

University of Minnesota Duluth Department of Philosophy Presents The Dialogue

Spring 2017, Volume 3

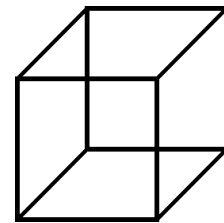
Welcome

Welcome to the third volume of *The Dialogue*, the annual newsletter from the UMD Philosophy Department! In this volume of *The Dialogue*, our most newly tenured faculty talks the merits of philosophy with some of our students past and current, passes along some fun facts about UMD Philosophy, profiles UMD philosophy Alumni Keith Loveland one of the inaugural winners of the Outstanding Alumni Award, and concludes with a joke, a couple of fun Philosophical puzzles, and one more joke.

Enjoy!

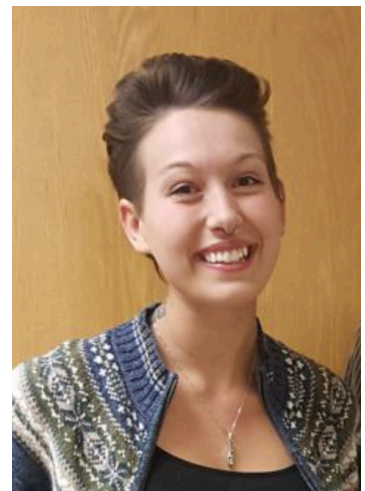
—Jeanine Schroer, Associate Professor
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—Terry Estep, Executive Office Administrative Specialist
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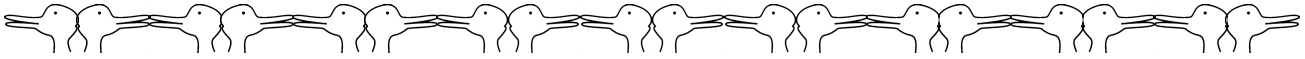
Students Answer: Why Philosophy?

We courted Autumn for a long time, most aggressively with a letter from the Department Chair discussing her finer points as a philosopher, before she finally agreed. Here's how she finally made the decision: "Growing up I switched schools all the time so I was able to take hard look at education and really draw this distinction between education and understanding or learning and that really rich involvement in the process of learning.... When I decided to continue my education... I was really looking for that. Intuitively, it makes sense: if you want to have a deep understanding of how things work you should probably question how things work all the time. It clicked." At this point we have a long conversation about violence, education and Foucault, cognitive science — Autumn favors a Cognitive Science Major! — and whether or not jellyfish have mouths. Autumn is currently planning to pursue graduate education in philosophy.



Autumn Soli

—Autumn Soli is a Philosophy major and a Cognitive Science and Psychology Minor and also has Business Administration Certificate. She recently received both the Robert Evans and David “Doc” Mayo Scholarship and the Darland All-American Scholarship.



Trevor Winger

*Trevor Winger is a current philosophy major. We worked together on his senior thesis, on racial slurs. Before I can properly talk to Trevor about how he came to philosophy, we talk about Michel Foucault for 40 minutes. We ended up having a sprawling conversation, but when we got to the central question — how he ended up in philosophy — He said it was because of his desire for critical engagement. “Logic is what did it to me....I was really drawn into the problem of nothingness when we engaged with it in logic. Professor Bob referred me to Professor Eve [when Nozick wasn’t enough] and she introduced me to Heidegger and Plato’s *the Sophist*. So you could really blame my interest in philosophy of Heidegger and the nebulous stuff in nothingness and my inability to understand it. It was the gateway drug....And the research assistantship [with J. Schroer on racial slurs] helped because I engaged with problems that I never really cared about before in a serious manner.” We now have a long discussion*

