



# PHILOSOPHY

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## Introduction

As we greet the friends of the philosophy department, this newsletter highlights some of our accomplishments this past year. The department thought it timely to refocus its ideas about practicing philosophy today. We encourage you to read the department's full statement concerning its commitment to inclusion:

<https://philosophy.uncc.edu/practicing%20philosophy%20today>

In our statement, and here in short, the department reiterates its commitment "to the robust inclusion and the epistemic and existential partnership of people who historically have been and often still are excluded from philosophical discourse: ... and [to] all other vulnerable populations." Our collective commitment also encourages our students to understand that "[p]hilosophical knowledge is incomplete and inadequate if it does not engage with and include these standpoints."

## The Department Grows

The philosophy department is delighted to welcome two new full-time faculty members this year. **Dr. Ruth Groenhout** is Distinguished Professor of Healthcare Ethics, specializing in bioethics, ethical theory, and feminist philosophy. Her publications include *Bioethics: A Reformed Look at Life and Death Choices* (2009), *Transforming Care: A Christian Vision of Nursing Practice* (2005), *Connected Lives: Human Nature and an Ethics of Care* (2004), and *Feminism, Faith Philosophy* (2003). Dr. Groenhout currently is working on a monograph that analyzes social structures in medicine from the perspective of an ethics of care. **Dr. Elisabeth Paquette** joins us as Assistant Professor of Women's and Gender Studies and Philosophy. She specializes in feminist philosophy, queer theory, decolonial and critical race studies, social and political philosophy, and 20th century continental philosophy. Dr. Paquette's dissertation *From Indifference to Difference* critically examined theories of emancipation in the work of Sylvia Wynter and Alain Badiou. Her article on Badiou and Julia Kristeva recently was published in *Badiou Studies*, and she currently is working on constructions of embodiment in the feminisms of Simone de Beauvoir and Monique Wittig.

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UNC CHARLOTTE

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

The Department of Philosophy

## Communal Outreach

### SERPA

The Southeast Roundtable on Philosophy of the Americas (SERPA) has now met for the last three years. It has assembled scholars on working on American philosophy writ large. It served as a wonderful regional venue to showcase work from under-represented sectors of the discipline. It happens to also be an opportunity to present our program to other sympathetic colleagues and consider, by their participation and presence, potential opportunities for our students as they consider their advanced degrees in the field.

### Student/Alumnae Exposure

Ash Williams (UNCC MA, '15) was recognized as one of Charlotte's 2017 "30 under 30" class. As a member of the 2017 class, Ash is acknowledged through their work, activism, and conscientiousness as one of the young Charlotteans improving the status of Charlotte today. Ash also received their BA in Philosophy in 2014.

<https://philosophy.uncc.edu/news/ash-williams-makes-charlottes-30-under-30-list>

Two of our current graduate students, Camilla Cannon and Maggie Castor, spearheaded a successful effort to bring to campus a chapter of the multi-institutional network of scholars "Minorities and Philosophy" (MAP). The group works to uplift the voices of underrepresented persons in philosophy. In its inaugural semester, the group has organized three "chats" with faculty and students this past fall. Its plans are to facilitate an understanding of marginalized persons in professional philosophy through colloquia, brown bag lunches and film screenings and discussions. We wish them well!

## Faculty Activities

### Robin James

In Spring 2017, Robin James lectured at the NYU Music Department Colloquium, the philosophy colloquium at LaSalle College, and the Aesthetics Working Group at the College of Charleston. She was the opening keynote speaker of the International Association for Popular Music Studies Biannual International Conference in Kassel, Germany, in June 2017. She published some works in *SoundingOut!* and *Real Life*. She invited Jennifer Lynne Stoeber to discuss her new book, *The Sonic Color Line*, in her Spring seminar on "Theories of Sound and Music." She is finishing her book *The Sonic Episteme* for Duke University Press and is expected to present a series of lectures in England and Wales in late November; more specifically she will address audiences at the University of Cardiff, the University of Sussex, and Goldsmith's.

### Phillip McReynolds

In spring 2017, Phillip McReynolds conducted his second study-abroad trip to help students live the Paris of early French existentialism. The program is back by popular demand. The next experience will take place in the spring of 2018.



