

NEWSLETTER

Dalhousie Department of Classics



A Masterful Graduation

On October 2, 2018, the Department of Classics celebrated the graduation of three of its Master's students: Jennie Selman, Matthew Vanderkwaak, and Nicholas Hatt. We watched them cross the stage at the Dalhousie convocation celebration, and then we carried the celebration into a luncheon. While we are sorry to see our graduates leave, we rejoice in their accomplishments and wish them the very best in their future endeavors.



PHOTOS: Top; the graduates with their families and the faculty. Bottom Left; a graduation selfie taken by Dr. O'Brien. Bottom Right; our three graduates (from left to right): Jennie Selman, Matthew Vanderkwaak, Nicholas Hatt.

IN THIS ISSUE

FALL 2018 CONVOCATION

ARRAY OF ILLUSTRIOUS VISITING SPEAKERS

KING AND VANDERKWAAK IN DUBLIN

DR FOURNIER PRESENTS IN SPAIN

AND MORE!

Conferences Galore!

October is the season of conferences! On October 19-20, Dr. Eli Diamond and current graduate student Dwight Crowell (writing for Dr. Hankey) travelled to St. Fx University in Antigonish for the ARPA conference. Dr. Diamond presented on “Goodness, Beauty, and the Tragedy of Language,” while Dwight presented part of his thesis on “Aristotle and Aquinas on Happiness.”

At the Atlantic Classics Association Conference, Matthew Vanderkwaak presented on his work in Proclus: “The last is like the first, perfectly simple: matter in the work of Proclus.” Cristalle Watson presented her work in Boethius: “The structure of Boethius’ Consolation: A circle becomes a spiral.” Ksenia Romashova shared some of her own thesis work on “Aristotle’s theory of mathematical abstraction in Metaphysics M 1-3.” And Andrew Griffin presented on “Skepticism as praxis in Sextus Empiricus.” It is a privilege and a pleasure for our students to contribute to and learn from local conversations around classical subjects here in the city of Halifax.



PHOTOS: Above; Dr. Diamond and Dwight Crowell at St. Francis Xavier for the ARPA conference (Antigonish); Below (from left to right) Matthew Vanderkwaak, Cristalle Watson, Andrew Griffin, and Ksenia Romashova at the ACA conference at St. Mary's University (Halifax)





Departmental Lecture Series

The Department has been especially fortunate this term in its visiting speakers: we have been privileged to receive visits from several academics at varying points in their careers, who have shared the results of their research, modelled for our students different modes of engaging in the discipline, and invited us to join in the questions that are currently propelling their projects. On September 25, Professor Kelly Olsen (University of Western Ontario) was our ACA speaker who presented her findings on the engagement of Roman noblewomen in recreational leisure activities. On October 16, Professor Geoffrey Moseley (Yale University) shared research results from his careful and revealing study of the preservation and reception of different Platonic texts in the Muslim world. On October 23, Professor J. David Konstan (New York University) visited Dr. Fournier's seminar on Epicureanism and contributed thoughts from his own

current work on Epicurus and Lucretius.

On October 23, Professor J. David Konstan (New York University) presented on the distinctive narrative structure of the concept of sin in the Judaeo-Christian scriptures and its relevant divergence from notions of error in the Greco-Roman world. Dr. Konstan's presentation was especially well attended and met with lively response from the audience. Most recently on October 30th, we enjoyed a visit from Professor Paige DuBois (University of California - San Diego), who shared on polytheism in Dr. Grundke's Mythology class and then presented to the department a chapter of an upcoming work on parrhesia, or frank speech, in the context of polytheism. Professor Dubois challenged Foucault's confessional and individual focus on parrhesia, suggesting that it be considered more properly within the communal context of comedy in the theatre. We look forward to one last speaker this term: Ms. Giulia Bonasio, who will present on November 27th on Aristotle's Eudemian Ethics.

(Continued on next page)

(continued from *Departmental Lecture Series* on previous page)

Next term, we look forward to visits from Dr. Chris Gibson, Dr. Larissa Atkison, Dr. Rodney Fitzsimons, and Dr. Therese Cory. We continue to appreciate all the work of our graduate students in providing hospitality through catering the receptions for the lecture series.

Above all, many sincere thanks to Dr. Christopher Grundke for his thoughtfulness and assiduous effort in graciously hosting our guests and facilitating discussions for the department!

Student Accomplishments

NEOPLATONISM IN IRELAND!

