy. In 2017–18, the workshop included papers addressing such topics as aesthetic reconciliation, ethics and the first-person perspective, Plato as critical theorist, and public reason, as well as relational autonomy, self-prediction in practical reasoning, and steering the sex education discussion. Presenters included Matthew Boyle (Chicago), Paula McAvoy (Center for Ethics and Education, Madison), Blain Neufeld (Wisconsin–Milwaukee), Jonny Thakkar (Swarthmore), and Andrea Westlund (Wisconsin–Milwaukee), in addition to Northwestern's Mark Alznauer and Stephen White.

Workshop with Kreeger Wolf Visiting Professor

Graduate students organized a May workshop and discussion with Rocío Zambrana, associate professor of philosophy at the University of Oregon and the Edith Kreeger Wolf Distinguished Visiting Associate Professor in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese. The workshop focused on Zambrana's forthcoming book *Neoliberal Coloniality, Critique, Resistance* and on her scholarship's unique orientation, which is situated between critical theory, decolonial thought, and decolonial feminism. Her teaching at Northwestern included courses on the Frankfurt School and Latin American critical theory traditions.

Brady Scholars Program

Seniors in the undergraduate Brady Scholars Program in Ethics and Civic Life successfully completed their class's capstone collaborative project, which will help raise the level of early childhood literacy in Evanston. For its 2018–19 project, the next class of seniors plans to address the issue of affordable housing.

In April the Brady Program sponsored its second triennial conference, which joins program alumni with the three cohorts (seniors, juniors, and sophomores) of current students. The conference featured two keynote speakers who addressed the role of religion in ethical life and American politics: Professor Kenneth Seeskin spoke on the first of these themes, and Eboo Patel, founder and president of Interfaith Youth Core, reflected on the second.

Political science professor James Farr has begun his two-year term as the inaugural Brady Faculty Fellow. Farr is the director of Northwestern's Chicago Field Studies Program, which has given him extensive experience overseeing community service projects.

Q&A with Professor José Medina

José Medina received his PhD in philosophy from Northwestern in 1998 and is a specialist in critical race theory, feminist and queer theory, political philosophy, communication theory, and social epistemology. This past fall, he joined the faculty as the Walter Dill Scott Professor in Philosophy, an occasion marked with a formal investiture ceremony and a medal from the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences.

Tell us a bit about your background and how you came to philosophy. My identity as an immigrant gay man has certainly shaped my philosophical career. I grew up in Spain in the 1970s and 1980s, during the last years of the Franco dictatorship and the early years of the democratic transformation. It was a time of political turmoil, when you could still feel the political repression and the social silences in all areas of life, public and private; but it was also a time of vibrant resistance, full of political possibilities and the formation of strong communities that were articulating political demands and denouncing their oppression publicly for the first time in Spain. I wanted to explore the role that philosophy could play in those social movements and political struggles, and I wanted to do research in philosophy in a politically engaged way. So in the 1990s I came to the United States—a place with a long history of political struggles for civil rights, women’s rights, and LGBTQ rights. And I decided to do my graduate studies at Northwestern, where I could freely explore meaning and normativity, which for me were also issues of identity and political struggle, and do serious, specialized work in Wittgenstein and in critical theory at the same time.

How has it felt to be back at Northwestern, this time as a professor? What were the highlights of your first year?

It has been an interesting and emotional homecoming returning to my alma mater after 20 years. I am a different person, and Northwestern is different place. Departments in the humanities and social sciences have



changed and grown, and I’m excited to see much more collaboration and interaction across departments and interdisciplinary centers and programs. It has been thrilling to get to know my new colleagues and students in philosophy and other departments. One highlight was a wide-ranging discussion of my working paper “No Justice, No Peace: Protest and the Politics of Confrontation” during a political theory workshop with graduate students and faculty. Teaching the Critical Race Theory interdisciplinary graduate seminar was another highlight.

You recently published a book, *The Epistemology of Resistance*, and edited a volume on epistemic injustice. What is epistemic injustice, and how it is connected to other forms of injustice and oppression? Epistemic injustice refers to the unfair treatment of individuals and groups as subjects of knowledge and understanding. Scholars in this field investigate the epistemic side of oppression, exploring issues such as social silences, bodies of ignorance and patterns of distortion, inabilities to listen to and understand certain people and certain things, and the epistemic vices of individuals, groups, and institutions. My scholarship tries to uncover forms of resistance to the epistemic exclusion and marginalization associated with racism, sexism, and homophobia. I discuss ways

to resist such epistemic injustices in our daily interactions, but I also address how ordinary forms of contestation relate to social movements and political struggles for structural and institutional transformations. I am interested in how political, ethical, and epistemological questions intertwine with and have bearing on one another.

