# 

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

LETTER FROM AAPT PRESIDENT	1
COMPUTER CONFERENCE IN AUGUST	1
WORKSHOP/CONFERENCE REMINDER	1
AAPT MEETS IN CINCINNATI	2
CENTRAL CONFERENCE ON TEACHING MEETS	2
PHILOSOPHY TEACHING EXCHANGE	
> James Campbell	3
CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS	6
SHAREWARE LOGIC PROOF CHECKER AVAILABLE	6
ASSISTANTSHIPS IN PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN	7

# 

# AAPT WORKSHOP/CONFERENCE REMINDER

The AAPT's 7th International Workshop/Conference on Teaching Philosophy (IWCTP) will be held at Hampshire College, Amherst, Massachusetts. August 8-11, 1988. The conference will begin on the evening of the 8th (Monday) and will conclude on the evening of August 11th (Thursday). Participants will be able to stay in college housing Thursday night for a Friday departure.

All buildings are air-conditioned, and full recreational facilities are available. The food service serves both regular and vegetarian meals in cafeteria style.

By car, Hampshire College is three-and-a-half hours from New York City and two hours from Boston. It is also easily accessible by train, bus, and plane.

Schedules and registration materials are being mailed under separate cover and should have been received by the time you read this.

If you need further information about the Conference, contact

--Program Chair, 7th IWCTP
H. Phillips Hamlin
Department of Philosophy
The University of Tennessee
Knoxville, TN 37996-0480
Office (615) 974-3255
Home (615) 588-0000

# 

### LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

The Board, in meeting with Phil Hamlin, the 7th IWCTP Program Chair, decided that the president should have the option of delivering a Presidential Address at the Workshop/Conference in August.

Actually, I am eager for the opportunity. The only hesitancy came from Vice President Ladd who, as incoming President, will have to comment afterwards. I promised her a very advanced copy of my text!

Presidential addresses in the APA tend to be very scholarly but socially and politically uncontroversial. In AAPT, they tend to reflect upon aspects of teaching and hence may involve social controversy. I having been thinking about the relationships among research, teaching, racism, and sexism. It seems to me that the first is compatible with the third and fourth but that the second is not. The argument will come in August.

# 

# AAPT TO CO-SPONSOR COMPUTER CONFERENCE

AAPT, the APA's Committee on Computers, and the Department of Philosophy at Dartmouth College announce the Third National Conference on Computers and Philosophy to be held in Hanover, New Hampshire, August 24-27, 1988.

The call is for presentations on intellectual, ethical, and practical problems in the development of philosophical software as well as for papers on all other aspects of the relationships between philosophy and computers. Papers on artificial intelligence are especially invited. The deadline

-> Please to to COMPUTER, p. 2

# 

AAPT News is published in February, June, and October. Deadlines for submissions are January 1, May 1, and September 1.

# Teaching Philosophy

# **Tenth Anniversary Special**

In celebration of the tenth anniversary of its publication, *Teaching Philosophy* is being offered to new individual subscribers at the special introductory price of \$10 for a one year subscription. The regular subscription rate is \$18.50 for individuals and \$42 for departments and libraries.

### Learn About the Trends

Learn about the latest trends on the teaching of philosophy through articles, discussions, reports, and reviews. Discover the most up-to-date information on:

- · Innovative teaching methods and classroom stratagems
- Theoretical issues
- · The use of new materials
- Experimental and interdisciplinary courses
- Evaluation of teaching and assessment of learning
- New books and audio-visual materials

# Comments on Teaching Philosophy

"A unique and important publication . . . . High standards of quality and judgment." —Terry Bynum, Metaphilosophy

"What we know of philosophy began in teaching and what we pass on will be carried by teaching. Join me in supporting the only journal in philosophy devoted to its teaching."

-Michael Scriven (University of Western Australia)

# How to Order

Please send your order to the Philosophy Documentation Center. Your introductory subscription will begin with the first issue of the volume. Orders must be pre-paid and received before November 30, 1988, to qualify for this special *low* rate of \$10 (add \$4 if mailed outside the United States).

INVITATION TO JOIN AAPT

If you teach philosophy or are interested in the teaching of philosophy, join us. Mail this coupon along with \$12 dues to

Richard Wright
Executive Director, AAPT
Department of Philosophy
University of Toledo
Toledo, OH 43606

Name:

11

11

1)

11

11

11

1)

11

1)

11

1)

11

1)

1)

11

11

11

1)

1

11

1}

1)

{}

1)

Address:

City, State/Province, ZIP:

If you are already an AAPT member, xerox this page and pass it on to your colleagues.

