

PROMISING BEGINNINGS, CONSOLIDATING SUCCESSSES & HAPPY ENDINGS

NEWS FOR THE NEW ACADEMIC YEAR

PROMISING BEGINNINGS: STRONG CLASS REGISTRATIONS

Happy surprises for many of our faculty greeting their classes: strong numbers which have kept growing during the first two weeks. Our big introductory classes in Mythology (Dr O'Brien) and Religious Studies have bounced back to levels not seen for two years, some popular intermediate classes are more popular than ever. Introductory language enrolments are promising and the higher levels benefit from a large new intake of graduate students whose studies are funded by Teaching Assistant posts in the large classes.

Introductory Greek with Dr MacLeod is overfilled, first year Arabic with Dr Firanescu is full; despite a Summer class, first year Latin taught by Dr Grundke is close to brimmed up, and 30 students started Sanskrit with Dr Austin. Dr Fournier's class on Ancient Magic Religion and Philosophy is full, and, together with Dr Treiger on Judaism Christianity and Islam and Dr Austin on Buddhism, has qualified for Teaching Assistants. Dr Diamond's Plato class with thirty participants is almost too big to teach as a seminar. Dr Hankey has perfect numbers for the four seminar classes which introduce advanced philosophical study to our new graduate students and our strong cohort of honours students.

SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSIONS: SEVEN MA THESES

This Summer Seven MA theses were successfully brought to completion in six different areas of our work.

We had Alexander G. Edwards on "Aristotle's Concept of Analogy and its Function in the *Metaphysics*", supervised by Dr Diamond; Tanisha Chakma on "Odysseus and the Song of Ares and Aphrodite: *Mētis* and *Moicheia* on Olympus and on earth", supervised by Dr MacLeod; Daniel Heide on "Ἐγὼ τὸ Ἀλφά καὶ τὸ Ὠμεγα, ἡ ἀρχὴ καὶ τὸ τέλος: Aristotelian Teleology and Christian Eschatology in Origen's *De Principiis* (An Eriugenian Reading of Origen)", supervised by Dr Hankey; Marybeth Osowski on "Fashioning Identity: Clothing and the Image of the Syrian in the Roman Empire", supervised by Dr Mitchell; Aaron Shenkman on "*Multus Homo Es*: Desire, Conquest, and Identity in Catullus' *Carmina*",

supervised by Dr O'Brien; Kevin Walker on "*In der erde als in dem himel: The God-Creature Relation in Meister Eckhart*", supervised by Dr Hankey and Tamara Watson on "*ῥοπή βίου μοι: The Passive Route To Apotheosis In Sophocles' Oedipus At Colonus*", supervised by Dr Diamond.

A LARGE GRADUATE INTAKE

Seven theses in a single year is an exceptionally big accomplishment and we are not likely to equal it in the near future, nonetheless, September saw us welcome a strong entering cohort to our graduate studies with a remarkably wide international background. In addition there is a large group of honours students, several planning to go on to graduate studies here.

We have eight new graduate students (including those doing qualifying studies): one from rural Nova Scotia (Woods Harbour), others from Chicago, Sherbrooke (Quebec), British Columbia, Newfoundland, and Russia, two from Saskatchewan. Four students are continuing coming from Halifax, Manitoba, and Ottawa. Not all have decided on their areas of research but, besides those studying Latin and Greek Literature, eight of the twelve are working on philosophy and theology in the ancient and medieval periods.

HARRY CRITCHLEY OUR FACULTY'S COMMUNITY OUTREACH COORDINATOR

Following up Professor Eli Diamond's report in our last Bulletin on the Department's crucial role in the Halifax Humanities & the Prison Education programmes, we have encouraging news of a Coordinator for our Faculty's outreach and an Alumnus (First Class Honours in Religious Studies and Contemporary Studies with the University Medal in Contemporary Studies, 2015) is filling this post. He writes:

In fall 2016, Harry Critchley was appointed as the Community Outreach Coordinator for the Faculty of Arts and Social Science. He is working to develop the Faculty's experiential learning, community and high school outreach, undergraduate research, and adult education programs. His main focus continues to be on educational outreach initiatives, bringing his experience and connections to this newly developed position. Harry carries on with organizing the Burnside Prison Education Program, a project that provides free non-credit courses in the liberal arts and social sciences to incarcerated men and women at the Central Nova Scotia Correctional Facility. Since its first course in Fall 2015, the program has grown and developed substantially, strengthening its affiliations with the Halifax Humanities Society, the NS Department of Justice, and the Nova Scotia

Community College. It has begun to establish connections with program counterparts in the United States. In November 2016, Harry will travel to Nashville, TN for the Sixth Annual National Conference for Higher Education in Prison and will present a paper on prison education in Atlantic Canada.

