

Phi Sigma Tau Bulletin

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A Publication of the Department of Philosophy, Southwest Texas State University

Issue 7

RICHARD SWINBURNE TO GIVE PRICE LECTURE IN MARCH

Richard Swinburne of The University of Oxford will speak at Evans Auditorium on the SWT campus on Tuesday, March 24th at 7:30 p.m. as part of the Price Lecture Series. Swinburne's topic will be "God and the World."

Swinburne is a major figure in philosophical theology and philosophy of science. Taken together his works constitute one of the most cogent and closely-reasoned contemporary defenses of theism.

In his intellectual autobiography Swinburne identifies "three major influences on my thinking....the Christian religion, Western philosophy, and theoretical science." Reflecting these influences, a major concern of his work has been to examine the compatibility of religious belief with the most powerful scientific theories. The author of a dozen books and more than ninety published articles, Swinburne is best known to scholars for a trilogy of works—The Coherence of Theism (1977), The Existence of God (1979), and Faith and Reason (1981). These books have been widely studied and quoted by philosophers, theologians, and scientists.

Educated at Oxford, where he is currently Nolloth Professor of the Philosophy of the Christian Religion, Swinburne has also been a Professor of Philosophy at the University of Keele. In addition to his theological works, he has published major works in the philosophy of science dealing with the meaning and justification of scientific theories, induction, and confirmation theory.

Since the completion of his trilogy, Swinburne has been focusing on such issues as human responsibility, the problem of evil, and the interpretation of Biblical texts. Recently he has also published *Is There a God?*(1996), a shorter and simpler version of *The Existence of God*. As a Price Lecturer, Swinburne will expand on some of the themes of this book.

While at SWT, Swinburne will also speak to two philosophy classes, give a luncheon talk, and visit the Philosophy Dialogue Room (LA 367) for discussion with those interested in his work. On Thursday, March 26th he will speak on "The Soul" at Texas Lutheran University. (Please see the box on this page for details about these events.)

Swinburne's lecture is part of a series established in 1984 with an endowment to the Campus Christian Community at Southwest Texas State University by the late San Marcos businessman and philanthropist H.Y. Price. The purpose of the lecture series is twofold: to examine the life of faith as it responds to issues of intellectual, political, economic, and cultural importance and to make these issues accessible to faculty, students, and the community at large. Speakers invited to give the Price Lecture are persons who have made significant contributions to scholarship and/or public service and who will enrich the university and community with their presence and ideas. The 1998 Price Lecture and related events are being sponsored by the Campus Christian Community, the University Lecture Series, the Texas Council for the Humanities, the SWT Department of Philosophy, and Texas Lutheran University.

(Note: The University Bookstore is currently sold out of *Is There A God?*, but is attempting to obtain more copies before March.)

Swinburne Events

Tuesday, March 24

12:30 p.m. "Why God Allows Evil" Question-Answer Format Professor Joy's Christianity and Judaism Class, LA 311

7:30 p.m. "God and the World" Price Lecture, Evans Auditorium, SWT (Doors open at 7:00)

Wednesday, March 25

9:00 a.m. "Simplicity as Evidence of Truth" Professor Hutcheson's Philosophy of Science Class, HAC 201

12:00-1:30 p.m. "Evidence for the Resurrection" Luncheon, Campus Christian Community (Reservations required)

3:00 p.m. Informal dialogue with Professor Swinburne, Dialogue Room, LA 367

Thursday, March 26

7:30 p. m. "The Soul", a talk by Richard Swinburne at Wupperman Little Theatre, Texas Lutheran University, Seguin

Coming Events

Antony Flew to Visit SWT in Fall

Antony Flew will visit SWT in the Fall of 1998. Flew, author of Hume's Philosophy of Belief, God and Philosophy, and many other works, is best known to philosophy students as a contributor to the symposium on "Theology and Falsification," which has been anthologized in many philosophy of religion books. In this discussion Flew raises the following challenge for theism: unless one can state the conditions under which religious belief would be false, such belief is not meaningful. Since he does not believe that theists can meet this condition, he further claims that theistic beliefs do not hold up to rational scrutiny.

More details about Flew's visit will be forthcoming in the Fall Bulletin.

