

MAY 2019

THE SPRING NEWSLETTER

The official newsletter of the Dalhousie Classics Department



What's New in the Department

The first few months of 2019 have been very exciting ones for the Dalhousie Department of Classics! This issue of our newsletter will explore and celebrate our many graduating students, the success of the 2019 Pythian Games, the wonderful things that our alumni have been doing, and all of the other thrilling moments our department has experienced since the last newsletter!

*What's in this
newsletter:*

PYTHIAN GAMES

**GRADUATING
STUDENTS**

**GUEST
LECTURERS**

and much more!



ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL PYTHIAN GAMES!

On March 15, 2019, the department held its 8th annual Pythian Games since resurrecting the festival in 2011. Our acts this year ranged from the comic to tragic, from recitation to rock musical; and, as always, all combined for an unforgettable evening of entertainment!

Many of our acts went home with prizes this year; in fact, it was such a glorious celebration that our King, Eli Diamond, and Queen, Giulia Bonasio, had to come up with a new prize so that even more deserving acts could win!

We are so proud of all of our participants and thankful for the time and effort of all of those involved. It was the perfect evening to send us to the end of the semester in high spirits, and, after a competition this successful, all that's left is to get excited for next year!

OUR PRIZE WINNERS

Ryan and Torin's Musical Spectacular
[The Howard Murray Prize of \$250]

Dr Varto's Intermediate Greek Class
[The Chair's Prize of \$150]

The Intermediate Latin Class
[Dr. Atherton Memorial Latin Prize of \$100]

Cristalle Watson and Jen Hall
[Alumni Prize of \$100]

The Poetry of the Arab Spring
[Res Publica Prize of \$75]

Amel Bensalim
[King and Queen Award \$50]



The Embree Library Project

This year Dr. Austin worked with Jennifer Lambert and the dedicated staff of the Killam Library to bring the personal library of Dr. Ainslie Embree (1921-2017, Dalhousie Alumnus 1941) to Dalhousie. Generously donated by the surviving family of Dr. Embree, the collection makes a stellar contribution to the Killam's selection on modern and contemporary South Asian politics, religion, and society. Prof. Austin's book, *The Pradyumnabhyudaya of Ravivarman* (Harrassowitz Verlag), appeared earlier this year; his monograph *Pradyumna: Lover, Magician and Scion of the Avatara* will appear with Oxford University Press this fall.

Our Amazing Guest Lecturers In Winter/Spring 2019

Dr. Chris Gibson

*"Plato and Gadamer's Magical
Mystery Tour: The Relevance of
Plato's Dialogues to 20th Century
Philosophical Hermeneutics"*

Dr. Larissa Atkison

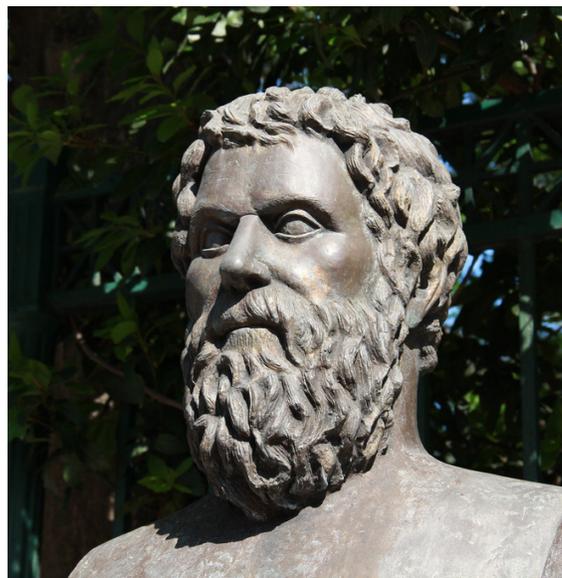
*"To Nobly Lie; Deception and
Complicity in 'Philoctetes'"*

Dr. Rodney Ritzsimons

"Emergent polis in Crete"

Dr. Therese Cory

"Aquinas on the Being of Intellect"