More specifically, my research tries to contribute to what can be called political epistemology, which has engaged feminist epistemologists (such as standpoint theorists) and critical race theorists (such as Charles Mills) for a long time. I bring to these debates a polyphonic contextualism and kaleidoscopic perspectivalism that is grounded in various philosophical traditions, including pragmatism and African American philosophy. I have described my scholarship in political epistemology and political philosophy as “methodologically promiscuous,” not simply merging various methods and philosophical styles but bringing them into critical dialogue with one another. My research draws from underrepresented bodies of literature—African American philosophy, pragmatism, critical race theory, queer theory, Latina feminism, and transnational and women-of-color feminisms—that often only intersect or touch each other at the edges and are rarely used in areas such as epistemology or philosophy of language.

What have you been working on lately? In critical race theory and political philosophy, I’m writing papers on collective responsibility and complicity with racism, dealing with issues of activism and social movements, group agency, and political protests. In political epistemology, I’m writing papers about pathologies of public discourse (especially visual propaganda and dysfunctional visual communication) and also, in the new paradigm of “vice epistemology,” papers that explore collective vices and structural vices that contribute to oppression and epistemic injustice. I am also working on a book manuscript, tentatively titled “Spectacles of Racial Violence and Epistemic Activism,” that explores how hate speech and dysfunctional communication around race sow racial vulnerabilities and perpetuate patterns of racial violence. It also looks at how “epistemic resistance” can be mobilized, paying particular attention to various forms of activism—from organized social movements to critically engaged education and public art—that use strategies of communication and critical intervention to disrupt complicity with racial violence and create new forms of sensitivity and responsivity to racial violence.

Medina Honored at Investiture Ceremony

José Medina was one of three faculty recognized at a January 31 Weinberg College investiture ceremony attended by University provost Jonathan Holloway and Weinberg dean Adrian Randolph. Medina was named the Walter Dill Scott Professor in Philosophy; Natasha Tretheway (left), Board of Trustees Professor in English; and Vicky Kalogera (right), Daniel I. Linzer Distinguished University Professor in Physics and Astronomy.



In your view, what is the value of studying philosophy?

At the core of philosophy is the power of critical interrogation. By studying and practicing philosophy, we interrogate who we are and the realities we live in. Critically engaged philosophy can open our eyes to previously unexamined aspects of ourselves (our subjectivity and its limitations or blind spots, our agency and its limitations or blind spots, etc.) and of the world we have inherited and are implicated in maintaining, reproducing, or reinventing. It is impossible to overestimate philosophy’s role in empowering people to be responsible thinkers, interlocutors, and citizens, especially in today’s peculiar social and political world: a world of mass communication, of sound bites, and of epistemic bubbles that make people blind and deaf to each other, unable to communicate across differences, and uninterested in listening with depth and care. In a world some would describe as “post-truth,” we need more than ever the power of interrogation and deep critical engagement that philosophy can afford us.

Student News

PhilFEST 2017

The ninth annual PhilFEST in April featured 10-minute presentations by the class of 2018's three honors philosophy students—Josiah Lopez-Wild, Vinay Patel, and Stanley Vuong—followed by Q&As, conferral of the traditional philosophy love roses, and a family-like celebration with “philoso-free” food and drink. As in years past, PhilFEST 2018 showcased what enthusiastic students can achieve by working with dedicated supervisors to tackle ambitious honors projects. The students summarize their presentations below.



Josiah Lopez-Wild

“Logic and Reasoning”

Fabrizio Cariani, supervisor

We have strong intuitions about what it means to be “rational” or “irrational,” especially when it comes to everyday reasoning. For example, in the morning I expect there to be milk in the fridge, thinking that if I open the fridge, then I will see milk. I open the fridge only to find that my roommates have finished off the milk. Since the “if” part of my reasoning has been satisfied (I did open the fridge), I seem to be entitled to logically

conclude that I do—or at least will—in fact see milk. But in an intuitive sense this reasoning is clearly wrong. Much as I keep staring at the fridge, the logicity of my conclusion won't create milk out of nothing—that is, it won't suffice to make true the “then” part of my reasoning. My presentation explores the difficulties of reconciling logic (truth-preserving argument) and reasoning (inference from premises to conclusions) by examining past solutions. I then present my own alternative.