The following is an excerpt from Richard Swinburne's book. Is There a God?:

For the last twenty or thirty years there has been a revival of serious debate among philosophers in Britain and the United States about the existence of God, conducted at a

high level of intellectual rigour. It has been recognized that the subject is not only of the highest importance, but also of great intellectual interest. Christian thinkers have been to the

fore in this debate, and the debate has led to a considerable growth in numbers of philosophy students taking courses on the philosophy of religion. Little of this, however, has reached the general public, who thing in existence. have been led by journalists and broadcasters to believe that the

existence of God is, intellectually, a lost cause and that religious faith is an entirely nonrational matter.

The basic structure of my argument is this. Scientists, historians, and detectives observe data and proceed thence to some theory about what best explains the occurrence of these

> data. We can analvze the criteria which they use in reaching a conclusion that a certain theory is better supported by the data that a different theory—that is, is more likely, on the

basis of those data, to be true....The very same criteria which scientists use to reach their own theories lead us to move beyond those theories to a creator God who sustains every-

Texas Council for the Humanities Funds "God and the World" Discussion Group

The SWT Philosophy Department has received a grant from the Texas Council for the Humanities to fund "God and the World," a community reading/discussion group based on Richard Swinburne's Is There a God? Jointly sponsored by the TCH, the SWT Philosophy Department, the San Marcos Public Library, and the Campus Christian Community, the goal of the discussion group is to provide a forum outside the university in which interested persons from the community at large can enter the dialogue concerning the relation between reason and religious faith. Six discussion sessions have been scheduled for the first three weeks of March at the San Marcos Public Library, with a culminating session to be held with Richard Swinburne on March 25th, the day following his public address in Evans Auditorium. Members of the SWT philosophy faculty will serve as discussion leaders for the reading group.

In This Issue:

Coming Events	2-3
Faculty Notes	4-5
Student Notes	
Lab Notes	
Fall Philosophy Classes	
Philosophy Dialogue Series Calandar	

Coming Events

Templeton Lectures To Feature Howard Van Till and Ron Numbers

The creation-evolution controversy will be the focus in April when the Templeton Foundation brings two philosophers of science to SWT. According to Glenn Joy, whose course "Science and Religion" won a John Templeton Foundation prize in 1996, the Templeton Foundation was established to address some of the contemporary philosophical issues which are emerging from the interaction between scientific inquiry and religious thought.

Howard Van Till, Professor of Physics at Calvin College, will deliver the first lecture. "The Universe: No Place for a Small God," on April 7th at 7:30 in the University Performing Arts and Conference Center (UPACC) on the SWT West Campus. Van Till, who is author of *The Fourth Day* (1986) and joint author of two other works, Portraits of Creation (1990) and Science Held Hostage: What's Wrong with Creation Science and Evolutionism (1988), is interested in examining the so-called "creation-evolution debate" and in achieving a possible rapprochement between special creationism and evolutionary naturalism. Van Till's SWT lecture will highlight a critique of Daniel Dennett's book, Darwin's Dangerous Idea, and its relationship to special creationism.

Ron Numbers, Professor of the History of Medicine and the History of Science at the University of Wisconsin, will speak on "The Evolution of Creationism" on April 16th at 7:30 p.m. at UPACC. Numbers has authored *Creation by Natural Law: Laplace's Nebular Hypothesis in American Thought* (1977) as well as several works dealing with the philosophy of medicine. He has also edited and contributed to *God and Nature: Historical Essays on the Encounter Between Christianity and Science* (1986) and is currently working on a forthcoming history of twentieth-century creationism.

While on the SWT campus, both Van Till and Numbers will be available in the Philosophy Dialogue Room for discussion with students and faculty. The Templeton Lectures are free and open to the public.

Templeton Events

Tuesday, April 7

7:30 p.m.

"The Universe: No Place for a Small God"
University Performing Arts and Cultural Center (UPACC)

Thursday, April 16

7:30 p.m.

"The Evolution of Creationism"
University Performing Arts and Cultural Center (UPACC)



Happy Birthday Copernicus!

Nicolaus Copernicus was born on February 19, 1473 in Torun, Poland. He was an astronomer and a mathmetician. He was also a true Renaissance man: he worked as a lawyer, a doctor, a bailiff, a governor, and a tax collector.