We are pleased and proud to report that our former graduate Daniel Watson (MA 2013), now a postgraduate scholar at Maynooth University, has received a postdoctoral research fellowship at the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies. Daniel wrote his dissertation on *Philosophy in Early Medieval Ireland: Nature, Hierarchy and Inspiration* and has been awarded now an O'Donovan Scholarship in the School of Celtic Studies at DIAS. This three-year appointment begins in January and will allow Daniel to continue his ongoing research into medieval Irish vernacular philosophy. We applaud Daniel's success!

CLASSICS & CROQUET

George Saad, a distinguished graduate of our department who wrote a thesis last year on *Virgil's Aeneid*, continues to go from triumph to triumph in his competitive croquet career. We are delighted to hear



from George that he has won laurels in West Palm Beach, FL in the Selection 8s with a record of 10-4, "the most competitive croquet tournament of the year." Congratulations, George! This event took place from Oct 25-28 at the National Croquet Center.

PHOTOS: Above; George Saad next to the Alice in Wonderland statue on the club grounds. Below; Daniel Watson with his thesis.





Boethius Study Day

The Department of Classics made a substantial contribution to the October 27th Boethius Study Day hosted at the University of King's College by Dr. Elizabeth Edwards. In the first panel, Emeritus Professor Dr. Hankey presented, "Retrieving the Body. The Vector of Forty Years of Study of the *Consolation of Philosophy* in the Scola Haligoniensis." This will be published in *Socio-Historical Examination of Religion and Ministry* 1, no. 2 (Fall 2019). Dr. Michael Fournier presented, "Lucretius, Boethius, and the Strong Free Will Theorem," while Dr. Ian Stewart shared on Boethius and Plato's *Timaeus*. In the second panel, Cristalle Watson presented on "The Structure of Boethius' *Consolation*: A Circle Becomes a Spiral," and Matthew Vanderkwaak shared on "Prayer in the *Consolation*." Dr. Neil Robertson presented on Robert Crouse on Boethius. Rounding out the fourth panel was Dwight Crowell on "Happiness is Homecoming in Boethius and Aeneid," the Rev. Dr. Thomas Curran on "Boethius's Odysseus and Dante's Ulysses," and finally the illustrious host Dr. Elizabeth Edwards on "The Inconsolable: Chaucer, Troilus, Boece." This convivial assembly of local scholarship was appreciated by all, and we eagerly hope for another study day in the future.



philosophy, the conference organizers held a second section entitled “Back to Ionia: the conception of Physis that makes Physics possible.” I attempted to do just that in my paper, using Chew’s bootstrap model to think about Epicurus’ minimal parts.

In addition to hearing some fascinating papers on Greek philosophy and getting an eye-opening glimpse into the debates raging in contemporary physics, I had numerous opportunities to walk around exploring the small resort town and sampling pintxos and sangria from a wide variety of establishments.”

Epicureanism in Spain

DR. MICHAEL FOURNIER REPORTS ON HIS EXCURSION

“A few years ago, the focus of my research swerved towards atomism in Epicurean philosophy. Connections and comparisons with contemporary physics are a mainstay of scholarship on Epicureanism, so when I saw the call for papers for the XIII International Ontology Congress in San Sebastián Spain, I was inspired to work up a paper presentation. The conference, held at the Department of Philosophy at the University of the Basque Country, was organized into two main sections. The first was entitled “Since ‘Solvay 1927’: Nature and Quantum Physics (state of the art),” and brought together Nobel laureates and leading physicists with philosophers of physics from around Europe and the Americas. Because of the admiration that early 20th-century physicists like Werner Heisenberg and Erwin Schrödinger had for Greek



PHOTOS: All taken by Dr. Fournier on his trip, the top right is “Outside one of [his] favourites, Amazonas, on the edge of De Bilbao Plaza.”

New Additions to the Department: Latin and Greek

We are delighted to welcome Dr. Giulia Bonasio (Columbia University) and Dr. Warren Huard (Ohio State University) to field our first-year language courses in the winter semester.

Dr. Bonasio comes to us from working as a Praeceptor in Contemporary Civilization in Columbia's Core Curriculum. We were fortunate to get a taste of Dr. Bonasio's work in her presentation on Aristotle's unity of the virtues for the departmental lecture seminar on November 27th. With an exciting research repertoire that includes work on Aristotle's ethics, metaphysics, and epistemology; various Platonic dialogues; Epicurean philosophy; and touchpoints between ancient and contemporary philosophy; Dr. Bonasio will be an invaluable addition both to our first-year Latin programme and to our academic community as a whole.



