

PHILOSOPHY DEPARTMENT

WINTER 2010



**Congratulations to Professors Patricia and Paul Churchland
on their retirements!**

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*“Now we are not merely to
stick knowledge on to the soul:
we must incorporate it into
her; the soul should not be
sprinkled with knowledge but
steeped in it”.*

- Seneca



A Retrospective on 26 Years at UCSD
By Paul Churchland

David (Brink) suggested that Pat and I pen something brief, for the Newsletter, given our upcoming retirement later this Spring. In truth, much the same giddy amazement attends our leaving our two positions as characterized our original arrival to them. The doors then opened to us, both by the department and by the campus academic community at large, transformed our personal and intellectual lives forever. The accumulated legacy of the intervening years leaves us stunned, even now, by the many marvelous things that have happened. Allow us a brief summary of why we are still smiling from ear to ear.

The dept. that wooed us, in 1984, was already well-balanced in its ideological profile and decidedly gifted in its membership. We were proud, even chuffed, to be welcomed into it. It was also a profound pleasure to finally be back on the West Coast, after 20 years of purgatory Back East, in England, and on the snow-driven Great Plains. But change came quickly. Mark Wilson, a gifted philosopher of science, was pirated away by Chicago, and we soon acquired Pat and Philip Kitcher from Minnesota, Stephen Stich from Maryland, and eventually, Sandy Mitchell from Pittsburgh. Francis Crick had made Pat an Adjunct Professor at the Salk Institute, and we quickly made friends with the neurocomputationalist Terry Sejnowski, the psychologist V.S. Ramachandran, and many other local scholars. Those early years were a time of heady expansion on the campus as a whole, and we were lucky to participate in the formation of the interdisciplinary Cognitive Science Ph.D. Program, and indeed, in the founding of the current Cognitive Science Department itself. Inspired by that success, Jerry (Doppelt), Sandy, Philip, and I subsequently teamed up with our distinguished colleagues in History and Sociology to found the interdisciplinary Science Studies Ph.D. Program, a program that continues to thrive today. Being Chair of the dept. during that formative period was, for me, an (almost) unalloyed pleasure.

As the 90s dawned, however, financial woes gripped the campus, retirements took many departmental icons from us (Zeno Vendler, Ed Lee, Fred Olafson, Avrum Stroll, Henry Allison), Chicago lured Bob Pippin away, and Stich and the Kitchers were also lured back to their eastern roots. Later in that period, we even lost Nick Jolley to Syracuse. Fortunately, the people who remained, and the high quality of our philosophy graduate students, made being here a reliable pleasure; our own philosophical research was flourishing as never before (we'll spare you a summary); and in that period we did manage to convince David (Brink), Gila (Sher), Rick (Grush), and Michael (Hardimon) to join us. As well, the Administration wisely determined to help the department replace its many losses and regain its former glory. On the strength of such promises, Pat agreed to be Chair, and the following years saw a second great burst of hiring. Clark Glymour, Nancy (Cartwright), Bill (Bechtel), Jonathan (Cohen), Don (Rutherford), Eric (Watkins), Craig (Callender), Sam (Rickless), Dana (Nelkin), and Chris (Wuthrich) came in a steady rush, and the department's reputation shot back up again. With the recent arrivals of Monte (Johnson), Clinton (Tolley), and now Saba (Bazargan), we are once again made whole. We wouldn't trade this dept. for any other in the world.

And we won't. Except for summer holidays, Pat and I will remain in San Diego and continue our research and writing in your extended and uniquely valuable company. David has kindly promised us a joint office in the dept., as long as resources permit, and we will continue to haunt the dept.'s Friday colloquiums. There is too much here to ever walk away from. May your own time here at UCSD be as rewarding to you as ours has been to us.

