

NEWS FROM ALUMNI

Many thanks to those of you who liked our Facebook page. Keep your comments coming! (Simply search “Oberlin Philosophy” on Facebook). If you’re not a Facebook fan but would like to share news, please email the newsletter editor: Katherine.Thomson-Jones@oberlin.edu.



Joseph Andriano '02 was appointed assistant professor of law and director of the Program on Alternate Dispute Resolution at Clarkson University’s School of Business in Potsdam, N.Y. Along

with teaching several classes on law, he is applying his philosophy degree by teaching a class on business ethics, with a particular focus on the application of Kant, Mill, and Aristotle to this field. Joe and his partner, Sarah, bought a house in Crary Mills, N.Y., where they live with their cats, Louie and Ella, and their llamas, Dolly and Daisy.

Marcia Baron '76 returned from the University of St. Andrews, where she held a professorship for two years before deciding, with a somewhat heavy heart, to return for family reasons to her position at Indiana University. She and her husband, Fred Schmitt, are professors of philosophy at IU. Their son is a graduate student at MIT, also in philosophy. She enjoys stopping in Oberlin when time permits, hearing from Oberlin friends, and also meeting younger Oberlinians such as Taylor Rogers, a graduate student in philosophy, and Matt Carlson, a professor at Wabash College (with a PhD from

continued on page 5

A Note from the Editor

by Kate Thomson-Jones

As philosophers, we know how difficult it is to understand the nature of and our relation to time. I cannot help but hesitate, therefore, in beginning this note with a remark about the seemingly rapid passage of time since the last newsletter. This is particularly in light of a recent book by one of our alumni. In *Objective Becoming* (2014), Brad Skow '98 argues that time does not pass in the way we commonly think. This is because time is part of the general structure of the universe, not something moving around inside it. Nevertheless, even if time does not flow like a river, events still occur; “things change,” as Brad readily admits. This year’s newsletter is a record of just a few of those changes and events affecting our faculty, students, and alumni.

As usual, I begin our newsletter with a brief summary of how the department has fared over the past academic year. In the fall, we were delighted to welcome Dorit Ganson back from medical leave. She was greatly missed in all of her many roles—as teacher, mentor, colleague, and departmental chair. We were also delighted to welcome two new members of the department. Jonathan (Jon) Shaheen joined us upon completing his PhD at the University of Michigan. Jon accepted an OKUM postdoctoral fellowship—the Oberlin-Kalamazoo University of Michigan Mellon postdoctoral fellowship established for the purposes of giving Michigan doctoral graduates experience teaching at a liberal arts college. Owen King joined us from Ohio State University while still working on his doctoral thesis in order to help the department meet the demand for introductory philosophy courses. The reason we needed Owen to help us meet this demand was that the most senior member of our department, Peter McNerney, began a phased retirement this year by switching to part-time teaching. It is with great sadness that we contemplate Peter’s retirement, but we are grateful that, with the phased plan, we have a little more time to draw on his wise counsel in departmental matters.

With the addition of Owen and Jon’s energy and interests, we were able to offer a particularly rich selection of courses this past year. In the fall, we offered a record six sections of introductory philosophy courses, with Owen teaching two sections of Problems in Philosophy, Kate teaching two sections of The Nature of Value, Martin teaching a section of Knowledge and Reality, and Jon teaching another section of the same course. At the 200 level, we offered courses in Existentialism, Deductive Logic, Modern Philosophy, Feminist Philosophy, and the Philosophy of Mind. Tim Hall also led an advanced seminar in the Philosophy of Law. In the spring, we offered five more sections of introductory philosophy courses, taught by Owen, Tim, and Todd. The higher-level courses offered were Dorit’s course in Reason and Argument, Peter’s course in 20th-Century Continental Philosophy, as well as courses in the Philosophy of Science, Biomedical Ethics, and the Philosophy of Music. There were two seminars, one led by Todd in the Philosophy of Perception, and the other led by Jon on the

continued on page 2

EDITOR'S NOTE, cont.

Continental Rationalists in Early Modern Philosophy.

