PEARCE OBTAINS NSF FUNDING

Trevor Pearce received funding from the National Science Foundation to support his book project, Pragmatism’s Evolution: Organism and Environment in American Philosophy, in which he will argue that the philosophical tradition of pragmatism owes an enormous debt to specific biological debates in the late 1800s. He will explore how biology shaped the ideas of American philosophers such as William James, John Dewey, Jane Addams, and W. E. B. Du Bois and how the philosophical tradition of pragmatism owes an enormous debt to specific biological debates in the late 1800s, especially those concerning the role of the environment in development and evolution. Pearce is drawing from both published writings from the period and extensive archival evidence.

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Feel free to email questions to Dr. Shannon Sullivan at SSullivan@uncc.edu.
PITTS PUBLISHES PAPERS


She also published “Review of Carlos Alberto Sánchez, Contingency and Commitment: Mexican Existentialism and the Place of Philosophy.” Human Studies: Journal for Philosophy and the Social Sciences.

She will be honored as a Women’s History Month Scholar-in-Residence, Wright State University, in Dayton, Ohio in 2017. She has presented “Race, Revolution, and Bergsonism in the Americas,” International Congress of the Latin American Studies Association, Panel New York, NY, 2016 and is scheduled to present “Bergsonism in Post-Revolutionary Mexico: Antonio Caso’s Theory of Aesthetic Intuition,” at the 55th Annual Meeting of the Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy, Salt Lake City, Utah in 2016.

GRADUATE STUDENTS SUCCEED

Four of the Philosophy Department’s master’s degree students successfully defended their theses. Congratulations to our graduates: Timothy Eyrich, Luciano Molina, Jason Rines, and Ashley Williams.

SULLIVAN RECEIVES AWARD

Shannon Sullivan’s book Good White People: The Problem with Middle-Class White Anti-Racism was awarded the 2016 Society of Professors of Education Outstanding Book Award. She also presented the Jerry Jackson Lecture in the Humanities at Western Carolina University on November 3, 2016. Dr. Sullivan spoke on “Good White People,” the subject of her acclaimed book.

Her research offers a theoretical, practical instrument for understanding and finding new ways to address white privilege. The book outlines four ways that well-intentioned middle-class white people seek to establish their anti-racism, documenting how these can distance and distract people from addressing systemic problems.

Sullivan’s discussion was part of the Jerry Jackson Lecture in the Humanities series. Her talk was co-sponsored by the Honors College, Intercultural Affairs and the Department of Philosophy and Religion.

SOUFFRANT EDITS BOOK


He also edited A Future without Borders?: Theories and Practices of Cosmopolitan Peacebuilding. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2016. This is an edited collection that explores contemporary links between cosmopolitanism and peacebuilding. The publisher says, “A Future without Borders (FWB) offers an explanation of why the recent, but by now distant, movements of the “Occupy Wall Street” activists have repeated themselves across the globe. The book demonstrates some of the processes inherent to an adapting cosmopolitanism (a call for civility, a call for Justice, a call for a collective responsibility or accountability) that is not individualistic in nature.”

SERPA CONFERENCE DRAWS ATTENDEES

SERPA (Southeastern Roundtable on Philosophy of the Americas) welcomed nine presenters to UNC Charlotte’s main campus in its second annual conference. SERPA will meet annually to provide an informal, helpful atmosphere for presenting work-in-progress in the areas of American/the Americas and pragmatist philosophy. SERPA attendees came from across the country, including the nation’s capital.
RASMUSSEN CO-EDITS JOURNAL

Lisa Rasmussen co-edited an issue of The Journal of Medicine and Philosophy on ethics expertise in clinical ethics consultation and published “Clinical Ethics Consultants are not Ethics Experts - But They do Have Expertise” in The Journal of Medicine and Philosophy. The Journal of Medicine and Philosophy is the scholarly journal in bioethics and the philosophy of medicine.