89000-00000-353

# CLEVELAND STATE UNIVERSITY

Department of Philosophy AAPT Cleveland, OHIO 44115 NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
CLEVELAND, OHIO
PERMIT NO. 500

# COMPUTER, from p. 1

for submissions is April 11, 1988.

The conference will also serve as a showcase for instructional software for use in philosophy classes.

All inquiries should be directed to the Program Co-chairs, Professors Randy Diepert and Morton Schagrin. Philosophy Department, SUNY—Fredonia, Fredonia, NY 14063.

# 

### AAPT SPONSORS WRITING WORKSHOP

Stephen M. Fishman of the University of North Carolina at Charlotte conducted a workshop entitled, "Writing-To-Learn in Philosophy" at the Central Division meeting of the APA in Cincinnati. This AAPT-sponsored workshop focussed on the Writing-To-Learn Program and its applications to an Introduction to Philosophy course. Below are some observations reported by a workshop participant. More detailed information about Writing-To-Learn may be obtained from Professor Fishman.

### \*\*\*\*\*\*

One block to good writing is the mistaken supposition that an essay needs to be completely planned before the writing begins. Instead, Writing-To-Learn stresses that we may express our ideas in written form precisely in order to learn what we really believe and to discover how our beliefs relate to other.

Another block to better writing is that when we write we too often worry about who will "grade" the product: the student worries about the teacher; the doctoral candidate worries about the committee; and professors worry about the editor. In writing to learn, the writer instead focuses on what he or she can discover by expressing ideas in written form.

In class. Fishman gives his students ten minutes to write a brief essay on an assigned topic. Students will have already read relevant material and are prepared to reflect on the topic. Fishman performs the writing assignment along with his students. The instructor's essay is then subjected to the same scrutiny as are the students' essays. Fishman feels that students "risk" more in terms of philosophical reflection as a result of instructor participation.

Because the writing time is so brief, students seem to worry less about the grade (perhaps because they cannot be faulted for saying too little). In fact, some students initially feel that ten minutes is too long, but by the end of the term complain that the writing time is too short! They have discovered that they have something philosophical to say after all.

# 

### CENTRAL CONFERENCE ON TEACHING PHILOSOPHY MEETS

Kevin McDonnell of St. Mary's College in Notre Dame, Indiana, organized a session cosponsored by The Central Conference on Teaching Philosophy and the APA Committee on Philosophy and Medicine at the April meeting of the Central Division of the APA in Cincinnati.

Five health-care professionals discussed recent changes in health-care systems and technology and some of the ethical problems presented by those changes. The five included two nurses, one of whom supervises an intensive care unit, an administrator employed by a for-profit hospital corporation, a counseling psychologist, and a physician who works in fertility. The panel members told stories, reflected on experiences, and answered numerous questions from philosophers who wanted to know more about what it was like.

There was a long discussion of a case involving a physician who talked the family of a man on life-support systems out of having the systems disconnected. The patient (and his family) suffered for a few weeks more before he died. To the audience, it seemed to be a case of a physician who could not let go of a patient whose difficulties were brought on by a medical procedure which should not have led to such

-> Please turn to CENTRAL, p. 6

AAPT News is the Bulletin of The American Association of Philosophy Teachers

### **EDITORS**

Daryl Close
Philosophy Department
Computer Systems
Department
Tiffin University
Tiffin. OH 44883

Mark Lenssen
Department of Philosophy
and Religion
Ohio Northern University
Ada, OH 45810

0000	,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,	000
Ö	PHILOSOPHY TEACHING EXCHANGE	Ü
0	A regular feature of AAPT News sharing course materials and teaching strategies.	[]
[]	Replies to the editors or the authors are welcome.	[]
0000	000000000000000000000000000000000000000	000

IN THIS ISSUE: Part Two, James Campbell, "Grading Philosophy Papers"

# 

IV

Is there any simply way in which we can justify a constellation of evaluative criteria in grading course work? Is there something about a student's ability to demonstrate familiarity with the course material, for example, or the presentation of his or her own position, which makes a paper that demonstrates these quantities better than another which does not-"better," that is, on some standard beyond what I like or what my teachers thought was important? If I downgrade careless punctuation, or for the student's failure to portray Plato's views on the soul adequately, or if I upgrade for the student's use of an imaginative metaphor, or for an insightful reading of a secondary source, I should be able to offer good reasons why I do so.

does striving to satisfy a Additionally, particular constellation of evaluative criteria perhaps develop skills and attitudes correlate positively with what we as individuals and as a society want and need, e.g., fulfilled adults, wiser parents, better citizens, persons with the ability to approach and learn from the accumulated wisdom of the past, etc.? To suggest that striving to satisfy a constellation of criteria might correlate positively with being a more successful philosophy graduate student is clearly inadequate here, because all that this would suggest is our ability to make the students think more like us-an achievement which itself would still stand in need of at least some justification.

