



# VIRTUOSITY:

## Newsletter of the ASCP

Australasian Society for Continental Philosophy

## Issue 6, November 2015

*The ASCP circulated a newsletter during the latter part of the 1990s under the title “Virtuosity.” We re-launched the newsletter in 2009 as a way of detailing important news and events of interest to members of the ASCP and wider Continental philosophy community in Australasia. This issue gives a summary of important events over the past year, as well as thoughts on future directions of the Society. Future issues of the Newsletter will include news, conference calls, new journal issues, links to reviews of ASCP authors, and other items of interest to the Australasian Continental philosophy community. We look forward to receiving contributions from members of the ASCP community and welcome ideas or suggestions for future issues. Thanks to all the contributors to this issue.*

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### 1. Welcome

Welcome to this late edition of *Virtuosity* for 2015. As the annual conference is almost upon us, it has been an eventful year politically for Higher Education, if not for continental philosophy — with last year’s peculiar assault on continental philosophy behind us for the moment (see the 2014 issue of *Virtuosity*). This year we witnessed the emergence and then shelving of federal legislation to deregulate funding of universities, and the prospects of the humanities tracking uncertainly with those vicissitudes. Indeed, higher education was for once looking to be a key election issue, as various parts of the community rallied around its significance as a public good. As I write the government is setting adrift a new thought bubble that would fund research according to its “impact and engagement” rather than the quantity



or quality of publications. Presumably this means capacity to monetise research by attracting business partners, although it is uncertain at this point exactly what it might mean for the humanities. We may need to get back to our keyboards and out into the streets to defend what continental philosophers do, and the ASCP will work with the AAP to strategise on this issue.

The continental philosophy community has maintained an impressive level of activity this year, with conferences on psychoanalysis, cinema, hermeneutics, biopolitics, and relationality held in Australasia this year, as well as regular workshops and colloquia and a robust presence at the AAP — held this year at Macquarie, a stronghold of continental thought in the region. A new continental philosophy journal has also launched, based in New Zealand: [Continental Thought & Theory](#). One of our Melbourne-based members, Bryan Cooke, has also launched a podcast, [Philosophy Can Ruin Your Life](#), the inaugural episode of which features Justin Clemens.

Our own Jess Whyte of Western Sydney University received an ARC DECRA in the latest round of announcements, for a project on “The Invention of Collateral Damage and the Changing Moral Economy of War.” Dalia Nassar won an ARC Discovery Grant to “investigate a distinctive tradition of empiricism that emerged in Germany during the Romantic period,” and “illustrate important parallels between this tradition and contemporary environmental philosophy.” Finally, Andrew Benjamin and Jeff Malpas won a joint Discovery Grant to “develop a new philosophical anthropology that centres on understanding human beings in terms of both place and commonality.” These grants are unfortunately increasingly scarce, and I’m sure members with worthy projects were also unsuccessful this year. However, continental philosophers have fared comparatively well in this context of scarcity, and on behalf of the ASCP I’d like to extend congratulations to those of our number who were successful (and apologies if I’ve not mentioned someone I ought to have acknowledged).

I’d like also to acknowledge some new appointments of continental philosophers to academic positions this year, including Mark Kelly, Dennis Schmidt,

and Jennifer Mensch at Western Sydney University; Undine Sellbach to Cultural Studies at Macquarie University; Louise Richardson-Self to Philosophy and Gender Studies at University of Tasmania; as well as Jon Roffe as Vice-Chancellor’s Postdoctoral fellow at UNSW; Daniela Voss as an Alfred Deakin Postdoctoral Research Fellow at Deakin University from March 2016; and Petra Brown has taken up a teaching scholarship at Deakin. Apologies again if I’ve missed anyone — this is all that has reached me through the grapevine.

This year the ASCP executive has seen a little turnover, with Magdalena Zolkos, treasurer from 2012–2014, taking a break from service to the society — Sean Bowden is now in this role. Magdalena was treasurer during a period of growth for the ASCP, and added significantly to the good shape of the society: her contribution is missed. Laura Roberts and Ricky Sebold joined us as Postgraduate and ECR representatives, respectively, and also led the postgraduate/ECR working party. Jack Reynolds has returned to the committee in the role of Institutional/Government Liaison; as has Marguerite La Caze in the new Equity and Diversity Officer position, which she shares with Ross Barham.