A Farewell From David Brink

At the end of the 2009-10 academic year Professors Patricia and Paul Churchland will take retirement and assume emeritus status at UCSD. Pat and Paul came to UCSD from the University of Manitoba in 1984. In over two decades here, their research on the implications of the sciences, especially cognitive neuroscience, for traditional philosophical issues has had a huge impact on the profession and the Department. They have led the trend for empirically informed work in philosophy and a naturalistic conception of philosophy itself. They have been incredibly prolific and influential scholars, leaving their distinctive stamp on the profession. Pat's books include *Neurophilosophy* (1986), *The Computational Brain* (with Terence Sejnowski, 1994), and *Brain-Wise* (2002). Paul's books include *Scientific Realism and the Plasticity of Mind* (1979), *Matter and Consciousness* (1984 & 1988), *A Neurocomputational Perspective* (1989), *The Engine of Reason, the Seat of the Soul* (1995), and *Neurophilosophy at Work* (2007). Together, they contributed to *The Churchlands and their Critics* (1996) and wrote *On the Contrary* (1998). And there is more in the works Both have received numerous awards and served as Presidents of the Pacific Division of the American Philosophical Society. Pat was selected for one of the very prestigious MacArthur Foundation "genius" awards, only a few of which have been given to philosophers. Both have served as Chairs of the Department, and both hold endowed chairs – Pat holds a UC Presidential Chair, and Paul holds the Valtz Family Chair. At UCSD they helped establish interdisciplinary graduate programs in Cognitive Science and Science Studies. Through their research and teaching, both Pat and Paul have made UCSD a mecca for students and scholars working in philosophy and cognitive neuroscience. Though we will miss their presence in the Department, they plan to remain active professionally and split time between San Diego and their second home on Bowen Island, British Columbia. We expect to make regular Churchland sightings around the Department, and we may even be able to talk them into teaching the occasional course for us. For those who have not yet read the charming *New Yorker* article about them and their intellectual union, you may wish to do so here: <http://philosophy.ucsd.edu/news/macfarquhar.pdf>

Saba Bazargan successfully defended his PhD thesis titled, "Individual Responsibility for Collectively Committed Crimes" in December 2009. *Congratulation Saba!*

Nancy Cartwright has received a British Academy Research Development Award which gives her a year off to mount a research program on how better to use evidence to evaluate social policies.

Patricia Churchland gave a lecture on "Why Don't Scientist Like Free Will?" at the Society for Neuroscience's Annual meeting in Chicago this past October. She presented a seminar on the neuroscience behind moral decision-making which was discussed in the Kavli Newsletter (Vol. 2, Issue 3, 2009).

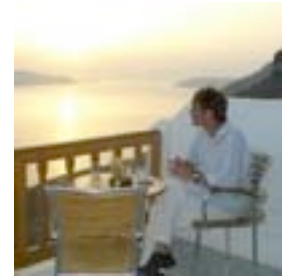


Jonathan Cohen has four new publications: "Special Sciences, Conspiracy, and the Better Best System Account of Lawhood" (with **Craig Callender**), *Erkenntnis* (in press); "Colors, Color Relationalism, and The Deliverances of Introspection" (with **Shaun Nichols**), *Analysis* (in press); "Color Relationalism and Color Phenomenology", in Bence Nanay (ed.) *Perceiving the World*. New York: Oxford University Press (forthcoming); and "Sounds and Temporality" *Oxford Studies in Metaphysics*. He also had three new talks: "Comments on Brogaard's 'An Alternative to Color Relationalism'," Eastern Division, American Philosophical Association, December 2009; "Special Sciences, Conspiracy and the Better Best System Account of Lawhood" (with **Craig Callender**), Pitt-Paris II: Emergence and Reduction in the Sciences, December 2009; and "Computation and the Ambiguity of Perception," UC, Irvine, October 2009. He will be giving talks at the UC

Riverside Epistemology and Philosophy of Psychology Workshop Series in April 2010, and at UNAM in Mexico City in May 2010.

Gerald Doppelt presented a paper on scientific realism to the Australian Association of Philosophy, a metaphysics of science conference in Sydney, Australia, and the European Philosophy of Science Association. He also presented papers on self-respect, social justice, and political liberalism to political theory groups at the Australian National University, the University of Amsterdam, and Goethe University in Frankfurt. He will be presenting a paper on this topic to the Midwest Political Science Association in Chicago, April 2010.