He is best known for his formulation of the Copernican theory, which stated that the Earth revolves around the sun. This theory was the first to challenge the church's idea that the Earth was the center of the universe. Copernicus died on May 24, 1543. This Februrary is his 525th birthday.

Faculty Notes

Professors Lynne Fulmer and Gil Fulmer will present the following papers at the Popular Culture Association convention in Las Vegas in February and at the New Mexico/West Texas Philosophical Association conference in El Paso in April:

Popular Culture Association:

Gil Fulmer: "Exporting Values: Evangelism Among the Stars"

Inspired by the renewed speculation about the possibility of alien life forms and the cultural conflicts and ethical questions this possibility raises, Fulmer examines two concepts of ethical evangelism, an exclusivist one from British astronomer E.A. Milne, and an inclusivist one from philosopher John Hick. Using these concepts to explore how we might apply ethical values in contact with alien life also can provide some insight into how existing ethical concepts relate to terrestrial species.

Lynne Fulmer: "Can This Marriage be Saved: Will Feminism Survive the Pornography/Sexuality Debate?"

This paper looks at the tension between the antipornography forces (e.g. MacKinnon, Dworkin) and the prosex forces (e.g. Strossen, Tisdale, Kipnis) of feminism and raises questions about whether there is any common feminist core beneath such differences. More than a minor quibble, the disagreement over the pornography/sexuality issue within feminism has important implications for how we are to understand our culture and how we are to improve the quality of women's lives, as well as for who we are and who our allies are in the political debate.

New Mexico/West Texas Philosophical Association:

Lynne Fulmer: "Affirmative Action: Judith Jarvis Thompson on Preferential Hiring"

Examining Judith Jarvis's claim that victims of social injustice (e.g. women, blacks) are owed reparations by the community and that hiring preferences for such groups do not constitute an injustice for those who are not members of that group, Lynne Fulmer argues that criticisms of Thompson raised by Robert Simon and Robert Fullenwider show that Thompson's case analysis fails to provide a completely satisfactory defense of preferential hiring and may rest on unclear moral foundations, although their counterclaims also require further strengthening in order to provide an adequate rebuttal of Thompson's view.

Gil Fulmer: "Is Phillip Johnson's Theism Politically Excluded?"

In this paper Gil Fulmer responds to the claim (by

Jerry Sherman in "The Politics of Metaphysics: An Open Letter," New Mexico/West Texas Philosophical Association, 1997) that the views of Phillip E. Johnson are excluded from full and proper consideration for "political" reasons, namely, that metaphysical naturalism as a world view is so firmly entrenched in the intellectual establishment that criticisms of it are systematically ignored. Fulmer argues, on the contrary, that Johnson seems unaware of the contemporary philosophical situation, in which theistic views such as his have long been debated, with arguments pro and con extensively discussed. A philosophically competent contribution to this debate would require a high standard of detailed argument, which Johnson does not provide.

Professor Lynne Fulmer will also travel to Amsterdam in June to present a paper "Assessment, Computers, Flow Charts, and Critical Thinking" to the International Society for the Study of Argumentation. Her paper involves the teaching of critical reasoning, particularly reason and argumentation, as a group of processes that can be reinforced through the use of flow charts and computer exercises. The exercises and techniques discussed in the paper were developed by Professor Fulmer in an assessment project conducted in her introductory philosophy classes at SWT.

Professor Marie-Luise Schubert Kalsi has an article "The Problem of Self-Presenting Properties in Chisholm's Theory of Knowledge and the Speckled Hen" in The Philosophy of Roderick Chisholm, The Library of Living Philosophers, Vol. XXV, 1997. This article addresses the foundationalist or internalist methodological principle of inward turning whose key concept is that of self-presentation. Chisholm's definition of self-presentation is designed to cover all and only those properties which are selfpresenting. It is shown that the definition does not work in all cases and that it is not necessary. Professor Kalsi uses the example of the speckled hen to show that a multiplicity of things (speckles in this case) can be given in (internal) perception without the requirement that it is a definite number of things.

Paul Wilson, Critical Thinking Lab Coordinator, will present a paper "Personal Action and Societal Structure: A Feminist Conflict Assessment of Abortion," at the Southwestern Social Science Association on March 19th, 1998.