### Trevor Pearce

Trevor Pearce's "'Protoplasm Feels': The Role of Physiology in Peirce's Evolutionary Metaphysics," has been accepted for publication at *HOPOS: The Journal of the International Society for the History of Philosophy of Science*. The article attempts to explain why Charles Sanders Peirce's evolutionary metaphysics would not have seemed strange to its original 1890s audience and argues that Peirce's discussions should be understood in the context of contemporary evolutionary and physiological speculations, many of which were featured in late-1880s issues of *Open Court*, sister journal to *The Monist*.

Trevor also received a \$153,327.00 NSF Grant to support his research for a book on the American pragmatists and late-nineteenth-century biology. He will show that 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. He is drawing from both published writings from the period as well as extensive archival evidence to make a case for pragmatism.

## Elisabeth Paquette

Elisabeth Paquette conducted The Feminist Decolonial Politics Workshop, about which she says that it “was a great success in May 2017. . . . From UNC Charlotte, we had participants from the Departments of Philosophy, English, and Geography as well as the Women and Gender Studies program. Participants also came from across the US and Canada. We studied the work of Sara Ahmed.”

The workshop was supported by the Chancellor's Diversity Grant, the Department of Philosophy, and the Center for Professional and Applied Ethics. In its 2018 edition, The Feminist Decolonial Politics Workshop will be supported once again by a Chancellor's Diversity grant. Information is available on the website: <https://decolonialthoughtworkshop.wordpress.com/>



## Eddy Souffrant

Eddy Souffrant published “The Renewed Case for Business Ethics: Ethics and Capitalism”, *International Journal of Management and Business*, Volume 7, No. 2, Winter 2016, pp. 110-129. The article explores some foundational issues lodged at the intersection of Ethics and Capitalism to make the case that a disregard for social responsibility is an oversight, even if at times an intentional oversight.

He has a forthcoming chapter titled “Hospitality, Identity, and Cosmopolitanism: Antidotes to the Violence of ‘Othernesses’”, in the collection *Handbook of Pacifism and Nonviolence*, Routledge. The chapter attempts to disentangle the violence that is embedded in nationalism. It proposes cosmopolitanism as a promoter of a global peace. The restrictive political philosophy of nationalism cannot take hold without the contribution of the foreigner. It argues that Nationalism is either internally inconsistent or willingly mistreats the foreigner, as the emblematic other.

Souffrant is also under contract with Rowman and Littlefield for the manuscript *Global Development Ethics: A Critique of Global Capitalism*.

He has received a Chancellor's Diversity Challenge Fund for a film series that explores the dialogue of Philosophy and Asian Culture (\$2,500).

He has presented two papers: “On the Possibility of Social Sustainability, (Revisited)”, at the 24th Annual Conference of the Society for Philosophy in the Contemporary World, Estes Park, CO, July 30 – August 4, 2017 and “Business Ethics, Revisited” (an extension of the article mentioned above), at the International Research Seminar in Management and Corporate Social Responsibility, IAE Lyon, École Universitaire de Management, Université Jean Moulin, Lyon 3, Lyon, France, in January 2017.

## Lisa Rasmussen

Lisa Rasmussen helped conduct a webinar summer workshop, funded by NSF, titled "Filling the 'Ethics Gap' in Citizen Science Research." It brought together philosophers, research ethicists, community participants, environmental justice activists, science and technology scholars, and citizen science practitioners together to identify pressing ethical issues in the growing field of Citizen Science. She and others will soon publish a group of papers in a special issue of *Citizen Science: Theory and Practice*, an online, open-access journal published by the Citizen Science Association.

## Ruth Groenhout

Ruth Groenhout published "Beauvoir and the Biological Body" in the *Blackwell Companion to Simone de Beauvoir*. The compendium is the first Blackwell Companion volume to cover a female philosopher.

## Gordon Hull

Gordon Hull was invited this past summer to write a piece for the "Philosophical Salon," which is the LA Review of Books philosophy site:

<http://thephilosophicalsalon.com/is-your-healthy-lifestyle-bad-for-you/>

## Andrea Pitts

Andrea Pitts has published "Decolonial Praxis and Epistemic Injustice" in the *Handbook on Epistemic Injustice*, edited by Ian Kidd, Gaile Pohlhaus Jr., and José Medina, New York: Routledge, 2017. Pitts was recognized by Wright State University, Dayton, OH as their Women's History Month Scholar-in-Residence.