Monte Johnson has recently published two papers: "Spontaneity, Democritean Causality and Freedom" in *Elenchos* XXX (2009); and "The Aristotelian Explanation of the Halo" in *Apeiron* XLII, a journal for ancient science and philosophy (2009). He also delivered two papers in England during the Summer of 2009, both of which build on the projects resulting in the two recent publications. The first, at a conference on Lucretius at the University of Manchester, concerned the role of the concept of "spontaneity" in the physics and ethics of the Latin didactic poet of Epicureanism. The second, at a conference on teleology at the University of Exeter, presented an interpretation of Aristotle's method of scientific explanation in mathematical, reductionistic and mechanistic terms. The organizers of the conferences are planning to anthologize and publish the conference papers. Reprints of the recent publications can be found on Monte's homepage: ucsd.academia.edu/MonteJohnson.



Samuel Rickless was awarded the Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Award by the Chancellor's Associate Faculty Committee, for 2009-2010.



Avrum Stroll has published two books in the last two years, both published by Roman and Littlefield (New York). The first is a joint publication with **A. P. Martinich** of the University of Texas in Austin, *Much Ado About Non-Existence: Fiction and Reference* (2007). Another volume called *Informal Philosophy* was published in 2009. In addition to these books, he has published some papers in this period including; "Wittgenstein and the Dream Hypothesis," *Philosophia* (2009); "A Defense of Same Sex Marriage," *Public Affairs Quarterly* (2009); "Metaphysics Revivified," in *The Routledge Companion to Metaphysics* (2009); "Searle's Philosophy and Chinese Philosophy," in *Constructive Engagement* (2008); and "Richard Popkin and Philosophy Made Simple" in *Essays in Honor of Richard Popkin* (2008). He also reviewed a book, *Wittgenstein and Analytic Philosophy* in *Philosophical Quarterly* (forthcoming 2010). In 2009 he gave talks at UC Riverside, the University of Miami, Florida, University of Nevada, Reno and Luther College.

FACULTY NEWS

Christian Wüthrich has a paper in Philosophy of Science titled "Challenging the Spacetime Structuralist" which appeared in the December 2009 issue. He co-organized the Geneva Summer School in the Philosophy of Physics in July 2009 where he gave three lectures. Also in summer, he gave talks at the Joint Session of the Aristotelian Society and the Mind Association as well as at the British Society for the Philosophy of Science Annual Conference, both at the University of East Anglia in Norwich (UK). In October, he went on another European tour, giving talks at different institutions in Paris, the University of Utrecht, the University of Hanover and at the Second European Philosophy of Science Association meeting in Amsterdam.



POST DOC NEWS



Elias Okon finished his PhD in Physics in 2007 at UNAM (Mexico City) working on a particular approach to quantum gravity, the long-sought theory that will combine general relativity and quantum mechanics. After graduation he accepted a postdoctoral position at the Department of Applied Mathematics at the University of Waterloo where he became interested in the challenging conceptual problems getting in the way of a quantum-gravitational unification. As a result of his interest in foundational questions, he decided to join UCSD's Department of Philosophy as a postdoc in order to be able to commit himself fully to the investigation of such topics and "to benefit from the amazing local intellectual atmosphere". He states he will have the privilege to be around until August 2010.

The project he is working on here at the department is conceived as a collaborative endeavor between physics and philosophy. It focuses on particular conceptual problems in the overlap of the quantum and gravitational domains. Due to the complexity of the problem involved, the generality and accuracy of philosophical thinking seems well suited to assist physics in the clarification of such fundamental aspects. After all, many important breakthroughs in physics have occurred hand in hand with philosophical work on foundational matters.