Philosophy Dialogue Series SWT- Spring 1998

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 FEBRUARY CONTEMPORARY ETHICAL 188UES: BIOETHICS, PART 1	2	3 ·	4	5 Dr. Richard Hull: When Is a Person Genetically Diseased? 2pm (in TMH 101); follow-up at 3pm in the Dialogue Room	6 Cloning: A Panel Discussion Fr. Art Gramaje, Prof. Caroline Benjamin, Prof. Ed Mihakinin. 2pm; PHI SIGMA TAU Meeting @3pm	7
8 CONTEMPORARY ETHICAL ISSUES: BIOETHICS, PART 2	9 Prof. Vince Luizzi: Issues in Organ Procurement 2pm	10	11	12 Prof. Rui Zhu: Ethical Issues of Euthanasia 2pm	13	14
15 THE COPERNICAN REVOLUTION	16 Prof. Gil Fulmer: Exporting Values: Evangelism Among the Stars 2pm	17	18 Prof. Russell Doescher: Copernicus and the Paradigm Shift 1pm	19 Jose Alfredo Bach: The Copernican Revolution and Pie in the Sky 12:30pm	20 film: <i>Contact</i> 1pm	21 HAPPY 525TH BIRTHDAY, COPERNICUS!!
²² Leibniz	23 Prof. Ise Kalsi: <i>Mechanics and</i> <i>Monads</i> 2pm	24	25	26 Paul Wilson: <i>The</i> Best of All Possible Worlds? 12:30 pm	27	28
1 MARCH Sean LeBeau's film week	2 film: Maya Deren's Meshes in the After noon 11am; Seven Samurai 3pm	3 film: Ingmar Bergman's <i>The</i> Seventh Seal 11am; Persona 3:30pm	4 film: Sex, Lies and Videotape 11am	5 film: <i>Ikiru</i> 11am; <i>Vagabond</i> 3:30pm	6 PHI SIGMA TAU Meeting @ 3pm Election of Officers	7
» M	9	10 D	11 T	12	13 R	14 M
15	16 SPRING BREAK	17 SPRING BREAK	18 SPRING BREAK	19 SPRING BREAK	20 SPRING BREAK	21
22 Science and Religion featuring Richard Swinburne	23	24 Why God Allows Evil 12:30 pm (in LA 311); God and the World 7:30pm (at Evans Auditorium)	25 Simplicity as Evidence of Truth 9am (in LA 311); Open Dialogue with Swinburne 3pm	26	27	28
29 80CIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY	30 Brad Jurica: Gender Differences in Video Game Playing Behavior 1pm	31 Prof. Lynne Fulmer: Judith Jarvis Thomson on Affirmative Action 12:30 pm	1 APRIL Paul Wilson: The Intersection of Philosophy and Sociology 1pm	2 Prof. Rebekah Ross-Fountain: Gender Identity and Political Discourse 12:30 pm	3 film: Spike Lee's Do the Right Thing 1pm PHI SIGMA TAU Meeting @ 3pm Initiation of New Members	4
5 THE CREATION/ EVOLUTION DEBATE, Part 1	6 Prof. Stephen Springer: Creation- Can We Be Certain? 1pm	7 TEMPLETON LECTURE SERIES Prof. Howard Van Till: The Universe: No Place for a Small God 7:30 pm (at UPACC)	8	9	10	11
12 THE CREATION/ EVOLUTION DEBATE, Part 2	13 Prof. Bob Dyal: Ultimate Origins: Should There Be a Controversy? 1pm	14 James Love: Biblical Creationism and Science 3:30pm	15	16 TEMPLETON LECTURE SERIES Prof. Ron Numbers: The Evolution of Creationism 7:30pm (at UPACC)	17	18

Dialogues take place in the Dialogue Room, LA 367 unless otherwise indicated. Topics and times are subject to change. For information call 245-2285.

Student Notes

Daniel Rodriquez and Roel Trevino are Delta chapter's representatives to the Liberal Arts Council for this semester. Many thanks to them for taking on this responsibility.