In 2017, Pitts also was a presenter at 9 Conferences: "Indigenismo and Education: Revisiting the Writings of Vasconcelos and Dewey," Panel on Decolonizing American Philosophy: Rethinking Race and Human Development, Annual Meeting of the Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy, Birmingham, AL "Counteremory and Critical Historiography: Resistant Imaginaries in Latin American Feminist Philosophy," Virginia Tech Philosophy Colloquium, Blacksburg, VA "Humanist Battles and Embattled Humanists: Neo-Interventionism, Neo-Pragmatism, and the Coloniality of Truth," Spindel Conference, 2017, Memphis, TN "Sanctuaries Then and Now: Historical Memory and the Prison-Industrial-Military Complex," Keynote Address, 2nd Latinx Philosophy Conference, New Brunswick, NJ "That Close and Contagious Death': Symptomatology, Sociogeny, and Structural Oppression," Roundtable on "Resistant Affects: On Building Active Intolerance against the Intolerable," Annual Meeting of philoSOPHIA: Affect and Social Justice, Boca Raton, FL "Trust and Truth-telling in Correctional Healthcare," Invited Symposium: Alternative Epistemologies, Central Division Meeting of the American Philosophical Association, Kansas City, MO.

"Reconstructing Racial Geographies in Philosophy of the Americas," 10th Annual Meeting of the American Philosophies Forum, Atlanta, GA, "Prison Abolition and Correctional Healthcare," Philosophy and Mass Incarceration, Yale University, New Haven, CT

Pitts was the subject of an article in the local Charlotte weekly publication, Creative Loafing. The article was titled "Trans and Queer in the Workplace: Andrea Pitts." Creative Loafing Charlotte. Jan. 2017.

Pitts hosted "Incarceration across the Americas: Transnational Perspectives on the Prison Industrial Complex and Globalization," Annual Bill Brown Conference, Latin American Studies, UNC Charlotte, 2017.



Participants of the Bill Brown Conference

## Other Notables

Nii Yartey and his initiative Nii Yartey Visual Arts (NVYA) presented a solo art exhibit titled “The Narratives Project” at the McGill Rose Garden in Charlotte (October 25 & 26). The project was a photo exhibit and discussion loosely based on Michel-Rolph Trouillot’s *Silencing The Past: Power and the Production of History*. Nii sought “to amplify the voices that have heretofore been excluded, marginalized, erased, or otherwise silenced in the process of creating governing narratives.” The Project was an illustration of how to engage in productive “societal conversations about woes and injustices.”

Kathleen Lowenstein (MA `17) is currently enrolled in the Philosophy PhD program at Michigan State University.

In October 2017, we welcomed a new addition to the philosophy department family. Our colleague Olivia Love-Dembovsky and her husband Ilan Dembovsky introduced us to Naomi. She is precious and is already reciprocating her parents’ love and care by sleeping through the night.



## Department at a Glance

**Daniel Boisvert, PhD.**, Philosophy of mind, logic.

**Ruth Groenhout, PhD.**, Bioethics, health care ethics.

**Gordon Hull, PhD.**, Philosophy of law and technology, continental philosophy.

**Robin James, PhD.**, Feminist theory, critical philosophy of race.

**Michael Kelly, PhD.**, Aesthetics, contemporary European philosophy.

**Phillip McReynolds, PhD.**, American philosophy, philosophy of film.

**Trevor Pearce, PhD.**, History and philosophy of science, American philosophy.

**Elisabeth Paquette, PhD.**, Feminist and queer theory, decolonial theory.

**Andrea Pitts, PhD.**, Philosophy of race and gender, critical prison studies.

**Lisa Marie Rasmussen, PhD.**, Research ethics, ethical theory.

**Mark Sanders, PhD.**, American philosophy, phenomenology.

**Eddy Souffrant, PhD.**, Africana philosophies, collective responsibility.

**Shannon Sullivan, PhD.**, Feminist philosophy, critical philosophy of race.

**Jayne Tristan, PhD.**, American philosophy, philosophy of science and technology.

**Olivia Love-Dembovsky**, Department Administrator



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