FEATURED GRADUATING STUDENT #1

DWIGHT CROWELL, MA

Dwight Crowell, who wrote his thesis on Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas on Divine and Human Happiness (A topic which he presented at the ARPA conference in Antigonish this past October, pictured above) will be graduating from our Masters programme and pursuing a PhD at the University of Toronto with SSHRC funding! Once there, he plans to enroll in the collaborative Program in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy (CPAMP) that is a joint program between the Philosophy and Classics Departments at UofT. He will continue to pursue his interests of Plato, Aristotle, Neoplatonism, and Thomas Aquinas as well as contemporary Philosophy of Mind and Philosophy of Science. The Department wishes Dwight the best of luck in all his future endeavours!

FEATURED GRADUATING STUDENT #2

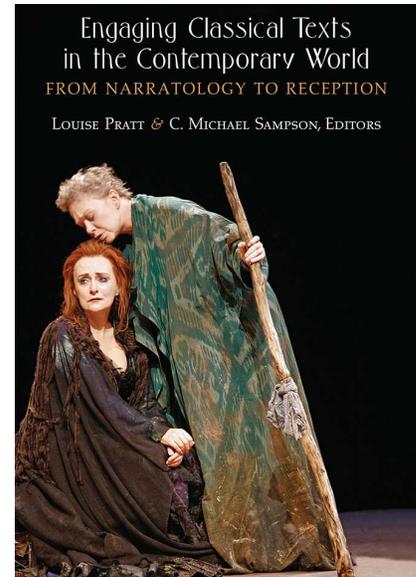
ETHAN SPEIGEL, BA (HONS)

Ethan Speigel, who is graduating in Classics with Honours, recently placed 3rd in all of Canada in the Classical Association of Canada's Senior Ancient Greek Sight Competition. Congratulations, Ethan! And there's more to come for Mr. Speigel: next year Ethan will be enrolled in the MA program in the Classics Department at UofT. He'll be focusing on Aristotle's concept of potentiality in the *Metaphysics*. This year, Ethan was also awarded the 2019 Nicole Knox memorial Award for Translation. And, in 2018, he was the Dalhousie recipient of the American Philological Association's Outstanding Undergraduate Student Award. Despite these awards, Ethan maintains that he is still a bumbling buffoon.



A New Work by C.M. Sampson, A Graduate of Our Department

C.M. Sampson, who was a member of the Dalhousie Classics Department for both his undergraduate degree (King's College) and his MA (Dalhousie), recently finished *Engaging Classical Texts in the Contemporary World*, a work co-edited with Louise Pratt, published by the University of Michigan Press. If you wish to read this exciting work, Sampson has generously sent us a copy, which can be found in the department library! Congratulations, Dr. Sampson!



Awards Season

This year the department had many of its members recognized more widely by the University in its various Winter Semester awards ceremonies! Most notably, our Administrative Secretary, Donna Edwards, won the FASS Staff Award for Excellence in Service, much to the delight of everyone here!

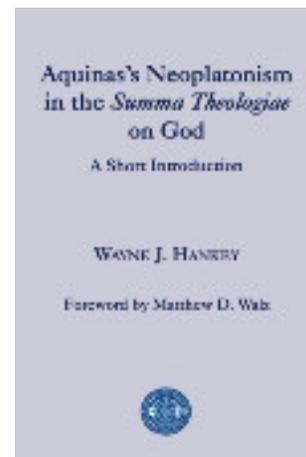
Classics student Sophie Jacome (pictured) also won an award at the DSU IMPACT Ceremony.



Another Publication for Dr Hankey

Professor Emeritus Dr. Wayne Hankey has just had his latest book, *Aquinas' Neoplatonism in the Summa Theologiae on God: A Short Introduction*, published by St. Augustine's Press in South Bend Indiana. In the summary on staugustine.net, the work is described as thus: "This book rises out of Dr. Wayne Hankey's 2015 Aquinas Lecture at the University of Dallas. It explains the Neoplatonic structure and doctrine of St. Thomas's treatment of God in the *Summa Theologiae* with the aim of showing that his doctrine of being is at root both Trinitarian and incarnational."