After last year's highly successful 42nd Oberlin Colloquium in Philosophy, this was a year for a speaker series, expertly run by Martin. The series included six top-notch philosophers. In the fall, we hosted Andrea Woody from the University of Washington and Jerrold Levinson from the University of Maryland. Their talks were on scientific explanation and expressiveness in jazz, respectively. We also cosponsored, along with the departments of Africana Studies and Politics, a talk by Paul Taylor from Pennsylvania State University on the possibility of a post-racial society. In the spring, we hosted Anna-Sara Malmgren from Stanford University, who spoke about inferential justification; Heather Logue from

the University of Leeds, who spoke about perceptual experience and representation; and Patricia Blanchette from the University of Notre Dame, who spoke about models in geometry and logic.

This year's Nancy K. Memorial Lecture, organized by Tim, was given by Michael Huemer from the University of Colorado at Boulder. Professor Huemer's well-attended talk was titled "Devil's Advocates: On the Ethics of Unjust Legal Advocacy."

As the year comes to an end, we wish Jon the best of luck in his future endeavors, both philosophical and fatherly (see his news to follow). We wish Owen the best of luck in the defense of his doctoral thesis, and we look forward to welcoming him back to teach in the fall. We also look forward to welcoming another new

colleague: Tina Botts will be joining us as a postdoctoral fellow with the Consortium for Faculty Diversity. Tina has broad research and teaching interests, including in the philosophy of law, the philosophy of race, and feminist philosophy. Another exciting year ahead!

Here you will find more news from individual faculty members, alumni, and graduating students, as well as information about student achievements and specific departmental events.

Perhaps, however, you find yourself wondering, are past events real? Brad Skow says yes, they are just inaccessible, located in another part of spacetime. Real or not, we hope the events described here remind you of your place in the Oberlin philosophical community.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS



Philosophy majors (from left) Sky Kalfus, Ariel Miller, and Ari Benjamin

Philosophy Majors Committee

Ari Benjamin, Anna Field, Vernon Fleming, Sky Kalfus, Robert Merges, Ian Poper

Oberlin Feminist Philosophers

An update from Sky Kalfus: "This year, Oberlin's Feminist Philosophers met weekly to have spirited discussions on a number of topics, including but not limited to the viability of feminist progress in a market economy, the metaphysics of structural injustice, and (briefly) whether or not it would be advantageous to kill all men. We look forward to meeting again next year, and we encourage all philosophically-minded women and non-binary folk to join us!"

Essay Prizes

The Christopher P. Dahl Essay Prize is given for the best undergraduate essay in any area of philosophy, and the Rhoden Essay Prize is given for the best undergraduate essay in the areas of ethics, medical ethics, or the philosophy of law.

David Myers is the winner of this year's Dahl Prize, and Waylon Cunningham is the winner of this year's Rhoden Prize. Congratulations David and Waylon on your outstanding work!



David Myers (right) in philosophical conversation with Jon Shaheen



CONGRATS 2015 GRADS!

Philosophy Majors:

Anna Field
Alexander Hilden
Sky Kalfus
Austin Little
Connor McCleskey
Alexander Mitts
Samuel Wappler

Philosophy Minors:

Emma Charno
Esther Choi
Travis Ivy
Damien Kirk
Samuel Potel
Oliver Ramirez
Jay Rosen
Lucien Swetschinski

FACULTY NEWS

Dorit Ganson: After taking a semester of leave for breast cancer treatment, I was grateful to return to teaching this past fall and to finishing my last year as chair of the philosophy department. I chaired a session at the Central APA in the spring. A highlight of the trip was running into my former student Matt Carlson and hearing that he had landed a tenure-track job in philosophy at Wabash College.

Todd Ganson: This year my research took an unexpected turn, focusing on the sensory capacities of plants. This work resulted in a new paper with Ben Bronner, a former Oberlin student in philosophy and neuroscience. I have two further collaborative projects lined up, one with Neil Mehta (Yale-NUS College) and another with Nico Orlandi (UC Santa Cruz). And after a long break from research in the history of philosophy, I am presenting a new paper on Aristotle's theory of perception at a conference in Sweden. This past year I enjoyed teaching an all-new version of my Philosophy of Mind course devoted to foundational questions in cognitive science. And next year I am introducing a new first-year seminar titled Making Sense of the Senses.