Vinay Patel

“The Ethics of Violence in Anticolonial Resistance”

Stephen White, supervisor

Colonialism was a primordial sin in the structuring of oppressive societies globally. Not only do the colonized endure the worst forms of exploitation, slavery, and genocide, the socially ingrained narrative of the colonizer's superiority makes oppression seem natural and informs an inferiority complex in the colonized mind. Mahatma Gandhi proposes disciplined,

nonviolent resistance (satyagraha) as a solution, keeping the colonized on the morally righteous path and inspiring the colonizer to admit error and pursue reform. Frantz Fanon, in contrast, defends violence as integral to restoring the dignity of the colonized and totally eschewing the colonizer's political and ideological grip on society. The brutality and perniciousness of colonial violence demand a special ethical consideration of violence in resistance. My project highlights the psychological harms of colonialism, the ethics of self-defense, and pragmatic evaluations of violent and nonviolent anticolonial resistance to suggest that violence should not be a forbidden tool of decolonization.





Stanley Vuong

“Decision Clarification and Agential Information”

Fabrizio Cariani, supervisor

The rational decision maker is sometimes (naively) modelled as only caring about pure utility. Such a model assumes that an agent without complete information about the decision problem ought not to care about sequential signals—i.e., information gained from observing the outcomes of actions taken—beyond the expected utility those associated actions provide. In my presentation I use a conceptualization of utility based on a structure of motivating properties to argue not only that agents ought to value sequential information outside of the expected utility the associated actions provide, but also that agents who do not consider the value of potential new information are behaving irrationally. This framework also helps to clarify the nature of “obfuscated decisions” that cannot be categorized as rational or irrational due to insufficient evidence pointing one way or the other.

What’s Next for This Year’s Graduating Seniors?

“I plan to attend law school and become a lawyer, or otherwise be involved in the legal defense of civil rights and other social justice causes.”

—**Mackenzie Eisen**, 2017–18 copresident of the Undergraduate Philosophy Society, president of WiPhi, and the department’s Weinberg College Student Advisory Board representative

“I was accepted to the University of Chicago’s humanities MA program and offered a spot in the philosophy master’s program at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee. After some pondering and consulting, I decided to take the latter.”

—**Josiah Lopez-Wild**, 2017–18 copresident of the Undergraduate Philosophy Society and PhilNIGHT organizer

“I will be working at Globe Talk, a nonprofit organization that creates virtual international exchanges for high school students. The exchanges are economically accessible, promote pluralism, and broaden students’ horizons. Then in fall 2019 I’ll start my first year at the Feinberg School of Medicine.”

—**Tazim Merchant**, an Honors Program in Medical Education student and 2015 Ethics Bowl national finalist with Northwestern’s team

“I’ll be attending Columbia Law School next year. I have not yet decided on a specific area of law.”

—**Vinay Patel**, whose philosophy honors thesis was included in the Northwestern Undergraduate Research and Arts Expo

“I had very good job interviews, so I’m hoping to find employment in consulting, investment, or something similar.”

—**Stanley Vuong**, who majored in philosophy, economics, and mathematical methods in the social sciences

Grad Students Participate in Bilingual Workshop on Pedagogy

Three philosophy graduate students traveled to New York in April to participate in Hacer Escuela, a bilingual workshop and speaker series aimed at exploring critical pedagogy in the university. Joining scholars from Fordham University, Bard College, and National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), the trio from Northwestern—Carmen De Schryver, Regina Hurley, and Taylor Rogers—attended talks and engaged in dialogue meant to cultivate new ways of thinking about and “doing” school.

The students interviewed Marisa Belausteguigoitia, UNAM’s coordinator of curricular innovation in the graduate humanities, regarding her “tilting pedagogy” method. They also met with three of her students who call themselves “Las Penélopes” (after Homer’s character of Penelope, famed for cleverly fending off unwanted suitors). Like their namesake, Las Penélopes must be savvy strategists as they maneuver tense political and social situations in their communities in and around Mexico City.