The ASCP book series, with Rowman & Littlefield International, continues to invite proposals from researchers working in continental philosophy at all stages of career. See [this page](#) for more information, and contact me ([j.faulkner@unsw.edu.au](mailto:j.faulkner@unsw.edu.au)) or Simone Bignall ([simone.bignall@flinders.edu.au](mailto:simone.bignall@flinders.edu.au)) if you would like to pitch a book for the series.

Finally, if you haven’t connected with the Australasian Society for Continental Philosophy on social media, our [Facebook](#) page now has over a thousand members. It’s an ideal forum to connect to philosophers worldwide, and to advertise local events and items of interest.

- *Joanne Faulkner, Chair, University of NSW*



## 2. ASCP Conference 2014, Australian Catholic University, Melbourne, Dec 4-6

The 2014 ASCP Conference was held at ACU Fitzroy from 4-6 December. The conference featured many interesting papers and opportunities for great conversations. Genevieve Lloyd's keynote was a particular highlight for me. Another particularly enjoyable session was the Women In Philosophy session chaired by Jo Faulkner with Catherine Mills and Jodie McNeilly. The panelists shared their own experiences as women academics offering advice to the audience based on their experiences. The session then merged into a more general, casual and lively discussion among the group. Apart from the practical advice that I learned at this session I left feeling part of a community of women philosophers intent on supporting one another in the attempt to create change in the discipline. An important point was made about finding academic mentors and as a recent PhD graduate from The University of Queensland I realized how lucky I am to have exceptional academic mentors like Michelle Boulous Walker and Marguerite La Caze in close proximity. I do hope that a mentoring program becomes a reality and something the ASCP champions as it seems an important way to support women philosophers entering the discipline. After attending the Women In Philosophy session I feel assured that there is a growing awareness of the need to cultivate and support the community of women philosophers in Australia and I am glad to have been part of this in 2014. The 2015 conference will be hosting a session on diversity in the discipline and I am really looking forward to this. While I am cognizant that the issue of Women in Philosophy is a concern, and a concern close to my own work in feminist philosophy, I think this discussion needs to extend toward conversations around Minorities in Philosophy and I am looking forward to the discussions at this year's conference.

Another enjoyable part of the conference was meeting new academics working on exciting projects. Af-

ter hearing Dr Helen Ngo's paper at the conference Bryan Mukandi and myself asked the UQ Philosophy department to invite Dr Ngo up from Melbourne to give a paper as part of the UQ Philosophy Series. We made good use of Helen's time while she was visiting us in Brisbane as she also gave a lecture at the Queensland School of Continental Philosophy entitled "Racism and the Phenomenal Body" and she was part of a panel organized by the UQ Student Philosophy Association entitled "Meditations on Minorities in Philosophy". All events were well attended and created quite a stir here at UQ. Importantly, none of this would have happened if we hadn't met Helen at the ASCP conference last year. With this in mind I really encourage all attendees to make the most of the connections you make with other PhD candidates and new academics at the ASCP and to create for yourselves new opportunities for future research partnerships.

*- Laura Roberts, Postgraduate Representative, University of Queensland*

## 3. Upcoming 2015 Conference

The University of NSW in Sydney will host this year's conference, from the 2nd to 4th of December. This year's keynotes include Amy Allen — author of *The Politics of Our Selves: Power, Autonomy, and Gender in Contemporary Critical Theory* (Columbia UP, 2008) and the forthcoming *The End of Progress: Decolonizing the Normative Foundations of Critical Theory* (Columbia UP, 2016) — and Professor of Philosophy at Penn State University; and Alison Ross — author of *Walter Benjamin's Concept of the Image* (Routledge, 2014) and *The Aesthetic Paths of Philosophy: Presentation In Kant, Heidegger, Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy* (Stanford UP, 2007) — from Monash University.

Our planned third keynote, Paola Marrati, has unfortunately had to cancel her trip due to personal reasons. We are proud to announce Dennis Schmidt as a keynote speaker. Dennis was recently appointed as Professor of Philosophy at Western Sydney Univer-



sity, and prior to that worked in the Department of Comparative Literature at Penn State University. He is the author of *Between Word and Image Heidegger, Klee, and Gadamer on Gesture and Genesis* (Indiana UP, 2013) and *Lyrical and Ethical Subjects: Essays on the Periphery of the Word, Freedom, and History* (SUNY, 2005), among other books.

Staff from across UNSW will coordinate thematic streams, as continental philosophers are located in Literary and Film Studies, Political Science, Environmental Humanities, and Law as well as Philosophy. The conference will also feature various book and topical panels, and Postgraduate/ECR and Equity and Diversity information sessions.