Owen King: My first year teaching at Oberlin has been an exciting and enjoyable one. I taught three sections of Problems of Philosophy to enthusiastic students, most of whom were in their first or second year, and I think I may have managed

to recruit a few talented new philosophy majors. Meanwhile, I have been working to finish my doctoral dissertation at Ohio State University. My dissertation is about well-being and the different ways things can be good for a person. I focus especially on the underexamined relationship between well-being (how well a person is faring at a particular time) and the goodness of the person's life as a whole. I presented some of this work at the 2015 meeting of the Ohio Philosophical Association. The other main strand of my research is in applied ethics, especially about the ethical challenges raised by new computing technology (e.g., the limits of privacy, the nature of intellectual property, and the unpredictable consequences of technological advances). In the fall I presented a paper on software anti-features to computer programmers at the Columbus Code Camp. I will teach a course on Computing Ethics this summer at Ohio State before returning to Oberlin in the fall.

Peter McInerney: My teaching responsibilities were less demanding in the last academic year, since I taught only two courses, Existentialism and 20th Century Continental Philosophy. This comfortable schedule allowed me to devote more time and energy to research. My research concerns the interaction of scientific claims (from psychology, behavioral economics, and neuroscience) about the workings of human psychological systems with philosophical and commonsense conceptions of

these matters in ethics, practical reasoning, and philosophy of mind. I am particularly interested in the extent to which people can exercise conscious control over what happens in their own minds. I have written several articles concerning various ways in which reflective activity can affect automatic, non-reflective mental happenings. I am currently working on issues about the rationality of having specific plans for the longer-term future. My wife and I are adjusting to living with my daughter away at college (Dartmouth). Being able to Skype regularly makes this transition much easier. I regularly play tennis and run for exercise, and I still occasionally play basketball.

Jon Shaheen: Michelle, Theodore, and I came to Oberlin from Ann Arbor in August to take up a one-year postdoc, and we've really enjoyed our time here. In the fall, I taught a version of the Knowledge and Reality introduction, focusing mostly on metaphysics. I spent all of August and some of September reading as much Buddhist and Africana philosophy as possible in the service of diversifying the syllabus for that class. Thanks to some helpful colleagues down in the basement of Rice, I managed to figure things out in time. I spent the rest of the fall applying to jobs for next year (more on that below) and discovering how much Oberlin (and how little Elyria) has to offer. I particularly enjoyed having lunch with my students every week in a room of Stevie I dubbed 'Philosophy Land.' (I was

continued on page 4

FUTURE PLANS OF SOME OF OUR 2015 GRADUATES

Anna Field: My plan post-graduation is to spend June doing a solo renovation of a cabin in the Berkshires, and then go to Colorado to get my paragliding instructor's certification. Come September, I'm moving back to New York to pursue a career in publishing; hopefully I'll be able to revisit my time at Penguin and get an editorial job there! Then (possibly) comes the grad school applications. I'm also taking my rambunctious mini labradoodle to obedience school so she can get past her puppy phase.

Alexander Hilden: My plan is to go home to Minneapolis. I (tentatively) plan to work as a teacher/tutor. This could entail working for the Minnesota Homeschooler's Association, tutoring independently, or getting a master's degree in education following a 1.5 year program at the University of Minnesota, beginning next May.

Sasha (Alexander) Mitts: I'm planning to travel for the summer to visit family, work, and relax. In the fall I will most likely move to Chicago to work in affordable housing there.

FACULTY NEWS, cont.

going to make a Candy Land-style sign for the window, but for various reasons it never happened.) On the home front, Michelle somehow managed to feed 12-20 people once a week for much of the semester, as we had other visiting (and sometimes regular) faculty members and their families over for dinner and playtime. We took advantage of the January term to visit family in Florida and spend time in Ann Arbor.

In the spring, I taught a seminar on the Continental Rationalists (Descartes, Malebranche, Spinoza, and Leibniz) and their female critics (in my rendition, Princess Elizabeth, Margaret Cavendish, Anne Conway, and Damaris Masham) to five students. Philosophy Land lived on with the smaller and tighter-knit group, and we all learned a lot. I also took part in a Google Hangout-based reading group on Margaret Cavendish's *Observations upon Experimental Philosophy* with philosophers from around the country. While none of this had much to do with my official areas of research expertise, I also eventually submitted two papers on my dissertation research on explanation and the meaning of 'why' and 'because' to journals. Back on the home front, we are expecting our second son any day now [in early May], and I look forward to taking a rather extended paternity leave as we welcome him to the world.

