

# LANGUAGE truth & GOSSIP

A newsletter for graduates of the  
MSU Philosophy Department

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Faculty Notes &  
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Graduate News

Fall 2005

Dear Graduates,

The department is wearing rather a different face this year. We have three new members—Christian Lotz who comes to us from Philipps-University in Marburg, by way of the University of Kansas, to teach 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Continental philosophy, Tamra Frei, an ethical theorist, who brings a brand-new Ph.D. from UNC Chapel Hill, and Corinne Painter, formerly of Emporia State University, who does phenomenology, history of philosophy, and logic—and three new people in old jobs: Fred Gifford takes over as Associate Chair from Marilyn Frye, Matt McKeon will be the Director of Undergraduate Studies, and I'm sitting in for Chair Steve Esquith, who will be a Fulbright Fellow in Mali this year. The door swings both ways, alas: our colleague Bill Lawson, who does such valuable work in the philosophy of race, has left to take a distinguished professorship at the University of Memphis, and Hilde Lindemann—who among her many rich contributions as a scholar and teacher in feminism and bioethics, initiated and edited *Language, Truth & Gossip*—will be leaving in the spring for the University of Pennsylvania. Here's where I'll say something that may sound like spin, but is in my view flatly true for all that: as much as we'll miss Bill and Hilde, it's a testimony of the vigor of this department that its faculty attract such intense interest from such high-quality institutions. We are mounting searches for philosophers working in their areas to carry on the department's tradition of distinguished research, imaginative teaching, and innovative outreach.



And as our tradition has been invoked, I will mention two emeriti of this department, Rich Hall and Joe Hanna, who did so much to nurture it. An important way that their influence continues is the Hall-Hanna Young Scholars Fund. We're making progress toward our goal of a \$30,000 endowment to provide undergraduate and graduate students with the kind of strategic support—travel grants, scholarships, teaching awards, *inter alia*—that can be crucial to getting their careers in philosophy off to auspicious starts. There is still a way to go, though. Any support you might be able to provide would be deeply welcomed.

We're looking forward to another stimulating round of distinguished visitors this year, thanks to the McCracken, Benjamin, and Suter endowed lectureships. We'll start in October with Cynthia Freeland (a former major in this department and now Chair at Houston), whose lecture is entitled "Portraits and Objectification." Georgetown's Robert Veatch and Princeton's Daniel Graber will visit later in the academic year. Our graduate students are welcoming Minnesota's Helen Longino to keynote what will surely be another sterling conference, and other visitors will alternate with our own faculty to present their research throughout the year. That homegrown research continues to do very well indeed, as indicated by Fred Rauscher's NEH grant to support his work on Kant's political philosophy, and by Paul Thompson's leading role in an interdisciplinary NSF- funded project that concerns ethical and social issues sparked by developments in nanotechnology.

So, like everyone else, we continue to deal with change and persistence, those venerable philosophical topics. It's been a pleasure to provide you with this snapshot of the state of the department today, and I very much hope you enjoy the rest of this issue of *LTG*.

My best wishes,

Jim Nelson, Acting Chair