- *Joanne Faulkner, Chair, University of NSW*

## 4. Winner of the ASCP Postgraduate Student Essay Prize

The ASCP's Postgraduate Essay Prize 2014 was awarded to Jessica Marian, for her paper titled 'Styling against absolute knowledge in Derrida's *Glas*'. The article, which will be published in the upcoming issue of *Parrhesia*, argues that *Glas*'s highly experimental style is intimately linked with its philosophical project, and that it stages an attempt to circumvent the possibility of a complete, closed text and an absolute philosophical position. The paper stood out from other excellent papers due to its inspiring nature, its insightful observations, the lively and engaging writing, and the significance of its conclusions.

Jessica is a PhD candidate at the University of Melbourne, in the English and Theatre Studies department in the School of Culture and Communication. Her thesis is on the concept of 'style' in French theory and looks at how Jacques Derrida, Maurice Blanchot and Sarah Kofman present their critical work, particularly in relation to readings of various literary texts.

- *Sean Bowden, Treasurer, Deakin University*

## 5. New ASCP Equity and Diversity Role

The purpose of the role is to support and promote equity and diversity both in the Australasian Society for Continental Philosophy and in the philosophical community more broadly.

This year we're beginning with a statement on equity and diversity on the ASCP site, with plans to develop a substantial page with a range of resources. We have been regularly posting relevant material on our Facebook page.

### Conference Session

Continuing on from last year's well-attended session, 'Women in The Philosophy Profession', there will be a conference session on diversity and equity issues in philosophy at this year's ASCP conference at the University of New South Wales, 2nd-4th December, 2015.

### Course materials

We are preparing a collection of course materials for use in courses in Continental Philosophy. These will include discussions of curriculum and pedagogical issues, as well as references on issues concerning age, anti-racist and decolonial philosophy, class, disability, feminist philosophy, sexual orientation, transgender issues, and works by women. Please email [m.lacaze@uq.edu.au](mailto:m.lacaze@uq.edu.au) with suggestions.

If you need advice about how to take into account equity and diversity in organising conferences, workshops, editing, or teaching, please feel free to contact us.

- *Marguerite La Caze, Philosophy, University of Queensland & Ross Barham, Philosophy, Melbourne High School, Equity and Diversity Officers*



## 6. Call for Expressions of Interest: Postgraduate Representative

The ASCP committee is searching for a postgraduate representative, to advise on HDR matters and issues as they affect HDR students. Laura Roberts fulfilled this role in 2015, co-convening, with Ricky Sebold, the Postgraduate and ECR working party, and we are grateful for her input this year. However, Laura is no longer a PhD student.

If you are interested in discussing the role with me, or putting in an expression of interest, please let me know at [j.faulkner@unsw.edu.au](mailto:j.faulkner@unsw.edu.au).

- Joanne Faulkner, Chair, University of NSW

## 7. SPEP 2015

For the fifth consecutive year, the ASCP held its own satellite session at the annual conference of the Society of Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy (SPEP).

SPEP is the biggest continental philosophy organization, and their annual conference is a meeting place of academics, publishers as well as students. It is important that Australian philosophy is officially represented with its own panel in the SPEP conference.

The so-called satellite panels take place on the first morning of the SPEP conference, which is always a Thursday morning. Societies or organization need to apply in order to be admitted in this satellite programme. Other societies included in the programme are, for instance, the Heidegger Circle, the Nietzsche Society, and philoSOPHIA: A Society for Continental Feminism. The ASCP is the only regional society.

This year's conference was organized by Emory University. It took place in Atlanta from October 8 to October 10. The André Schuwer Lecture was delivered by Daniela Vallega-Neu and the closing keynote address by Barbara Cassin. Unfortunately, William

Connelly, who was scheduled to deliver the Thursday keynote address could not attend.

The ASCP panel on the Thursday morning was chaired by Catherine Mills. Speakers included Mark Kelly, Francesco Paradiso and Rhonda Siu. The session was very well attended, and it is expected that the ASCP will hold another satellite session next year.

There was further Australian representation at the conference. Other speakers from Australian universities included Andrew Benjamin, Dennis Schmidt, Catherine Mills, Dimitris Vardoulakis, Andrew Cooper and Alexei Procyshyn. There was also a book panel on Allison Weir's book *Identities and Freedom: Feminist Theory Between Power and Connection*.