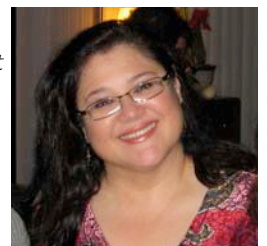
In particular, he has been exploring with **Professor Craig Callender** alleged conflicts between the equivalence principle, a core concept in general relativity, and quantum mechanics. The equivalence principle, however, is a complicated subject since there are almost as many formulations of it as there are authors writing about it. Their first task then is to clarify the interconnections between different versions, and to organize the messy literature on the subject by showing that different authors reach different conclusions, often the case in the affair, because different equivalence principles are at stake. We are also interested in uncovering *meaningful* clashes between the quantum and the gravitational. Such conflicts would certainly shed light on the status of the geometrical character of gravity in the quantum domain.



STAND FOR LESS
REMEMBER TO GO GREEN

STAFF NEWS

Congratulations to Nancy Guerrero for her promotion to Undergraduate Student Affairs Officer! Nancy replaces Nina Cooper and is responsible for all Philosophy Undergraduate Affairs. Well done Nancy!



GRADUATE NEWS

Amy Berg was awarded a Jacob K. Javits Fellowship from the US Department of Education.

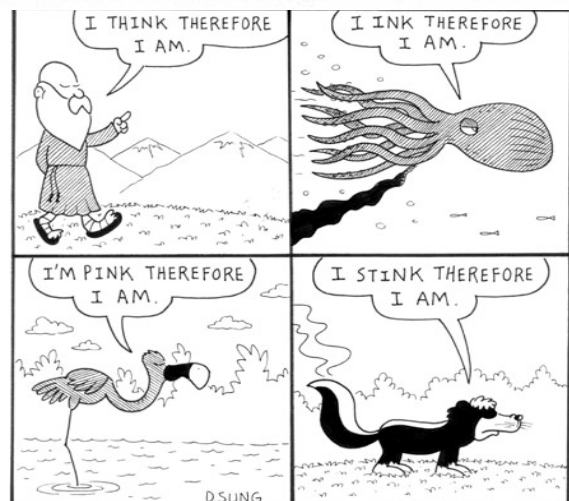
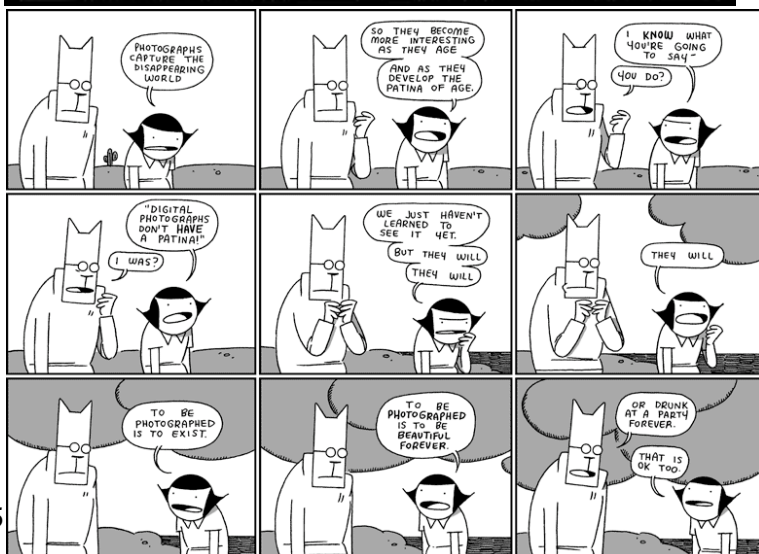
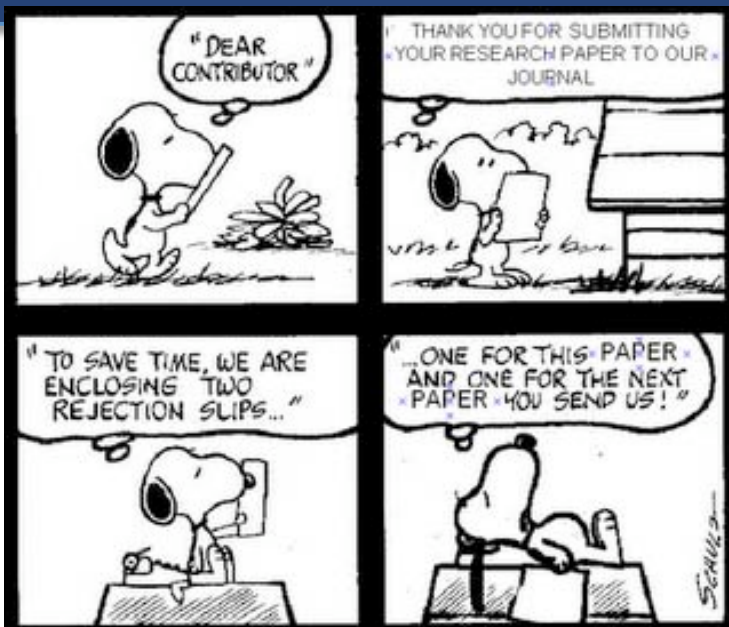
Nina Brewer-Davis defended her dissertation on November 30, 2009. She also presented a paper in October titled, "*Political Obligation through Conversation*," at the Northwest Philosophy Conference held in Oregon, October 2009.