Can we justify a constellation of criteria, or is it simply, as that oft-heard students' question "what is it that you want?" implies, that we are in a position of power and we can decree that in a

philosophy paper certain features demonstrate quality and certain others demonstrate the lack of it? Part of our jobs as teachers is to make sure that our students not only know what to expect as evaluative criteria but also that they perceive the legitimacy of the criteria. Is there any way, then, that we can justify to ourselves-and not incidentally to our students and others-the constellation of criteria which we are using to grade their papers? I think this can be done. One way is in terms of meeting the needs of our society as we recognize them to exist. justify these evaluative criteria in terms of their preparing our students for that world by developing the strengths which the students have and by counterbalancing weaknesses we recognize in To clarify what I have in mind here, need to more closely examine the role of education and philosophy in our society.

V

For our purposes here, education may be described as that process by means of which we try to prepare human beings for an independent yet cooperative adulthood. One key aspect of this educational process is the sharpening of the student's intellectual faculties so that he or she might more easily and effectively recognize and deal with problems. To foster this aspect of education, we would tend to focus on my third evaluative criterion [See Part One of this paper in the February 1988 number of AAPT News—Eds.] of putting emphasis upon the strength of the presentation of the student's position.

Another key aspect of the educational process is its ability to develop the student's innate sociality. Education can help our students open

<sup>---&</sup>gt; Please turn to GRADING, p. 4

up to the ideas and perspectives of other individuals, so that they might enrich their own understanding of human existence and their consequent ability to work easily and profitable with others. To foster this aspect of education we would need to focus on my second evaluative criterion of emphasizing the student's ability to enter into and utilize the positions of others.

A third key aspect of education is its ongoing and cumulative nature, by means of which the student continues to grow and communicate long after he or she leaves the classroom. We must therefore be careful to foster rather than to cut off this growth and communication, to cultivate rather than kill the interest of the student. To do this, we would need to emphasize my fourth criterion of evaluation, effort expended and work produced.

My understanding of the nature of philosophy grows out of this understanding of education: philosophy (broadly) as the elaboration and evaluation of ways of living. In its elaborative aspect, philosophy seeks to explore and understand the possible modes of interpretation of existence. In its more critical aspect, philosophy attempts to evaluate those modes.

To foster both the elaborative and evaluative aspects of philosophy in the student, we would need to emphasize both the second and the third evaluative criteria. I.e., the student ought to be familiar with and able to function within the perspectives of several key thinkers as well as to present his or her own views forcefully. The fourth criterion, effort expended and work produced, similarly must be considered within the context of the student's attempts to elaborate and evaluate positions which reflect his or her own interests and concerns.

Now, there surely will be disagreement as to the accuracy and worth of my remarks in this section, as there may even be with regard to my whole endeavor. Suppose, however, that we consider such a disagreement to be an instance of what is encountered with the application of the initial criterion: agreement with the instructor's ideas. Let us "grade" the paragraphs of this section in terms of their agreement with our own understanding of education and philosophy.

The power of the first evaluative criterion, agreement with the instructor's ideas, can be easily grasped by the reader's "grading" of my remarks thus far. Did not you, the reader, almost intuitively either agree or disagree with the views about education and philosophy that I

suggested above?

More importantly, note the extent to which this agreement or disagreement persists despite one's efforts to dispel it. It is for precisely this reason (and not simply to avoid criticism of my own position!) that I suggest that we ought to use my first evaluative criterion (agreement with instructor's position) as little as possible. Complete divorce from that part of us which itself holds positions is probably not possible, especially when the question is as important as the future welfare of our own students. However, something like a complete divorce is desirable. We must at least aim at neutrality in grading.

VI

At this point, I want to offer an example of how I grade philosophy essays and papers, using as my context an introductory course which examines different perspectives on human nature. In this course, I try to structure the paper assignments and the examination questions around some particular event or situation which offers several modes of interpretation.