The UNAM women shared pedagogical insights (informed especially by the scholarship of Gloria Anzaldúa) from their work in a women’s prison, where they promote art and education as means of creative expression and questioning social narratives.

It is hoped that Northwestern graduate students will continue to participate in the Hacer Escuela initiative, enriching the whole philosophy community through engagement across universities and borders.



Jaeyoung Shin Presents Paper at Student Conference

Philosophy major Jaeyoung Shin traveled to Missouri in March to present his paper “Distant Generations: The Shortfall of Williams’s Relativism of Distance” at the sixth annual Saint Louis University Undergraduate Philosophy Conference. Organized by the SLU Philosophy Club, the two-day conference included presentations by Shin and nine other students whose papers were judged the best of the submissions.

“The range of topics was quite impressive,” Shin said. “We discussed topics like the Soviet avant-garde, AI philosophy, and cosmological arguments—all in one day.” Intensive Q&A sessions followed

Graduate students Carmen De Schryver (top left), Regina Hurley (top center), and Taylor Rogers (bottom right) with other Hacer Escuela workshop participants

the presentations, prompting thoughtful philosophical exchanges. A day earlier, Harvard philosophy professor Frances Kamm delivered the conference's keynote lecture, "Arguments on Assisted Suicide and Gorsuch's Objections."

Shin had originally written his paper as a final assignment in Professor Mark Alznauer's course Studies in the History of Ethical and Political Theory and later edited and expanded it with Alznauer's help. The paper critiques the relativism of distance proposed by Bernard Williams in his 1985 book *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*.

"I was inspired by today's various ethical conflicts arising from the generational gap," Shin said. "In the paper I point out that Williams's concept of notional confrontation between divergent ethical outlooks, which he considers to allow room for relativism, can be applied to real generational conflicts in contemporary society, and that this contradicts his earlier suggestion that relativism is unacceptable in such cases."

Shin's participation in the conference was made possible in part by the philosophy department's support for undergraduate research and travel.



Flanked by honors program coordinator Axel Mueller (left) and department chair Cristina Lafont (right), this year's undergraduate student award winners included (left to right) Josiah Lopez-Wild, Mackenzie Eisen, Megan Pan, Vinay Patel, Michael Miller, and Bennett Eckert.

Student Achievements Celebrated in June

Earning **Honors in Philosophy** and the **David Hull Prize** for best senior thesis of 2017–18 was **Vinay Patel**; his thesis "Tensed Muscles: An Analysis of Violent and Nonviolent Resistance to Colonialism" was also chosen for presentation at the University's May 30 Undergraduate Research and Arts Expo. \\ Also receiving **Honors in Philosophy** were **Josiah Lopez-Wild** and **Stanley Vuong**, whom the department recognized with an honorable mention for his senior thesis. \\ **Megan Pan** received the **Stephen Toulmin Prize** for superior overall performance in all courses for the philosophy major. \\ The **Lula A. Peterson Prize** for exemplary department citizenship was awarded to **Mackenzie Eisen**, who was cited for her efforts on behalf of students as a Student Advisory Board representative, president of WiPhi and organizer of the Bussey Lecture, and copresident (with Josiah Lopez-Wild and Tomer Cherki) of the Northwestern Undergraduate Philosophy Society; she was also selected as senior marshal and bearer of the department banner at Northwestern's Commencement in June. \\ The **Herder Prize** for best first- or second-year paper went to **Bennett Eckert** for his PHIL 313-1 paper "The Scandal of Philosophy: Transcendental Idealism and Kant's Refutation of Skepticism." \\ The **Brentano Prize** for best third- or fourth-year student paper was awarded to **Michael Miller** for his PHIL 313-1 paper "The Impossibility of Self-Knowledge in the 'I Think' Formulation." \\ **Kimberly Rowghani** and **Lily Zhang** were corecipients of the **Ruth Barcan Marcus Award** for tutoring in formal logic. \\ The **Thomas A. McCarthy Award** for exemplary graduate student teaching was shared by **Mark Thompson** and **Nathan Weston**.

Faculty News

Mark Alznauer is working on two projects: one on the idea of a poetic theodicy, the other on Hegel's philosophy of spirit. In 2017, he had essays published in *The Oxford Handbook on Hegel* and *The Owl of Minerva*. He also gave talks or participated in workshop at the University of Illinois at Chicago, DePaul University, Boston College, the University of Navarra, the University of Padua, and Oxford University. This past spring he was on sabbatical leave, which he and his family spent in Europe.