Mitchell Herschbach presented a paper titled, "*Mirroring is Not Always Simulation*" at the Pacific APA Division meeting in San Francisco, March 31, 2010.

Charlie Kurth presented a symposium paper titled "*Fashion Models and Moral Realists*" at the APA Central Meeting in Chicago, February 19, 2010. He also presented his paper "*Unity Relations and the Metaphysics of Color*" at the Society for Exact Philosophy in Missouri, March 2010.

Jacob Stegenga's book review of Marcel Weber, "*Philosophy of Experimental Biology*", has appeared in print by Cambridge University Press. He has a new paper, "*Robustness, Discordance, and Relevance*" which appeared in the *Philosophy of Science* February 2010 issue. He presented a lecture titled "*Varieties of Evidential Experience*" at the UCSD Science Studies Colloquia, November 2010.

PHILOSOPHY COMICS



INTUITIONS JOURNAL

VOL. VII, *An Undergraduate Journal of Philosophy*



CALL FOR PAPERS

The editors are looking for any philosophical papers that are well written, well-organized, well-argued, and do more than simply summarize. Defense, criticism, and adjudication of other works are the most common submissions. Open to all undergraduates from any major.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION EXTENDED:

April 12, 2010

For more information, contact Ryan Bennett at rbennett@ucsd.edu

Philosophy Club

Meet other Philosophy Majors! Students meet on a weekly basis in the department lounge to discuss topics from class or topics of their choice.

For meeting days and times, please contact Mason Westfall at mrwestfa@ucsd.edu.

Undergraduate Philosophy Conference

Selected Papers for the Intuitions: Undergraduate Journal of Philosophy will be presented at the Philosophy Undergraduate Conference on:

Wednesday, May 19

2:00 – 5:00 pm

Seminar Room, HSS 7077

Reception to Follow

Please RSVP to Nancy Guerrero at: neguerrero@ucsd.edu.



Julius Syvanen will be presenting his paper "*Markets, Motives, Public Welfare: Defending Choice Architecture*" at the 2010 Undergraduate Ethics Symposium hosted by the Janet Prindle Institute for Ethics at Depauw University in Indiana from April 8-10. The paper defends public policy prescriptions enabled by recent advancements in behavioral economics from potentially unforeseen criticisms.

Freshman Seminar Spring Quarter 2010

PHIL 87 TIME TRAVEL AND ITS PARADOXES, Christian Wüthrich

Have you ever wondered whether one can travel back in time to kill one's grandfather before he can sire any offspring? If so, this seminar is for you. We will discuss the logic, the philosophy and the physics of time travel and of time machines.

Coming This Fall

PHIL 87 INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY AND ITS LIMITS, Gerry Doppelt

This freshman seminar will critically examine JS Mill's classic defense of individual liberty as the basis of legitimate government in *ON LIBERTY*. We will then explore the implications of Mill's view for current debates over the attempts to use the law to regulate pornography, racial hate speech, and recreational drug use. We will read *ON LIBERTY* and four essays that seek to apply or criticize Mill's theory in light of current controversies.

Fun Times at the Philosophy Department



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