Kate Thomson-Jones: In the fall I taught two sections of the Nature of Value, a

course I somehow never tire of teaching. I gave a paper on digital cinema at the British Society of Aesthetics annual meeting in Oxford and (on the same weekend!) a paper on digital images at the Aesthetics Research Centre at the University of Kent. In the spring, I taught a new collaborative version of Philosophy of Music with Jamie O'Leary from the musicology department in the Oberlin Conservatory of Music. This was a truly wonderful experience: I learned a great deal from my co-teacher, and I think the students had almost as much fun as Jamie and me. I gave the keynote address at the Pennsylvania State Universities meeting of the Interdisciplinary Association for Philosophy and Religious Studies (IAPRS). At the very end of the semester, I gave another talk, this one in the philosophy department at UC Irvine. Throughout the spring, I have been hard at work editing *Current Controversies in the Philosophy of Film* for Routledge. In February, I was pleased to see my entry on the philosophy of digital art appear in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/digital-art/>). I continue to work on my book about the digital arts, and I hope to get as much writing done this summer as possible before my first semester as department chair in the fall.

Setting aside research and teaching, however, the biggest event during this past year was our (Martin's and my) daughter Orla starting kindergarten in the fall. She

seems to have become a far more sophisticated and independent person since September, which I find both exciting and a little heart-wrenching.

Martin Thomson-Jones: This year I taught Knowledge and Reality (one of our introductory courses, focussing on metaphysics and epistemology), Deductive Logic, and Philosophy of Science. And I signed up to teach a new seminar next year: Happiness, Death, and the Meaning of Life. I only hope there's some interest in it. I traveled both eastwards and westwards to give talks this year. In September I was part of a panel on fiction and the sciences at the annual meeting of the British Society of Aesthetics in Oxford; it was perhaps the one and only time I'll ever speak at an aesthetics conference, and I enjoyed it very much. At the end of the year I spoke to the Department of Logic and Philosophy of Science at UC Irvine. Somewhat distractingly, on both occasions Kate and I were speaking at the same time in different buildings on the same campus. It was much nicer to co-present with Kate when we spoke as a couple as part of the Faculty FaithStories series here at Oberlin, doing our best to represent the exciting world of atheism (of differing varieties, which we carefully defined) to the broader community.

To read more about faculty research, please see our website: new.oberlin.edu/philosophy

2015 PHILOSOPHY DEPARTMENT OPEN HOUSE



During Commencement

Weekend each year, the department sponsors an open house to exchange fond farewells with graduating seniors while meeting their families. Thanks to Owen for capturing the event in images. *Far left: Martin Thomson-Jones, Sasha Mitts, Todd Ganson, and Dorit Ganson. Near left: Dorit Ganson, Anna Field, and Todd Ganson.*

ALUMNI NEWS, cont.

IU). While she misses Scotland, she says Bloomington is a pretty wonderful place, with even more free and excellent concerts than Oberlin(!), great cafes, and an artsy character. “And we have hills here. Oberlin philosophy majors interested in pursuing graduate work in philosophy are strongly encouraged to apply to IU’s PhD program!” she writes.

Kurt Beals ’02 returned to Oberlin in February at the invitation of the German department to give a joint presentation on poetry and translation with Max Kade Writer-in-Residence Anja Utler. Beals translated a book of Utler’s poetry, which was published in English under the title *engulf—enkindle* in 2010. While in Oberlin he was happy to run into Martin Thomson-Jones, whose classes he enjoyed while completing his philosophy major.

David Beidler ’78 writes: “After 35 years in the financial services business, I am happily ensconced in Woodstock, N.Y. I have had many philosophical exchanges over the years, but none more enjoyable than with Cody, my quarter horse.”