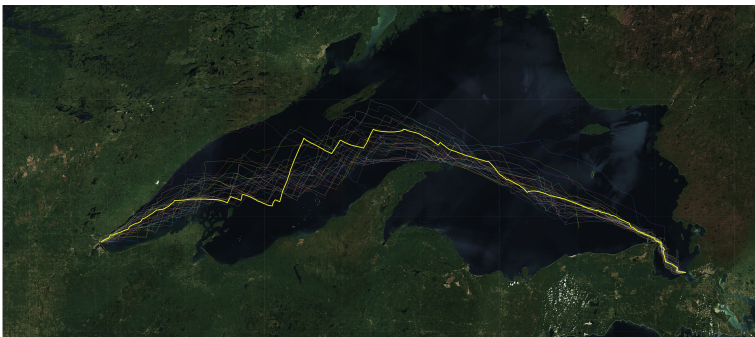
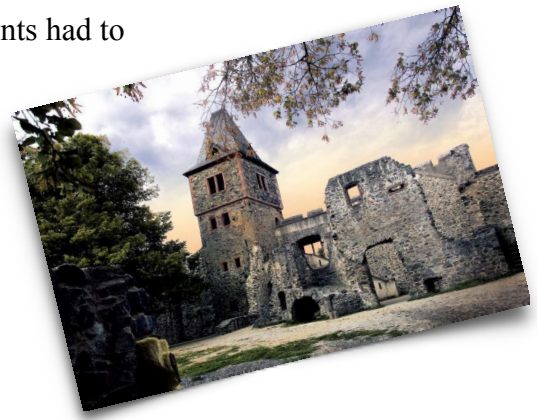
about Heidegger, Foucault, Being and Language and when Dr. Alexis Elder arrives we rope her in too. Trevor is pursuing three bachelors — in Philosophy, Linguistics, and Computer Science — to keep his options open.

—Trevor Winger is Philosophy/Linguistics/Computer Science triple major and an Cognitive Science minor. He is a recent winner of both the Rhetta and Henry Ehlers Scholarship and Book Prize, he also won a prestigious fellowship to York University’s Center for Vision Research Science Summer School in Toronto, in his short tenure at UMD he has served as a research assistant, a teaching assistant, he presented his paper, “What Would Wittgenstein Say About Charlie Sheen” at and he’s completed a thesis in the philosophy of language called “Obscenity Games: Conceptualizing a Social Framework for Slurs”.

Fun Facts! Did You Know That...

- Sean Walsh's family has a new addition: Welcome Kyler, who is keeping his parents very busy.

- Bob Schroer's Logic Class had a treasure hunt in! Students had to decode instructions and take selfies around the department to pass the test. (Check the Philosophy Department's Digital Sign Board for results)
- Alexis Elder hiked to the original Castle Frankenstein while in Germany to give a talk!
- Jeanine Weekes Schroer is serving on the board of directors for PAVSA!
- Jason Ford is filming a series of videos to research the nature of consciousness!
- Kelly MacPhail and Bob Schroer along with two others won this year's Around the Islands Sailboat Race by circumnavigating the Apostle Islands in 14h 49' 01".
- The Philosophy Department has now had the good fortune to acquire Terry Estep as our new Executive Administrative Specialist. Her office is 265 ABAH.
- Dr. Jeanine Schroer was promoted to tenured associate professor as of July 1, 2017.
- The Philosophy Department's unofficial mascot, "Phil" (along with Bridget Park) has left us for the department of Geography, Urban Environment, and Sustainability.



His winning route is highlighted here in yellow.

Trevor Winger! Trevor was also awarded this year's Ehlers' Book Award along with Cherrylee Fraser! Camren Hopkins won the Center's best student paper prize last year! The Philosophy Department was also able to award a new scholarship the Evans-Mayo Scholarship to Autumn Soli.

- Bridget (along with her husband, linguist, Chongwon Park) welcomed their daughter Elle on June 3, 2017. Welcome to the world, Elle!
- Robert Schroer (along with UMD Engineering alum, Nick Rorem) took first place in the double-handed class in the 2017 Trans-Superior Race from approximately Sault Ste. Marie, MI to Duluth.

● This year's Ehlers' Scholarship winners are Joy Parker and

**Congratulations
to our award
winning
students!**



Keith Loveland Wins 1st CLA Outstanding Alumni Award

He received his Bachelor's degree in Pre-Law & Philosophy from the University of Minnesota, Duluth, and a Juris Doctor from William Mitchell College of Law. He continued his education at Harvard University Law School, receiving a Certificate in Securities Regulation. He graduated as Valedictorian from the Katz Graduate School, University of Pittsburgh as an Accredited Investment Fiduciary Analyst (AIFA).

He is admitted to law practice in Minnesota, and also admitted to Federal District Court and Court of Appeals practice. He specializes in ethical and fraudulent practices in investments and securities. He has also served as a subject matter expert to the North American Securities Administrators Association, and to the New York Stock Exchange Qualification Committee.

Keith received the Outstanding Contribution Award from the Financial Planning Association of Minnesota. Among other virtues, they cited Keith's work developing their Code of Ethics courses, and his knowledge, energy and wisdom. He also received the prestigious Heart of Financial Planning Award, presented by the National Financial Planning Association.