Fabrizio Cariani received a Mellon Foundation fellowship and spent the year doing research for his forthcoming book on how we think and talk about the future and acquiring superpowers. The fellowship also enabled him to take courses in psychology, computer science, and statistics. He was one of three Hans Camp visitors at the University of Texas at Austin in March and gave talks at conferences in Amsterdam, Tokyo, London, California, and elsewhere.

Penelope Deutscher has been on sabbatical in 2017-18, spending time in Germany and Mexico City as well as Evanston. In her ongoing role as principal investigator on the "Critical Theory in the Global South" project, she convened its inaugural international workshop at Northwestern in November. She also participated in two workshops that resulted from Northwestern's continuing cooperation with German universities: "Queer Temporalities and Media Aesthetics" at the University of Bochum and

"Critical Theory in Translation: Life, Politics, Critique" at Goethe University Frankfurt. She gave papers at the University of Giessen, Princeton University, the University of Ghent, and in Brazil and Memphis and took part in workshops and panels on her book *Foucault's Futures* at Goethe University Frankfurt, the University of Kiel, the Institute of Critical Inquiry in Berlin, and the University of New South Wales. Her work appeared in *Parrhesia* and in two edited volumes of essays on feminist philosophy.

Kyla Ebels-Duggan is working on a book that focuses on our human tendency to adopt values by experiencing valuable things, rather than by thinking through some argument that things ought to be valued. In it she argues that such experiences can provide reasons for valuing that outstrip any attempts to capture them in propositional form. In particular, she has been writing about how the experience of loving individual people provides rational grounds for moral commitment; how a good moral education exposes us to reasons for valuing things without reporting those reasons to us; and how we ought to reason together about the organization of our political community, given that we value different things and can't fully articulate our reasons for doing so. She presented and discussed this work in Scotland, Kentucky, Arizona, Massachusetts, and Michigan. In addition to writing, she did related work on a University-wide committee charged with updating the Ethics and Values undergraduate distribution requirement, part of a larger overhaul of Weinberg College degree

requirements. This summer she is taking some of committee's conclusions on the road, consulting with a group of psychologists seeking to understand the role of humanistic study in human well-being and at a high school looking to help its students think about the role of the humanities in their own education. During 2017-18, Ebels-Duggan taught first-year students about Plato's insights concerning democracy and tyranny, and second-year students about why a cost-benefit analysis probably can't capture all of our reasons for acting. She also advised many graduate students and rode her bicycle many miles.

Michael Glanzberg continues his research on the nature of linguistic meaning, its connections to cognition, and on theories of truth and paradox. He is the editor of the forthcoming *Oxford Handbook of Truth*, and his book *Formal Theories of Truth* (with Jc Beall and David Ripley) was just published by Oxford University Press. He recently published papers on the connection between mind and language and the nature of context dependence and presented papers in Croatia, France, Germany, Israel, Latvia, Peru, Scotland, Switzerland, and at several US universities. He is an associate editor of *Linguistics and Philosophy*, an editor of the Perspectives in Logic book series for the Association for Symbolic Logic, and a member of the boards of several journals. He chairs the consulting board for the Laboratory for Perceptual and Cognitive Systems at the University of Latvia and serves on the organizing committees for events in Croatia and Latvia.

Richard Kraut returned from his sabbatical leave, which he spent in Oxford, and resumed his work as director of the Brady Scholars Program. Oxford University Press will publish his book *The Quality of Life: Aristotle Revised* this fall.

Axel Mueller enjoyed the rewards of diversifying his course syllabi this year, learning much from interaction with student work and finding that students were enthusiastic about his classes' increased relevance to real life. (One exception was his Kant's Critique of Pure Reason course, described by a student as mostly a "weekly brain workout.") He is excited to report that after years of intermittent preparation, a chapter of Minorities and Philosophy (MAP) is forming at Northwestern; the organization, to be jointly run by undergraduate and graduate students, is expected to complement the activities of other student-led initiatives. With a former philosophy honors student as a coauthor, he continued work on an article on the philosophy of neuroscience, and his work on authoritarian populism's challenges to democracy was ongoing; he was invited to speak about the latter at an international conference in Prague and to edit a special issue of *Philosophy and Social Criticism*. Other projects he would describe as "more abstract" persist, though he says they stand little chance of acquiring the urgency they deserve.