Congratulations on this achievement, Dr. Hankey!



Philosophers Gather at Dalhousie Classics

On March 23, Dalhousie Classics facilitated a convivial meeting of minds among local philosophers, spearheaded by Dr. Giulia Bonasio, our new instructor of introductory Latin as well as Greek tragedy. Dr. Giulia Bonasio has conducted philosophy workshops in her previous time at Columbia University and is now bringing her energy, initiative, professionalism, and love for ancient philosophy to Dalhousie Classics. Together with Dr. Eli Diamond, Dr. Bonasio organized a workshop on nature and ethics in ancient philosophy that brought together both faculty and students from Dalhousie Classics and faculty from surrounding universities in the province, including University of King's College, St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish and St. Mary's University in Halifax. Presenters and participants both enjoyed a packed day from 9:00AM to 6:00PM of intense ratiocination supported by amicable dialogue and delicious refreshments. Aristotle figured heavily on the programme, as well as Plato, but there were surprising appearances as well from Levi Strauss, Lucretius, Sophocles, and even Hercules himself. Together the participants pondered matter, infinity, honour, perception, education, necessity, self-interest, persuasion, and heroic excellence. Speakers received invaluable feedback, suggestions, and feedback for their various works-in-progress, and all present benefited from discussion. At the conclusion of the day, a hearty appreciation for Drs. Bonasio and Diamond was expressed, as well as a hope of gathering again in future for a similar workshop.

Presenters and their Papers!

- **Christopher Byrne** (StFX University) *"Matter & Teleology in Aristotle's Natural Philosophy"*
- **Irene Serra** (University of Cagliari) *"Aristotle's infinity: physics, mathematics and metaphysics"*
- **Giulia Bonasio** (Dalhousie University) *"Honour as a natural good in Aristotle's Eudemean Ethics"*
- **Madelaine Wheeler** (Dalhousie University) *"Vestigia and perception in Lucretius' DRN IV"*
- **Neil Robertson** (King's College) *"Levi Strauss on education"*
- **Eli Diamond** (Dalhousie University) *"The war-like character of Necessity in Plato's Timaeus"*
- **Sheldon Wein** (Saint Mary's University) *"The Role of Contractarianism in Plato's Account of the Soul"*
- **Andrew Griffin** (Dalhousie University) *"Guile, Persuasion, and Compulsion: Philoctetes' Return to Community"*
- **Warren Huard** (Dalhousie University) *"Aretē and the choice of the choice of Herakles"*



Successes from Religious Studies

CURRENT STUDENT SUCSESSES

Honorary RELS student Tanisha Chakma (Honours BA Dal Classics 2014; MA Dal Classics 2016) will be setting off for the University of Toronto next fall to begin a SSHRC-funded PhD in Religious Studies at the Department for the Study of Religion, conducting research on Sanskrit epics in the context of Indo-European poetics. Exciting days ahead, Tanisha!

Justin Bulicz (BA Hons CLAS-EMSP) has recently presented not one but two separate essays from the course The Mahabharata (RELS 3113, Fall 2018) at two different conferences this March (Atlantic Universities Undergraduate History and Classics Conference and the UNB Arts Matters Conference). A busy month for Justin! Another honorary RELS student, Amaan Kazmi (BA Maj HIST), has won the 2019 Halifax Overseas Club Essay Prize for his essay on religious communalism in contemporary India. Congratulations, Amaan!

Alumni Updates: the Dal-McMaster Connection

Combined Honours CLAS-RELS graduate (2012) Gerjan Altenburg is nearing the completion of his PhD in Religious Studies at McMaster University, and recently delivered a paper at the Association for Asian Studies Annual Conference, Denver, Colorado. Also at McMaster, Combined Honours CLAS-RELS graduate (2018) Anna Phipps-Burton is advancing by leaps and bounds through her SSHRC-funded M.A. in Religious Studies, studying Buddhist manuscript culture and monasticism in early Indian Buddhism. Keep up the great work Gerjan and Anna!