Keith maintains significant connections to UMD, in several ways. He has served on the CLA Board of Advisors. He gave a colloquium for our undergraduates, which was very well attended and well received. He has donated many books to the Philosophy Department's Library.

We are extraordinarily pleased to honor Keith Loveland's professional excellence, his contributions to the College of Liberal Arts and the Philosophy Department with this Outstanding Alumni Award.

(Above provided by Jason Ford, Department Head, pictured top — right — with Loveland)



UMD Philosophy Alum Daniel Norgard

Answers the Question: “What do you do with a Philosophy BA?”

Answer: Open a Bar*

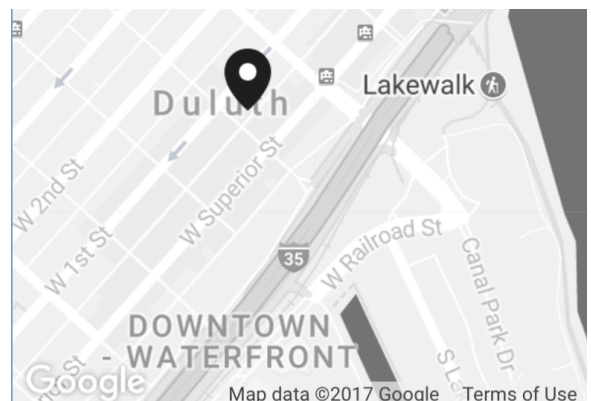
I sat down with UMD Philosophy Alum, Daniel Norgard, to talk about THE question. Daniel starts his answer with this: “I feel an obligation to tell students that are pursuing philosophy as their primary educational goal [that] it requires a certain degree of bravery.... People do not look highly upon those that seek philosophy. If you really love the craft and everything thing that goes into it, the history and skills that you acquire, the community, all that jazz, you need to endure a lot. And *that*, I think, is a valuable lesson that does translate into the real world. Because when you get out into the real world, you need to maintain that bravery.” Daniel’s original plan was to pursue an academic track or law school because “the LSAT, though a test is probably the most fun test you’ll ever take and I would do that in my spare time anyway” but he decided ultimately that further education wasn’t in the cards for him.

His warning, it turns out, is portentous and reflective of the features of the path he ultimately chose. Daniel is currently part of the cooperative that runs Blush — “*an art gallery, bar, and intimate music venue focused on providing an inclusive platform for resident as well as visiting artists. Blush intends to offer a space that accommodates a diverse spectrum of artists patrons*”. While Daniel is quick to point out that fundamentally it is a community bar; the cooperative has thought a lot more about the community they are serving. They wanted to make a space where marginalized members of the community — artists and patrons — could know that they were not and afterthought, that this was space conceived and organized *with intention*. Bravery, indeed. *Daniel is one of the first students I taught upon coming to UMD. I’m afraid I’m a little bit proud.*

Look Blush up!

—Daniel Norgard graduated from UMD around December 2014 with a Philosophy Major and a Film Studies minor. He is part of the cooperative that runs Blush.

- URL: <https://www.zenithcitymusiccollective.com/blushvenue>
- Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/pg/BLUSHDULUTH/about/?ref=page_internal
- Twitter: [@blushduluth](https://twitter.com/blushduluth)
- Email: akrausellc@gmail.com
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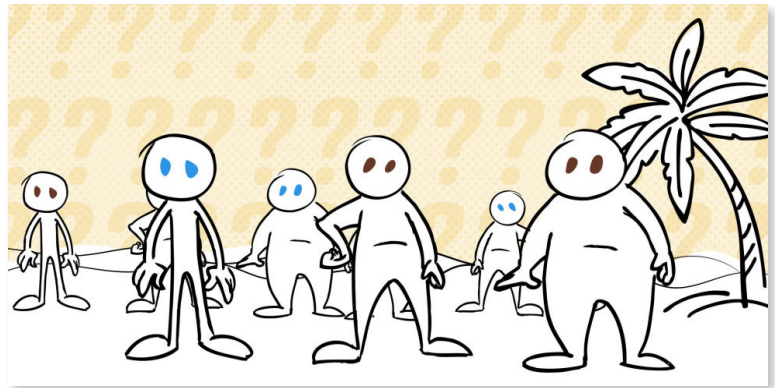


One Joke, Two Philosophical Puzzles & One More Philosophy Joke

An engineer, a scientist, a mathematician, and a philosopher are hiking through the hills of Scotland, when they see a lone black sheep in a field. The engineer says, "What do you know, it looks like the sheep around here are black." The scientist looks at him skeptically and replies, "Well, at least some of them are." The mathematician considers this for a moment and replies, "Well, at least one of them is." Then the philosopher turns to them and says, "Well, at least on one side."