David Beidler ’78 with Cody

Katharine Cook ’59 writes: “I continue to be involved in citizen journalism, writing for the Pulitzer prize-winning *Pt. Reyes Light*; writing a garden column for our local website, West Marin Commons; and participating with the West Marin Carbon Project in helping to reduce global warming by sowing, distributing, and planting native perennial grasses that draw down carbon from the atmosphere. I am involved in sowing the seeds and

otherwise distributing the native flowering plants of the coastal prairie as described by Kat Anderson in her book *Tending the Wild*. We just finished [in early May] a wonderful weekend of the Geography of Hope Conference that brought together celebrities in the world of restoration work, such as Diana Beresford-Kroeger, for talks and seminars. The latter is sponsored by Pt. Reyes Books, who do an amazing job of bringing folks on the forefront of ecological restoration to our small town for annual conferences. Poetry reading and other work is available at www.cuke.com; put ‘cook’ in the search engine.”

Paul Curry ’99 writes: “I’m now working as a DevOps engineer in NYC. I live in Astoria with my partner. We are in negotiations over getting a dog.”

Jonathan Dinman ’80 was named chair of the Department of Cell Biology and Molecular Genetics at the University of Maryland. He is interested in how the exceptions to rules serve to define the rules. Accordingly, his research investigates how cells and viruses redefine the genetic code in order to expand their protein coding and regulatory repertoire. From this, we gain a deeper understanding of how the genetic decoding apparatus normally works, how its function can be subverted, and how defects in these processes can cause disease. The resulting insights provide platforms for new therapeutic strategies and bioengineering opportunities.

John Donaldson ’60 writes: “You might be interested to know that the grandfather of Sally Kerr Meyers ’61, who lives in Oberlin, was the chairman of the philosophy department back in the 1920s. My father, Class of 1927, was a philosophy major in his department. You may also be interested to know that the classes of 1959 and 1960 have alumni presidents who were philosophy majors—Bill Hall and me. I followed him in making some remarks at our reunion classes dinner this past May and pointed out to our classmates that it

was probably the first time they had ever been addressed by two philosophy majors in a row. However, Bill is distinguished by being a professional.”

Jay Garfield ’75, the Kwan Im Thong Hood Cho Temple Professor of Humanities, is on leave from Yale-NUS College in Singapore, where he has been head of studies in philosophy. He will spend a pleasant sabbatical at Smith College (whence he is on leave to be at Yale-NUS!) in the fall and will teach at Yale in the spring. He recently published *Engaging Buddhism: Why it Matters to Philosophy; Madhyamaka and Yogācāra: Allies or Rivals* (edited with Jan Westerhoff) and *The Moon Points Back: Logic, Analytic Philosophy and Buddhism* (edited with Kji Tanaka, Yasuo Deguchi and Graham Priest). *Moonpaths: Ethics and Emptiness (with the Cowherds)* will be out in October, and *Investigation of the Percept: Dignāga’s Ālambanāparikṣā and its Indian and Tibetan Philosophical Legacy* is under review (all with OUP). Jay is currently working with Nalini Bhushan on a book on Indian philosophy during the period of British occupation, a book on Hume’s *Treatise* (with which he first fell in love under the late Norman Care’s tutelage at Oberlin), and a project in Tibetan intellectual history. In April, Jay and Don Baxter ’76 appeared together in Singapore in a workshop on Hume’s philosophy.

Barry Goldensohn ’57 writes: “I went to grad school in English rather than philosophy and had a 42-year career teaching and writing. The principal teaching was at Goddard College, Hampshire College, Skidmore College, and the Iowa Writers Workshop. Our primary residence after retirement is a summer house in northern Vermont that is habitable only half the year, so we live in a variety of places for the rest of the year, among them London, Paris, and Berkeley, Calif. *The Hundred Yard Dash Man: New and Selected Poems* came out a year ago. Our granddaughter Ava Rose Prince is finishing her first year at Oberlin this year.”

continued on page 6

ALUMNI NEWS, cont.

Daniel Goode '57 writes: "I went to Cornell in 1958 with a Woodrow Wilson Fellowship to study with people like Norman Malcolm, David Sachs, Max Black, and others. I only stayed a year and became a composer and performer, eventually with an MA in music composition from Columbia. At Oberlin in my senior year, there was an Oxford-trained philosophical analysis professor, Cal Rollins, which was one reason I went to Cornell to continue that study, and especially of Wittgenstein with Malcolm. So of course I was interested in aesthetics then and now. I run and compose for my self-devised alternative orchestra, the Flexible Orchestra, as well as two other ensembles: the DownTown Ensemble (since '83) and Gamelan Son of Lion (I'm cofounder, not director). The Flexible Orchestra seeks to model the full symphony orchestra in 'miniature' by having only one section of the identical instruments, and several others as contrast. Total about 15 plus or minus. [Google flexible orchestra]. My blog has profited by my training in philosophy, making me at least a clearer conceptualizer and writer (<http://danielgoode.com/>). I've been writing thumbnail reviews of musical events that interested me."