PHOTO: Dr. Giulia Bonasio.



PHOTO: Dr. Warren Huard.

Dr. Warren Huard comes to us from Ohio State University (PhD 2018), where he studied after taking his BA (2009) and MA (2012) at McGill University in the Department of History and Classical Studies. Dr. Huard has already joined us this year at the local ACA conference at St. Mary's University (October 19, 2018), where several of our graduate students contributed and heard Dr. Huard present on "Dionysius and the *Olbios* Herakles of Hes. *Th.* 954." Dr. Huard's background in Greek religion and mythology will be an exciting resource for beginning and veteran Classicists alike, and we are immensely grateful for his presence.

News from Dr. Hankey

Updates on New and Continuing Projects

Dr. Hankey remains busy in his retirement, setting the example for productivity and continuing to push his students onward in their intellectual development and academic successes.

Dr. Hankey writes to us:

"I taught "Selected Poems from Boethius' Consolation of Philosophy," for the Halifax Humanities Seminar, on October 10, 2018 and delivered "Retrieving the Body. The Vector of Forty Years of Study of the Consolation of Philosophy in the Scola Haligoniensis," Boethius Study Day, Foundation Year Programme, King's College, Halifax, October 27, 2018. The latter will be published in Socio-Historical Examination of Religion and Ministry 1, no. 2 (Fall 2019). Two master's theses, one by Justin Wolf on Body in Augustine's Confessions, the other by Dwight Crowell on Happiness in Aristotle and Aquinas were finished this month under my supervision.

Dionysius for 2018, a large issue with papers from Wisdom Belongs to God, is nearing completion and publication. Two of our Alumni, Hans Feichtinger (MA, 2003) and Seamus O'Neill (PhD, 2009) are organizing a Panel, "Alterity in Neoplatonism: Christian and non-Christian," at the International Society for Neoplatonic Studies meeting Dominican University College, Ottawa, 12-16 June, 2019 which I will lead with "The Birth of Alterity in the Principle: Reflections on Plotinus, Proclus, Dionysius and Aquinas."

Both undergraduate and graduate students alike in the Classics department eagerly look forward to Dr. Hankey's upcoming seminar this winter on Anselm in the Augustinian tradition. May the Wednesday night 3-hour marathons long continue!

Farewells and New Endeavors: MA Graduate Highlights



PHOTO: Nicholas Hatt.

While we are sorry to see our graduates leave, we are excited to see them move on to new tasks and projects. The Rev'd Nicholas Hatt, one of our fall graduates of this year, has not only completed his MA this October together with Matthew Vanderkwaak and Jennie Selman, but he has embarked upon a new position as Rector of St. George's Round Church here in Halifax, NS, a place well-known to many in the Classics Department. Fr. Hatt, who wrote his MA thesis on the character of Monica in Augustine's *Confessions*, served a long-standing role, starting in 2008, as Dean of Students at the University of King's College for the past ten years. We congratulate Nick both upon finishing his MA programme and upon taking up his new position, and we wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

ATTENTION CLASSICS ALUMNI!

I seek your advice,

We are thinking about hosting an alumni event, which, if enough people were interested, could become a regular occurrence - a Weekend Dalhousie Classics Alumni Text Seminar. We could choose some short and manageable text each summer - a play, a set of poems, a dialogue, a short treatise- and come together to discuss the text. A faculty member or graduate of the Department could lead and moderate the discussions. I am picturing perhaps twelve hours of seminar time over the long weekend - a 2-hour text seminar in the morning and a 2-hour text seminar in the afternoon for three days.

While our text seminar sessions would be serious and intensive, we would also build into the weekend lots of time for free discussion and social time, since this would also be a chance to reunite and reconnect with old friends, as well as meet fellow alumni from different generations of our departmental history, including current Dal Classics students. On top of our text seminars, we could also set aside an afternoon for a short mini-conference or some activity which might be of interest to the Dal Classics crowd.

Would this be of interest to you or any Dal Classics alumni you know? Do you have any ideas for what shape an event like this ought to take? What time in the summer would work best? If there is enough interest, I might be able to organize an inaugural version of the seminar this summer, so do send me your thoughts as soon as possible.

I would love to hear from people by the end of January 2019.

Looking forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,

Eli Diamond (alumnus, BA 1999, MA 2001)

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