THE BLUE-EYED ISLANDERS

A group of people with assorted eye colors live on an island. They are all perfect logicians -- if a conclusion can be logically deduced, they will do it instantly. No one knows the color of their eyes. Every night at midnight, a ferry stops at the island. Any islanders who have figured out the color of their own eyes then leave the island, and the rest stay. Everyone can see everyone else at all times and keeps a count of the number of people they see with each eye color (excluding themselves), but they cannot otherwise communicate. Everyone on the island knows all the rules in this paragraph.



On this island there are 100 blue-eyed people, 100 brown-eyed people, and the Guru (she happens to have green eyes). So any given blue-eyed person can see 100 people with brown eyes and 99 people with blue eyes (and one with green), but that does not tell him his own eye color; as far as he knows the totals could be 101 brown and 99 blue. Or 100 brown, 99 blue, and he could have red eyes.

The Guru is allowed to speak once (let's say at noon), on one day in all their endless years on the island. Standing before the islanders, she says the following:

"I can see someone who has blue eyes."

Who leaves the island, and on what night?

HINT: This is a logic puzzle driven by the consequences of common knowledge. Here's a starter version: Imagine three girls sitting in a circle, each wearing either a red hat or a white hat. Suppose

that all the hats are red. When the teacher asks if any student can identify the color of her own hat, the answer is always negative, since nobody can see her own hat. But if the teacher happens to remark that there is at least one red hat in the room, a fact which is well-known to every child (who can see two red hats in the room) then the answers change. The first student who is asked cannot tell, nor can the second. But the third will be able to answer with confidence that she is indeed wearing a red hat.

TROLLEYS AND DRIVERLESS CARS

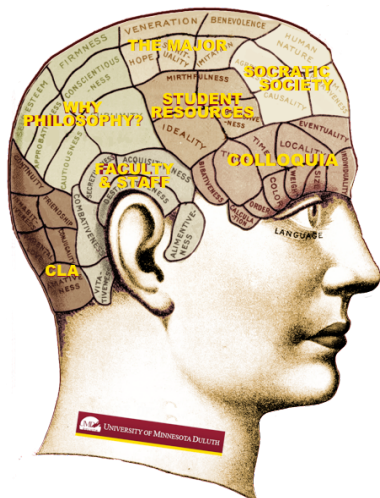
Many philosophy students have encountered the Trolley Problems, a series of thought experiments in which a train, or trolley, is barreling out of control down a track, and can only be stopped by being steered so as to crash into one or more victims, in order to avoid running over others. These problems have been around since the 1960s, when Philippa Foot introduced them. But recently,



they've been getting renewed attention as programmers of driverless cars try to figure out how these vehicles should be programmed to respond in case of brake failure or situations where the vehicle must swerve to one side or another. Patrick Lin, a philosopher working with autonomous car manufacturers, introduces a new variation: *Suppose a driverless car is careening down the highway, and must brake suddenly and swerve into another lane to avoid a collision that would kill all of the passengers in the vehicle. To the left is a motorcyclist riding without a helmet. To the right is a motorcyclist wearing a helmet.*

*Swerving to the right seems to minimize damage, since that motorcyclist is better protected. But this seems to punish the cyclist for being responsible. Swerving to the left seems to make the car enforce vigilante justice. **What should the programmers tell the car to do under such circumstances?***

For more cases like this, check out his TED Ed talk on the Ethics of Driverless Cars: <https://youtu.be/ixIoDYVfKA0>.



A boy was feeling very nervous about his first date, and so went to his father for advice.

"My son, there are three subjects that always work with women: food, family, and philosophy."

The boy picks up his date and they stare at each other for a long time. The boy's nervousness builds, but he then remembers his father's advice and asks the girl,

"Do you like potato pancakes?"

"No," comes the answer, and the silence returns like a suffocating blanket.

"Do you have a brother?"

"No."

After giving it some thought, the boy plays his last card: "If you had a brother, would he like potato pancakes?"