This semester, several students are working on honors projects:

Shane Denson will argue for a pragmatic theory of knowledge, loosely construed. His thesis includes subarguments for an anti-foundational, contextual theory of justification, a pragmatic theory of truth, and a behavioral theory of belief. He also argues against skepticism and considers the impact of a historicist definition of knowledge on philosophy in general. Professor Peter Hutcheson is advisor for the project.

Franciso Gomez is working on a film study for his honors project. "Table-cloth" is a dark study of two mentally disturbed young students who try to concretize their identity and free themselves from conventional moral strictures by committing a random act of violence. According to Francisco, the film uses Nietzschean and Kierkegaardian motifs to explore the implications of moral relativism and existential freedom in the face of psychological determinism. Professor Jeff Gordon is advisor for this project.

"Gender Differences Related to Video Game Playing Behavior." Brad, who has a double major in philosophy and psychology, will present his findings at the Psi Chi Convention at TCU on February 13-14 and at the Southwest-

ern Psychological Association Convention in New Orleans in April. He will also discuss his thesis in the Philosophy Dialogue Room on March 30th. Professor Audrey Mc-Kinney is a reader for this project.

In Alumni news, Chris Andrews, December philosophy graduate, was accepted to North Texas State University's counseling program and began graduate work there in January. Congratulations, Chris.

Carlos Armintor is beginning his second semester of work toward a master's degree in philosophy and social policy at American University in Washington, D. C. He has recently completed an internship with Congresswoman Diana DeGette of Colorado, and will soon begin a new job at the Congressional Quarterly.

Ryan Kane, past president of Phi Sigma Tau, left for Poland in January to teach English.

Steve McGovern, another December philosophy graduate, completed an honors thesis in the fall in the area of aesthetics. He will be moving back to his family home in Boston in February, where he will join a hockey team and begin the process of applying to graduate schools. He is interested in the relationship between aesthetics and athletics. Stay in touch, Steve.

We received a nice message from D.J. Seidel, one Brad Jurica has completed an honors thesis titled of the first presidents of the SWT Delta chapter of Phi Sigma Tau, in October. D.J. and his wife Julie (also a former SWT student) live in Houston, where D.J. practices law.

Special Initiation Held at Anniversary **Banquet**

In October twelve individuals were initiated into the Delta chapter of Phi Sigma Tau at the banquet celebrating the 20th anniversary of the SWT Philosophy Department. They are:

Mike Arfken, Tommy Maness, Luke Bellville, John Meek, Daniel Bissett, Daniel Rodriquez, Patrick Hoyt, Elizabeth Renfro, James Hulgan, Paul Stearns, Jeff Joy, Carolyn Sue Taylor

Current Phi Sigma Tau Officers are: Shane Denson, President; James Love, Vice-President; Brad Jurica, Secretary-Treasurer; Jo Ann Carson, Faculty Advisor.

Election of officers for next year is scheduled for the Phi Sigma Tau meeting on March 6th.

The next initiation is scheduled for April 3rd. For information on qualifications for membership or to suggest a candidate for initiation contact Jo Ann Carson or Brad Jurica.

Student Notes

SWT Student Philosophy Symposium

Last October the SWT Philosophy Department held its first annual Student Symposium. Students came from universities from around Texas and even from outside of the state to read philosophical papers on a variety of subjects. The Symposium was a chance for students to share their papers and thoughts in front of faculty and fellow students and to discuss them critically. There were 12 papers read on topics such as: ecofeminism, the problem of evil, and sociobiology. SWT philosophy students and graduates were in the audience, along with Professors Hutcheson, Carson, Fulmer, Zhu, and Joy. The Philosophy Department plans on bringing back the Symposium on an annual basis, with the next one planned for November, 1998. A collected edition of the papers that were presented at last year's Symposium can be obtained by contacting Prof. Carson. A full list of those papers and the presenters follows below.