Louis Grube '08 writes: "I am currently six months into a two-year clerkship with Justice William M. O'Neill on the Ohio Supreme Court. I advise the boss on a wide variety of legal issues, evaluate cases the court is considering taking in for review, and draft opinions. I regularly use my Oberlin instruction in logic, metaphysics, and philosophy paper-writing—a technical task not unlike court opinion writing."

Dale Jacquette '75 was awarded a \$375,000 research grant from the Swiss National Fund to finance philosophical study on "Ontology of Musical Works and Analysis of Musical Practices." The money will fund a new PhD student, yet to be identified, to work with Jacquette on metaphysics and music, and to support a postdoc student at Bern who is currently writing his

Habilitationsschrift on ontology of music with Jacquette. The package will also support two large conferences on ontology of music, one of which is expected to be coordinated with the Zentrum Paul

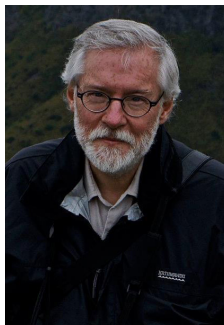
Klee in Bern. An Oberlin graduate in philosophy, Jacquette went on to complete his PhD at Brown University, and, after 22 years teaching at American universities, has been professor at Universität Bern, in Switzerland's capital city since 2008, where he is ordentlicher Professor für Philosophie (senior chair in philosophy) and director of the Abteilung Logik und theoretische Philosophie (Division for Logic and Theoretical Philosophy). Dale lives with his wife, Tina, in the Berne Umgebung.

Jon Kleinman '91 writes: "I work as an academic advisor at SUNY College at Old Westbury. I specialize in working with students who are pursuing degrees in the social sciences—psychology, sociology, and criminology. I'm also editor in chief of a new college publication titled *Unfettered Inquiry*. The fall 2015 issue will feature a cover story on diversity in the STEM fields."

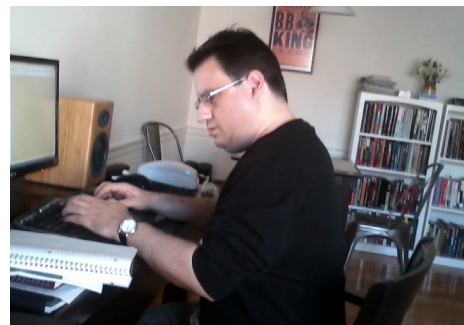
Chris Kleps '04 writes: "After seven years of practicing law, I am returning to Ohio State to pursue a PhD in sociology to become a law and sociology professor."

Singer/songwriter **Pamela Machala** '08 will release her sophomore album, *When I Get Home*, on June 16 and tour the West Coast to promote it. Details are at www.pamelamachala.com.

Tom Mayer '59 writes: "I graduated from Oberlin in 1959 with a major in philosophy. I subsequently got a doctoral degree in sociology at Stanford and



Dale Jacquette '75



Jon Kleinman '91

taught for 45 years first at the University of Michigan and then at the University of Colorado (Boulder). Since retiring from the University of Colorado, I have been working with the Middle East Collective of the Rocky Mountain Peace and Justice Center. We work for human rights and a just peace in the Middle East. Among other things, I maintain a political analysis blog for our collective, posting relevant progressive articles with commentary two or three times a week. We emphasize civility and intelligent discussion, but do not shrink from controversy. I would be happy to put any interested person on our distribution list. Just send me an email at thomas.mayer@colorado.edu."

Edward Mooney '62 writes: "I'll be happy to see my new book, *Excursions with Thoreau: Philosophy, Poetry, Religion*, arrive in late September. I taught for two years in Israel after retiring from Syracuse. I'm living now in Portland Maine. I spent 2013-14, the year commemorating the 200th anniversary of Kierkegaard's birth, reading papers at Dartmouth and Johns Hopkins, and—quite a treat—in Reykjavik, Villain, Frankfurt, and Tel-Aviv. I'm transitioning into a life of little teaching, more time for music, and friends and family."