Baron Reed will transition from president-elect to president of the Northwestern Faculty Senate in August. He is the first Senate liaison

with the University's Board of Trustees, serving on its Academic Affairs Committee, and is the first faculty member on the University's Policy Review Committee. A collection of 55 new essays on skepticism that he coedited (with Diego E. Machuca) was recently published by Bloomsbury, and he will be coediting a volume on the nature of the epistemic with alumna Amy Flowerree. He gave a series of papers in Paris and a symposium paper at the American Philosophical Association meeting in San Diego. He also chaired the department's graduate admissions committee for another year. His three-year term with the American Council of Learned Societies as a selector of dissertation-completion fellowship recipients ended, and this fall he will begin a three-year term on the APA's Committee on Lectures, Publications, and Research.

Ken Seeskin was on sabbatical in 2017–18, a period he devoted to finishing a long essay on freedom, several essays on Maimonides, an essay on Socrates, and a second book on philosophical interpretations of the Hebrew Bible. After 46 years of affiliation with the department—first as a class of 1968 philosophy undergraduate, then as a faculty member first hired in 1972—he will start a phased retirement in September.

Mark Sheldon has been working lately on ethical issues concerning healthcare. He published the article "Pharmacological Cognitive Enhancement in Pediatrics" in *Current Opinions in Pediatrics*, presented the paper "Current Challenges in Allocation of



Mark Sheldon will retire at the end of 2018 and assume his new title, "Mark the Emeritus"—the icing on his 33-year teaching career at Northwestern.

Health Care Resources" at the University of Illinois at Chicago School of Public Health, and is coediting the American Philosophical Association's *Newsletter on Philosophy and Medicine*. In addition to serving as the 2017–18 interim director of Northwestern's Environmental Policy and Culture Program, he continued to engage in clinical ethics consults at Rush University Center. After 33 years of teaching at Northwestern—which included offering the University's first bioethics course—he is retiring at year's end.

Gregory Ward served on the department's search committee charged with filling the philosophy of language faculty position and will become codirector of the Sexualities

Project at Northwestern in 2018-19. In addition to presenting talks and conference papers—including some on the use of demonstratives, cowritten with department alumnus Ryan Doran—he taught at the Linguistic Society of America’s 2017 Summer Linguistic Institute at the University of Kentucky.

Stephen White has been appointed a visiting faculty fellow at Princeton University’s Center for Human Values and will be working on a project that explores how we understand our responsibilities as individuals when engaging in the activities and practices of larger groups. This past year he had papers published in *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, *Oxford Studies in Normative Ethics*, and *American Philosophical Quarterly*. He also taught a graduate seminar on T. M. Scanlon’s contractualist moral theory and an upper-level course on nonconsequentialist ethics.

Rachel Zuckert has been on sabbatical in 2017-18, working on a book manuscript on 18th-century philosophy of art, supported by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. She gave talks on various other topics in 18th-century philosophy at DePaul University, Miami University of Ohio, Boston College, and Oxford University and fulfilled her duties as newly elected president of the North American Kant Society. It has been a productive, restful year away, but she looks forward to talking philosophy with students when she returns to teaching this fall.

Department Welcomes New Faculty, Postdoc

Newly hired assistant professor **Megan Hyska**, who is completing her PhD at the University of Texas at Austin, works primarily in philosophy of language and political philosophy, with interests in ethics and feminist philosophy. Her current research draws on contemporary work in formal pragmatics to develop ways of modeling mass discourse structure, which facilitate the detection of propaganda and communicative problems such as deliberative polarization.

Assistant professor **Patricia Marechal** recently received her PhD from Harvard University, where

she won the Derek C. Bok Award for Excellence in Graduate Student Teaching. A specialist in ancient Greek and Roman philosophy, ancient medical theory, and ethics, she has published papers on Galen, Plato’s ethics, Aristotle’s metaphysics, and contemporary epistemology.

Postdoctoral fellow **William Paris** is finishing his dissertation in Pennsylvania State University’s philosophy and women’s, gender, and sexuality studies program. His areas of research include Africana philosophy, African American philosophy, 20th-century continental philosophy, and black feminism.



Clockwise from left:
Megan Hyska, William Paris,
Patricia Marechal