Presenters and topics at the 1997 Student Symposium:

James Love (SWT):
Augustine and Neo-Platonism

Roel Trevino (SWT): Hume's Criticism of the Argument from Miracles: A Modern Approach

Chris Andrews (SWT):
A Critique of the Argument from Design

Bryce Bedford (Baylor):

Mary Moody Emerson: A Socratic Figure

Ryan Kane (SWT):
A Reconciliation Between Form and Meaning in Literary
Theory

Rafia Zacaria (Belmont): Plato's Ion: Treading the Boundries Between Poetry and Philosophy

Victor Boutros (Baylor): The Flux of Faith: An Investigation into Faith Progression in the Book of Job and Elie Wiesel's Night

Francisco Gomez (SWT): Critique of CORNEA

Jason Berman (Baylor): No Place To Go: A Critical Examination of Sociobiology

Patrick Hoyt (SWT): Ecofeminism and Cyberfeminism: A Critical Comparison

Shane Denson (SWT):
Skepticism and the Cultural-Critical Project

"What am I doing?"
by Melissa Lomax-LeBeau
(Inspired by Ayn Rand's book *The Fountainhead*)

Sitting here,
I feel that I am trapped inside
the tiny little box that is my world.
I try to break away from the inside
of my glass surroundings, but I feel
that I am just another ornament
that must be looked at and stared at.

They pass around me and stare at the crystalized box.
They seem to look upon me with an utter contempt for what I am.
Then, after I have made my outburst, I demur and decide to take the role that they have wanted to give me for so long.

They then look upon me with utter amazement.
I comply to their standards and have become an unreal version of what I was before.
They are so happy that I am able to be what they want me to be, even if it is just the rose-tinted glass box that they see.

Lab Report:

Happy New Year and welcome to a new semester. The Philosophy Dialogue Series promises to be an exciting one this Spring. March will bring the arrival of Professor Richard Swinburne, who will give a lecture to a large audience in Evans Auditorium, and speak to Professor Joy's "Western Religions" class and Professor Hutcheson's "Philosophy of Science" class. We will also have an open dialogue with Professor Swinburne in the dialogue room. With the hard work of Professor Joy, the Templeton Lecture Series, scheduled for April, will bring visits from Professors Howard Van Till and Ron Numbers. The two gentleman will give lectures in Evans as well as visit our department for some discussion in the dialogue room.

The topics for the dialogue room this semester are as follows: Bioethics, The Copernican Revolution, Leibniz, Social and Political Philosophy, and The Creation/Evolution Debate. We have reserved the week of March 23rd solely for Swinburne's visit, appropriately entitled, "Science and Religion featuring Professor Richard Swinburne." We will also hear from Dr. Dick Hull during "Bioethics" week, and we will have a visit from Dr. Jack Rooney in February who will be speaking on Legal Ethics.

As always, feel free to contact me at 245-2403 for any questions regarding the dialogue series or the Critical Thinking Lab. The Lab Hours this semester are Monday and Tuesday, 8am-7pm, and Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, 8am-5pm.

Paul Wilson
Critical Thinking Lab Coordinator

Officers of the Delta Chapter of Phi Sigma Tau for '97-'98 are:

Shane Denson......President
James Love.....Vice-President
Brad Jurica....Secretary/Treasurer

Jo Ann Carson......SWT Faculty Advisor

"Philounton Sophian Time"

The Phi Sigma Tau Bulletin

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WORDS FROM THE CHAIR

This March we will host a reading group at the San Marcos Public Library for 25 members of the San Marcos community. Under the direction of members of the philosophy faculty, participants will read and discuss Swinburne's *Is there a God?* in preparation for Swinburne's visit later in the month. The group will also have a chance to meet with Swinburne during his weeklong stay in San Marcos.

The Price Lecture Series of Campus Christian Community and the SWT Philosophy Department arranged to bring Swinburne, a well-known Oxford University professor, to deliver a public lecture and to meet with some of our classes. We had considered for some time the possibility of organizing a reading group for the community, and once plans were in place for Swinburne's coming to SWT, the time seemed right. And we were right; the time was right! Texas Council for the Humanities agreed to fund our grant proposal for the reading group. Special thanks and credit go to Prof. Jo Ann Carson and Paul Wilson, our Lab Coordinator, for their efforts in securing funding from this prestigious agency.

We would like to connect more reading groups with the speakers we bring to campus and eventually make them regular events in the community. At the same time it makes sense to consider other ways we can bring philosophy to the San Marcos community and to the greater community of SWT philosophy alumni. Please let us know what you think.

Vince Luizzi Chair, Department of Philosophy