For example, in a unit which compares and contrasts the thought of Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud, an incident I might choose would be an apparently "senseless" murder. For the assignment, I ask the students to write a five-page paper consisting of three components. The first of these is an explanation of how an investigator of a generally Marxist persuasion might approach the incident. What assumptions would he or she bring to the investigation? What "facts" would become "evidence?" What hypotheses would be offered as explanation? What possibilities might exist for the murderer and for society in general? The second component of the paper is to answer these questions again, this time from a Freudian approach. Together, these components comprise about two-thirds of the paper and are worth about two-thirds of the grade.

The final aspect of this type of assignment is for the student to examine critically what he or she has just recorded. How adequate were these perspectives as explanations of the situation? What aspects of the situation did each lay open? What aspects were concealed? Were the advantages and disadvantages of the particular perspective the result of the perspective itself or of the problem with which I confronted the students? How would the student explain the incident? How much do the authors in question contribute to the

student's own understanding? Why? What else does the student consider vital?

This type of philosophy paper has several advantages. It strikes a balance between the degree of structure necessary to get an assignment done and the degree of freedom necessary to make the doing of that assignment interesting. It also strikes a balance between the life of the classroom and study-carrel and that of the wider world. With regard specifically to our constellation of the four evaluative criteria, this type of philosophy paper emphasizes those aspects which seem most important and downplays the others.

For example. with regard to the second criterion of demonstrating familiarity with the course material, the student is required a situation from within a pair perspectives to which he or she may have just been introduced and then to attempt to set out a full and adequate interpretation of the situation from the viewpoint of each. With regard to the third criterion of being able to present his or her position, in doing this type of paper the student is required to evaluate the perspectives he or she has just presented as adequate explanations of the situation and then to develop his or her own understanding of the situation. The criterion, the amount of work performed, though admittedly of lesser importance, can still be put to some use. For example, it is possible to reward somewhat a student who had little to offer of his or her own for the diligence to hunt down and cite the proper passage to back up a point, or to downgrade somewhat student who seems to know almost everything except how to spell. Perhaps importantly, the initial criterion of agreement with the instructor's position is almost completely eliminated from consideration.

### VII

I began this discussion with the enumeration of three aspects of grading philosophy papers which I take to be problematic. Grading is, first of all, insufficiently precise: we have to separate papers with fairly continuous levels of merit into distinct grade-groupings which are thought to have constancy through time. I have not examined this question at all, except to say that the other two problems are initially more severe. The second problematic aspect of grading papers is that our grading possesses an inherent degree of arbitrariness to the extent to which we fail to publicize

and adhere to a strict set of evaluative criteria in each grading situation. The third problematic aspect is the most significant: we need to justify the evaluative criteria we use, and their interrelation and relative strengths, in terms of some standard which is more or less objective.

such a standard been found examination of the nature of education and philosophy? Certainly not, if we take 'objective' to imply entailing the agreement of all philosophy Even on this approach, teachers. different evaluators will feel different strengths and lacks in their society and in their students, and these differences will generate different constellations of the four evaluative criteria. But, these different constellations of criteria might all be justifiable if the evaluators can demonstrate how, by means of satisfying them, students can become better. If we can indicate to our students the nature of the standard we use to justify our evaluative criteria-or, with our more advanced students, if we can mutually derive the standard which we are to be using—and if we can create examination procedures and suggest paper topics which enable the students to demonstrate how well they can satisfy the criteria, we may be better able to foster their future as self-conscious inquirers.

When I approach grading papers in this wayrecognizing that I have the students working on certain necessary skills in their papers which need to be developed, recognizing that I make use of a constellation of criteria with which the students are familiar, and recognizing that I cannot do more than ordinally rank papers and impose grade distinctions somewhere—I am still uncomfortable with grading. And, when grading philosophy papers, a certain amount of residual discomfort is probably a good thing. Such discomfort keeps the questions of the arbitrariness of grading and the justifiability of criteria alive. Such discomfort also serves another purpose: that of increased attention to execution. I can never be complacent because there remains the practical problem that each time I face a new paper I may do a poor job of evaluating it. Each time I must instantiate these theoretical considerations, and this instantiation requires vigilance.

# \*\*\*\*\*\*

This paper is an expanded version of a paper presented at the Third International Workshop/Conference on Teaching

# GRADING, from p. 5

Philosophy in Toledo, Ohio, in August, 1980, and has benefitted from the comments of the participants there. It has also benefitted from the insightful comments of Professor Richard E. Hart of Bloomfield College.

—James Campbell University of Toledo

(This is part two of a two-part series)

# 

CENTRAL, from p. 2

problems. But to the administrator, whose knowledge of the particulars came only from the morning presentation, it was a case of a physician for whom this was not the first time that a patient had suffered from unanticipated complications. People familiar with the details concurred. It was illuminating in this instance to have someone who could describe the case as part of a pattern rather than as a unique event.