SUMMER 2019 in the Department

PLATO SEMINAR:

This August 3 and 4, the Classics Department will be holding its first Dalhousie Classics Alumni Summer Text Seminar. This past Winter we sent out an open invitation to our alumni email list and were overjoyed with the enthusiastic response, which confirmed what I have long suspected - graduates of the Department want the opportunity to re-engage in the kind of collective discussion of the ancient and medieval texts they studied as students of Dal Classics. Thirty participants, consisting of former and current students and professors spanning almost six decades of Dalhousie Classics history will get together for a weekend of study - Plato's *Cratylus* will be the subject of this inaugural summer seminar. *Cratylus* is an under-read and under-appreciated Platonic dialogue about language and whether there are certain words which naturally fit the objects they designate, or whether language is nothing more than a conventional tool where words are arbitrarily picked to symbolize their objects. Although we will be reading from an English translation, because the dialogue has so many fantastic and fantastical etymologies of Greek words, participants will have the opportunity to dip their toes back into the Greek language, though we will not be assuming that people have been keeping up their Greek since graduating.

Studying this dialogue will let us talk about a fundamental philosophical question, the question of how being, thought and language are related, but also a linguistic question which is very pertinent to poetry and the poetic use of language, an approach to language which celebrates the sound and fit of words to what they convey beyond a merely instrumental relation to them.

Our hope is that this will be a stimulating and enjoyable way to reunite with some old and new friends from Dal Classics. We will have three two-hour sessions over the two days (morning and afternoon sessions on Saturday, and then a concluding afternoon session on Sunday). But we will also build in time to discuss the text and socialize more informally. In the invitation, I described the event as lying somewhere in between a class or formal seminar and a high-powered book club meeting. If the seminar goes well, this will not be the last iteration of the Dalhousie Classics Alumni Summer Text Seminar. In the future we hope to continue this tradition and alternate between literary, philosophical and historical texts. Although the seminar is currently full, please let us know if you would be interested in coming this summer, in case a spot opens up. For those of you who have confirmed your participation, I will be in touch over the course of the summer with more specific details, and I greatly look forward to seeing you in August to discuss Plato and language. Please also let us know if you want to be on our contact list for future versions of the seminar.

An Award Richly Deserved

This spring our whole department was very pleased to hear that our well-loved and hard-working secretary Donna Edwards is this year's recipient of the new FASS Staff Award for Excellence in Service. Donna's labour and care for our department exemplify the notion of "service," and her assiduous attention to detail and administrative competence and efficiency have rescued most of us at one point or another from various mishaps. We are enormously grateful to Donna for her service, and we are glad that her work has been acknowledged. Thank you, Donna!



Donna on her recent trip to China and Thailand.

Summer Latin with Dr. Grundke

Prospective students of Latin (or returning students who need some review) can look forward to working this summer with our beloved professor of Latin, Dr. Christopher Grundke. Dr. Grundke, who had charge of our intermediate Latin students this last year, will be offering instruction over the summer approximately between the second week of June and early August (the schedule will remain fairly flexible). The course will aim at preparing students with no previous knowledge of the language to be ready to embark upon second-year-level work by the end of the summer. Dr. Grundke is already busily scrutinising potential textbooks, so get in touch to let him know you are interested!



BOOKS GALORE!

This spring the Department ran an extremely successful book sale, which accomplished at once several objects: cleaning out duplicates from the Departmental Library, supplying students with inexpensive copies of texts, and raising funds for the Departmental Library. The Library is a special place for our department, serving as home to our beautiful book collection and providing a quiet place of work for students, as well as supporting many of our language classes and seminars. Our collection of Loeb's and Oxford Classical Texts is regularly updated, and we look forward to adding yet more titles with the revenue generated from the book sale.