Lisa Moses Leff '91 is associate professor of history at American University. She published *The Archive Thief: The Man Who Salvaged French Jewish History in the Wake of the Holocaust* (Oxford, 2015). She is married to fellow Obie Ben Leff '90; they live in Washington with their two kids.

ALUMNI NEWS, cont.



Ed Mooney '62

Michael Siniscalchi '07 and Jennifer
Figueroa Siniscalchi '07

Rebecca Whisnant '89

Send us
your news
via Facebook
or by email:
Katherine.
Thomson-
Jones@
oberlin.edu.

Taylor Rogers '12 finished her MA in philosophy at Indiana University, where she studied with Allen Wood and Marcia Baron (another Oberlin alum). She will transfer to Northwestern University this fall to finish her PhD. Taylor's research explores questions through a Kantian lens in aesthetics, Eastern philosophy, and feminism. She recently gave a paper at the Indiana Philosophical Association titled "The Moral Order of Commitment," in which she investigates the unconditional nature of certain moral commitments in light of basic human psychology. In addition to doing philosophy, Taylor plays music around the Chicago area with her partner, Sam Sharp '06, and teaches jump rope at a Chicago-based youth circus, CircEsteem. She will live in Oberlin this summer to complete a 500-hour yoga certification with Eric Stewart at Solaluna.

Brad Skow '98 writes: "My big news is that I published my book, *Objective Becoming*."

Michael Siniscalchi '07 and Jennifer

Figueroa Siniscalchi '07 (geology) have been happily married since April 2013. (He's her "Thinking Man," and she is his rock. Rock on!). With their loyal dog, Buster, they survived New Jersey and then New York before landing in New Haven, Conn., where Michael is pursuing a PhD in neuroscience at a very old university and Jen is busy fighting crime with the NHPD. In the spring, Michael was awarded a graduate research fellowship by the National Science Foundation, during which time he taught a seminar on bioethics (an element of the core neuroscience curriculum at Yale). His research is focused mainly on the neurophysiology underlying flexible decision making.

Rebecca Whisnant '89 is associate professor in the wonderfully diverse and welcoming philosophy department at the University of Dayton, where she also serves as director of women's and gender studies. When not doing feminist philosophy, she spends time with her spouse and 4-year-

old daughter, Maria, who recently asked "what IS truth, Mommy?"

Daniel Wikler '67 writes: "After Oberlin, I studied philosophy at UCLA, specializing in philosophy of language. I was hired by U. of Wisconsin, Madison, in 1975 and taught in the medical school and in the philosophy department for most of the next 25 years. During a fellowship year at Harvard in the mid-1990s, I became interested in global health issues, and in 1999 I moved to Geneva to join the World Health Organization as "senior staff ethicist." After a brief return to Wisconsin, I joined the faculty of the Harvard School of Public Health, which is my present job. I don't contribute to philosophy, but it is as a philosopher that I try to contribute to ethical debates in global and population health. My family: children Ruth and Ben (from my first marriage to Lynn McDonald '66, also a philosophy major), and Sam, now 13, in my current marriage (to Sarah Marchand, yet another philosopher)."

THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Programming in the Department of Philosophy relies significantly on contributions from alumni and friends. Gifts of every amount facilitate the growth and vitality of the study of philosophy at Oberlin for majors and students throughout the college. We hope you can make such a contribution. The following URL allows you to do so directly and online: www.oberlin.edu/giving. When you reach this page, click "Donate." When asked to "choose a designation," please choose **Departments** and then **Philosophy**. Thank you for your support. Your generous contributions enable us to sponsor events on and off campus, benefiting the entire Oberlin community!

OBERLIN PHILOSOPHY

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Timothy Hall

Owen King

Peter McNerney

Jonathan Shaheen

Martin Thomson-Jones

Katherine Thomson-Jones

Administrative Assistant: Karen Barnes

WE WANT TO KEEP IN TOUCH!

Please register for the TAPPAN Network, your new Alumni Online Community, and update your contact information so you can receive important communications from Oberlin and locate classmates and friends. Your unique alumni ID (required for initial login) can be found above your address on this newsletter. Access TAPPAN at <http://alumni.oberlin.edu>.