# 

### POLE'S PROOF CHECKER AVAILABLE

AAPT President Nelson Pole, of Cleveland State University, is distributing his program, Logic Checker Version 3, as shareware. Logic Checker is a formal logic proof checker and truth-table checker. It is menu-driven and designed for easy use by the computer novice. The program contains an extensive data base of exercises for current editions of both Copi texts, Kahane, Hurley, and Simco and James. It supports the rule sets for those texts as well as allowing for the construction of new rule sets. Users may also customize the data base and type in their own exercises.

The program is compiled to run under MS-DOS (IBM PC/XT/AT, compatibles, and near-compatibles), and minimal memory (256K). Neither color nor graphics are required. The program is available for a nominal fee from National Collegiate Software Clearinghouse, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC 27695 (919-737-2468).

(Shareware is software which is distributed by

freely copying the program and giving it to another user, rather than selling a license to use the software through a software publisher. shareware, the program is copyrighted and may not be altered without the author's permission, but it may be copied freely and given (but not sold) other users. Sometimes called "freeware" "user-supported software," shareware is not in the public domain and is not necessarily free. author may chose to charge a fee for the license to regularly use his or her product, or the license may involve no charge at all. Shareware license fees are usually much cheaper than other commercial software because the costs distribution are born by the user. There is currently no registration fee required by the author for the license to use Logic Checker. Ed.)

[][]	[][]	[][]	[][	[][	][]	[]	[][	][	][]		
[]										-	
		U	PCO	IING	EV	EN	TS				
[][]	00	00	UL	[]	1[]		III	1[	1[]		

August 1988

- 7-10 Eighth Annual & Sixth International Conference on Critical Thinking and Educational Reform, Sonoma State Univ., Rohnert Park, CA 94928 (707) 664-2940. Contact the Center for Critical Thinking and Moral Critique at the above address.
- 8-11 7th International Workshop/Conference on Teaching Philosophy,
  Hampshire College. Sponsored by
  the American Association of Philosophy Teachers. Further details
  in this issue of AAPT News.
- Conference on Technology, Communication. and the Humanities, University of Edinburgh. Papers due March 1, 1988. Contact: Director, Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities, Hope Park Square, Edinburgh EH8 9NW Scotland.

<sup>---</sup> Please turn to CALENDAR, p. 7

CALENDAR, from p. 6

24-27

Third National Conference on Computers and Philosophy, Hanover, New Hampshire. Sponsored by AAPT, APA, and Dartmouth Dept. of Philosophy. Contact Randy Diepert and Morton Schagrin, Philosophy, SUNY at Fredonia, Fredonia, NY 14063. Deadline for submissions is April 11, 1988.

These listings are drawn in part from Nancy Simco (ed.), The Philosophical Calendar, published by The Conference of Philosophical Societies.

# 

### TEACHING PHILOSOPHY TO CHILDREN

The Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children at Montclair State College announces that the students in the 1988-89 master's program in Teaching Philosophy to Children will be eligible for assistantships made possible by a grant. The assistantships will provide recipients with a stipend and tuition waiver. The master's program allows students with a Bachelor's degree and a strong background in philosophy to obtain a Master's degree plus certification in less than one year. Applicants interested in matriculating in the program may obtain information by writing Ann Margaret Sharp, Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children, Montclair State College, Upper Montclair, NJ 07043.

# 

### AAPT BOARD MEETS AT APA CENTRAL

The Board met during the Central Division meetings of the APA. Present were Ladd, Hamlin, Merrill (Bishop), Pole, and Wright. No formal actions were taken and discussions centered on details of the arrangements for the 7th International Workshop/Conference on Teaching Philosophy (IWCTP).

It was pointed out that this conference marks the 10th anniversary of the founding of AAPT which took place at the 2nd IWCTP! It is hoped that as part of the celebration there will be a photo montage of images of past conferences.

The next Board meeting will take place at Hampshire College at 1 PM on Monday, August 8, 1988. All AAPT members are welcome to attend.

# 

### SUBMISSIONS TO AAPT News

Submissions on diskette, when possible, are much appreciated. Page composition is done in WordStar 4.0, so WordStar document files are fine. Otherwise, provide a straight ASCII file. Virtually any CP/M 5 1/4" format is acceptable, as well as MS/PC-DOS. Other diskette formats cannot be read. Be sure to include a paper copy with any underlines, etc. indicated.

# PLAN AHEAD