In November, Aaron Shenkman (Honours in Classics and German 2014 graduating with a MA in Classics this October) will convene a six week interdisciplinary course for men from the North Unit at Burnside, entitled "Perspectives on Masculinity." In January 2017, the Department of Classics will offer a one month course for men from the West Unit, coordinated by Drs. O'Brien and Diamond and featuring seminar classes led by faculty and graduate students from the Department. These are in addition to two fall courses currently planned for October and November with the Women's Unit, coordinated by Drs. Margaret Denike of the Political Science department and Carrie Dawson of the English department respectively.

FIRST DEPARTMENTAL SEMINAR OF THE NEW YEAR:

GODDESSES, WHORES, VAMPYRES AND ARCHAEOLOGISTS: UNCOVERING ANCIENT MYTILENE (LESBOS)

PROFESSOR HECTOR WILLIAMS, DEPARTMENTAL LIBRARY AT 5 PM THURSDAY THE 22ND

Since 1983 a team from the University of British Columbia directed by Professor Hector Williams has been uncovering areas of ancient Mytilene, the largest city now and in antiquity on the northeastern Greek island of Lesbos. Some of the team's discoveries: a sanctuary of Demeter and Kore, a medieval burial chapel, a vampyre burial of the 19th century, and a tavern/brothel. Besides presenting these, the talk will look at the gladiators of Roman Lesbos.

DR HANKEY'S RETIREMENT CELEBRATIONS: "WISDOM BELONGS TO GOD" AND "GOD EVERYDAY AND EVERYWHERE"

SUNDAY JUNE 18TH TO SATURDAY, JUNE 24TH, 2017

Drs O'Brien, Diamond and Hankey and the organizers of the Atlantic Theological Conference have been busy this Summer putting together a week of literary, theological, and philosophical reflection and discussion covering a large part Dr Hankey's teaching and research. More than forty participants drawn from Dr Hankey's thesis students, colleagues, and collaborators will deliver almost fifty addresses, papers, and responses on topics from antiquity to the present.

Keynote addresses will be delivered by Cristina D’Ancona (Pisa): “O luce etterna che sola in te sidi’. Divine self-intellection in the Middle Ages, Aristotelian and Neoplatonic.” Michael Harrington (Duquesne): “The Divine Name of Wisdom in the Dionysian Commentary Tradition”, Wayne Hankey, Eli Diamond, Patrick Graham, and Evan King & Douglas Hedley (Cambridge). Besides these an incomplete list of others participating will whet your appetite: Torrance Kirby, Hans Feichtinger, Michelle Wilband, Alexander Treiger, Michael Fournier, Gregory MacIsaac, Barry Craig, Matthew Robinson, Stephen Blackwood, Daniel Heide, Elizabeth King, Thomas Curran, Daniel Gillis, David Puxley, Peter Bullerwell, Barry David, Seamus O’Neill, Emily Parker, Timothy Riggs, Nathan McAllister, James Muir, Ian Stewart, Neil Robertson, Matthew Furlong, Nic Thorne, Simon Fortier, Rebecca Coughlin, David Butorac, David Curry, Gary Thorne, Aaron Higgins-Brake, Matthew Wood, Cory Owen, Richard Smith, Daniel Watson, Michael Carreker, and John Paul Westin.

A sample of titles and topics: Plato’s *Timaeus*, a Liturgical Hymn; The Light of Truth: The Role of the Good in Human Cognition; Epicurus’ Panpsychism; A Place for Everything and Everything in Its Place: Order in Philo of Alexandria; ‘We too are Kings’: Plotinus on God and the Self”; “Similarity and Difference in Proclus’ Theory of the Symbol”; Augustine on Pluralism; Dietrich of Freiberg and Berthold of Moosburg on Intellect and the One; “Thou art Light and darkness both together”: Mysticism and Negative Theology in the Poetry of George Herbert; Human Self-Knowing and Divine Wisdom in Descartes’ *Meditations*; Between Chomsky and Foucault: Plotinus, Memory and *Paideia*; Eckhart and Ontotheology: The Plight of Michel Henry; Contemporary Islamic Theology.

All are invited to this week of philosophy, literary study and theology. Mark your diaries now. Details will continue to appear in issues of this Newsbulletin.