- Dimitris Vardoulakis, Western Sydney University

## 8. Special Issue from After-Conference Workshop

If you look at the Winter 2015 (59:1) issue of the influential American philosophy journal *Philosophy Today*, you will find an evidence of the impact that the Australasian community working in the field of Continental philosophy is making on the international scene. The issue in question is a special issue entirely devoted to the philosophies of Hegel and Heidegger, as well as their relation.

The issue is related to the ASCP and its members for several reasons. First, it features Diego Bubbio as Guest Editor. As explained in the introduction written by Diego, most of the essays in the issue were delivered at the "Hegel and Heidegger Symposium" held at Western Sydney University on December 6, 2013, immediately following the annual ASCP Conference. The Symposium was organized as part of Diego's Future Fellowship project "The Quest for the 'I': Reaching a Better Understanding of the Self through Hegel and Heidegger", funded by the Australian Research Council. Four of the seven papers in the special issue are written by Australian philos-



ophers: Simon Lumsden, James Phillips, Jeff Malpas, and Diego Bubbio himself. The other contributors are Angelica Nuzzo, Dennis Schmidt, and David Kolb.

And here we have another connection with the Australian philosophical community – Dennis Schmidt, in fact, who in the Philosophy Today issue was still credited as affiliated to Penn State University, has recently taken up a Research Professorship in Philosophy at Western Sydney University.

I do not have the space here to adequately comment on the merits of this interesting issue, or to engage in any discussion of its philosophical contents. However, I do want to comment on what Diego writes at the end of his editorial introduction. Diego expresses his hope that other researchers may be inspired by the avenues of further study suggested in the issue, and remarks that “Scholars willing to be involved in this dialogical work will be required to translate between different philosophical languages, and may need to develop new concepts”. This seems to be a very appropriate methodological approach, when two important and yet difficult philosophers such as Hegel and Heidegger are at stake; and this attitude seems to me very consistent with the truest and authentic spirit of continental philosophy. Therefore, I agree with Diego that the first steps in such work have already been made in the process of collecting the essays for this issue, and it is good to see the contribution that Australasian Continental philosophy can offer to it. I too hope this dialogue will continue.

- Dimitris Vardoulakis, Western Sydney University

## 9. Members' Books

We would like to congratulate the following ASCP authors for books published since the last issue of Virtuosity:

- Robert Sinnerbrink, *Cinematic Ethics: Exploring Ethical Experience Through Film* (Routledge, 2015)
- Ben Golder, *Foucault and the Politics of Rights* (Stanford UP, 2015)

— M. G. E. Kelly, *Biopolitical Imperialism* (Zero, 2015)

— Luke Fischer, *The Poet as Phenomenologist: Rilke and the New Poems* (Bloombury, 2015)

— Alison Ross, *Walter Benjamin's Concept of the Image* (Routledge, 2014)

— Mark Kelly, *Foucault and Politics* (Edinburgh UP, 2014)

— Mathew Abbott, *The Figure of This World: Agamben and the Question of Political Ontology* (Edinburgh UP, 2014)

And editors,

— Joanne Faulkner and Magdalena Zolkos (eds), *Critical Childhood Studies and the Practice of Interdisciplinarity: Disciplining the Child* (Lexington, 2015)

— Sean Bowden, Simone Bignall, and Paul Patton (eds.) *Deleuze and Pragmatism* (Routledge, 2014)

— Jessica Whyte and Jernej Habjan, (eds.), *(Mis) Readings of Marx in Continental Philosophy* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014)

Our members' books raise the profile of Australasian continental philosophy. More information about members' books published this year can be accessed on the [website](#).

## 10. Annual General Meeting 2015

The Agenda for the 2015 Annual General Meeting of the Australasian Society for Continental Philosophy is as follows:

1. Approval of minutes from 2014 AGM and matters arising
2. Reports
  - Chair's report
  - Secretary's report



- Treasurer's report
- 3. Upcoming conferences:
  - 2016: Deakin
  - 2017:
  - 2018:
- 4. Elections
  - No positions vacant
- 5. Increase to membership fees
- 6. Other business (time permitting)
  - Rowman and Littlefield Book Series
  - Supporting Postgraduates and ECRs
  - Women in CP

The minutes from last year's Annual General Meeting can be accessed at [http://www.andrewinkpin.net/ASCP\\_AGM\\_2014\\_Minutes.pdf](http://www.andrewinkpin.net/ASCP_AGM_2014_Minutes.pdf).