From the journal: “Its contributors and focus are international, addressing bioethical concerns across the world. The journal’s concerns range from clinical bioethics to studies in the philosophy of medicine such as explorations of the nature of concepts of health and disease, as well as the character of medical explanation.”

DEPARTMENT SUPPORTS OUTSPOKEN

Samra Habib, a multimedia journalist and visual activist whose work examines Islam through a queer lens, presented the OutSpoken talk this November, co-sponsored by the Department of Philosophy. The event is an annual speaker series that brings to campus LGBTQ+ identified speakers to address issues relevant to the community. This year was the 10th year of the series. Habib’s photography project, Just me and Allah, documents the experiences of queer Muslims around the world. Students including some from the department also met with Habib for a roundtable before the larger public event.

STUDENTS SUPPORT COMMUNITY WITH ‘DAY OF THE DEAD’ EFFORTS

Over 400 community members attended a Day of the Dead celebration, with participation by graduate students of the fall 2016 Latin American Thought seminar. Charlotte-based artist Rosalia Torres-Weiner worked with the students, who helped construct the materials for the community altars. Many attendees were families with young children, who came to LACA Projects, a Latin American contemporary art gallery and studios located near Bryant Park.

The students also read Regina Marchi’s book Day of the Dead in the USA: The Migration and Transformation of a Cultural Phenomenon (Rutgers 2009). To analyze what they were learning, the students wrote and published large bilingual prints of introductory information about the celebration, created an altar in memory of recently-deceased Mexican singer/songwriter Juan Gabriel, and created and performed a brief bilingual theatrical piece for the event, says Andrea Pitts, philosophy professor.

UNC Charlotte instructor Susana Cisneros of the Department of Languages and Culture Studies also facilitated the participation of a number of UNC Charlotte undergraduate students at the event.
Phillip McReynolds directed a successful “Existentialism in Paris” study abroad course during spring break. The course sought to introduce students to French existentialism and to help them understand the historical and political circumstances in Paris following WWII that helped give birth to French existential philosophy. He will lead a second section of the course in spring 2017.

From the course description, “Coined by Jean-Paul Sartre in the 1940s, the term “existentialism” fundamentally – and somewhat infamously – means that existence precedes essence. Human beings create the “essence” of humanity in and through their choices; there is no natural or God-given form of humanity to which they must confirm. As a result, human freedom and responsibility, which often are accompanied by bad faith as people avoid their freedom, are central components of human existence. Co-developed by Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir and critically modified by Franz Fanon and Albert Camus, French existentialism influenced many philosophers, scholars, and artists in the 20th Century and continues to be an important influential theory today.”


Dr. James was also a speaker at the EMP PopCon in Seattle, and participated in a roundtable on her book Resilience & Melancholy at the philoSOPHIA meeting in Denver. The book is nominated for IASPM-US’s Woody Guthrie Prize. The prize recognizes the best academic book in popular music studies. Dr. James was elected to the executive committee of IASPM-US (International Association for Study of Popular Music).

In November 2016, she presented at the “Afrofuturism and Social Justice” symposium, which brought together the artistic and activist concerns of Afrofuturism. She joined Detroit-based activist and writer Adrienne Maree Brown and filmmaker M. Asli Dukan.

Afrofuturism is a global phenomenon in Black cultural expression in Black literature, film, music and graphic arts.


Gordon Hull is spearheading two speaker series for the Center for Professional and Applied Ethics. One centers on the theme “Being Muslim in America,” funded by a grant from the Chancellor’s Diversity Challenge Fund. The other focuses on precision medicine, in a continuation of an initiative started last year and funded through a grant from the North Carolina Biotechnology Center.


In June 2016, he commented on a paper “The Reputation Engine,” by Julie Cohen, Georgetown Law. at the annual Privacy Law Scholars Conference in Washington, DC.

The Center for Professional and Applied Ethics hosted the second annual SEPOT (Southern Ethics and Philosophy of Technology) conference in collaboration with Virginia Tech on Sept. 10, 2016.