

Committee on Public Philosophy

2016–2017 Membership

Lynne Tirrell, chair (2017)

Jason Stanley, associate chair (2017)

Samantha Brennan (2017)

Lucius T. Outlaw Jr. (2017)

Dorothy Rogers (2017)

Kai Draper (2018)

Sarah-Jane Leslie (2018)

Justin R. Weinberg (2018)

Lori Gruen (2019)

Paul Henne (2019)

Gordon D. Marino (2019)

To: APA Board
From: Lynne Tirrell, Chair, Public Philosophy Committee
Re: APA Public Philosophy Committee Activities, 2016-2017.
Date: 29 June 2017

This is my final report as chair of the APA Committee for Public Philosophy. I hope the APA will continue to offer excellent support for the work of this committee. It is a growing area, crucial to the long-term vitality of our discipline. There is tremendous activity both within colleges and universities, and in cities and towns across the country. Learning about these efforts has been inspiring, and helping to support them has been an honor. I'm grateful to Amy Ferrer and Linda Nuoffer for their support to the committee during these three years, and grateful to the Committee on Committees for consistently sending us excellent new members. This committee is a pleasure to work with, and its projects truly matter. The members are active and excited about the work we do.

BOARD STATEMENT: An important thing the committee did this year resulted in the Board voting to issue a Statement on Valuing Public Philosophy. Sally Scholtz (chair, Committee on the Status and Future of the Profession) and I (as chair of Public Philosophy) drafted the initial statement, and then worked with members of our committees to revise and refine it. We are all grateful that the Board issued the statement. This will be an important asset for years to come as the profession seeks to increase our engagement beyond the academy.

<http://www.apaonline.org/page/publicphilosophy>

MEETING SESSIONS: An important part of our work with the APA membership is done through the sessions we sponsor at APA meetings. We sponsored four sessions at three divisional meetings this year, as listed below. All sessions were very well attended. In previous years, we sponsored two at each meeting: one session on a topic of public concern, and one on methods of doing public philosophy. This year we changed the pattern, and sponsored only one each at the Central and Pacific. For 2018, we already have plans to hold two at each, offering six in total. We have already begun planning for the 2018 divisional meetings, planning sessions relevant to the locations of the meetings. It is going to be a dynamic year with the committee led by Jason Stanley.

Eastern Division 2017 : Baltimore

Because the Eastern Division Meeting was held in Baltimore, we devoted both sessions to Black Lives Matter. The lead organizers were Avery Kohlers (U. Louisville) & Lucius T. Outlaw (Vanderbilt), both members of the committee. These sessions were lively and well attended.

1. A Vision for Black Lives as/and Philosophy

- Devonya Havis (Canisius College) havisd@canisius.edu "Doing Philosophy Dangerously: Insurrection, Defiance, Dissent and the Ethics of Resistance"

- Qrescent Mali Mason (Berea College) Qrescent_Mason@berea.edu "When and Where I Enter: A Vision for Black Lives Matter"
- Paul Taylor (Penn State) pct2@psu.edu "A Vision for the Ordinary: BLM and its Publics."

Chair: Avery Kohlers (U. Louisville) avery.kolers@louisville.edu

2. Methods: Being Citizens, Scholars, Teachers, and Philosophers in the Context of Black Lives Matter

- Robert Birt (Bowie State) rbirt@bowiestate.edu
- Anika Simpson (Morgan State) anika.simpson@morgan.edu
- Calvin Warren (George Washington University) calvinwarren26@gmail.com "Black Anxiety, Black Death: A Nihilistic Meditation"
- Michael Cryor, One Baltimore

Chair: Lucius T. Outlaw, Vanderbilt. l.outlawjr@vanderbilt.edu

Note: Calvin Warren didn't register, and is not an APA member, so we used Berry Fund to pay the APA. We might want to set aside some Berry Fund money each year for the purpose of supporting non-philosophers who come talk with us.

Central Division 2017: Chicago: "Doing Philosophy in Prisons" Organized by Lori Gruen

- Geoffrey Adelsberg (Edgewood College)
- Myisha Cherry (U. Ill/Chicago)
- Lori Gruen (Wesleyan U)
- Jennifer Lackey (Northwestern U) (withdrew)

Pacific Division 2017: Seattle: "Writing Op Eds & other media"

- Rebecca Kukla (Georgetown) rkukla@GMAIL.COM
- Joseph Levine, (U Mass Amherst) jle@philos.umass.edu
- Gordon Marino (Saint Olaf College). marino@stolaf.edu
- Cailin O'Connor (UC, Irvine) cailino@uci.edu
- Chair, Lynne Tirrell (U Mass Boston) lynne.tirrell@umb.edu

Note: This was very well attended, and there was a lively discussion of important topics. There were many untenured faculty in attendance, who wanted advice on navigating public work and career issues, particularly if in uncongenial departments or regions.

OP-ED CONTEST: The Op-ed Contest for Op-eds and blog posts published in 2016 had over 100 nominations. Nominations closed in Spring 2017, and the awards will be given at the Eastern Division Awards ceremony January 2018.

We decided that in the future, nomination is limited to APA members.

2016 Op-Ed Contest Winners:

Katalin Balong. "Inwardness made visible: Kierkegaard, the Holocaust and *Son of Saul*", *NYT*, The Stone. <http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2016/02/28/son-of-saul-kierkegaard-and-the-holocaust/?ref=opinion&r=0>

Andrew Fiala. "Without Faith in Humanity, Cynicism Grows, and Democracy Becomes Mob-Rule". *The Fresno Bee*
<http://www.fresnobee.com/living/liv-columns-blogs/andrew-fiala/article81572897.html>

David V. Johnson. A Democracy Deficit Plagues the US and the EU. *Aeon*
<https://aeon.co/ideas/one-way-the-us-and-the-eu-are-less-democratic-than-china>

Ian Olosov. "How Did "All Lives Matter" Come to Oppose "Black Lives Matter"? A Philosopher of Language Weighs In." *Slate*.
http://www.slate.com/blogs/lexicon_valley/2016/07/18/all_lives_matter_versus_black_lives_matter_how_does_the_philosophy_of_language.html

Michael Robillard and Strawser. "Are Soldiers Morally Exploited?". The Stockholm Center for the Ethics of War and Peace: *The Ethical War Blog*.
<http://stockholmcentre.org/are-soldiers-morally-exploited/#more-1022>

BERRY FUND AWARDS: The committee has \$5000 annually to distribute as grants to members for projects engage in public philosophy. The decision about what to fund rests entirely with the committee. This year the committee dispersed \$2900 in grants.

We are moving toward increasing our organization the grants review, with the help of the APA office, especially Linda Nuoffer. Next year, there will be two grant cycles, with deadlines at the end of September and the end of March. Grants must go through the APA office, and only APA members are eligible to apply. Linda will collect the grants into a Dropbox older, which will also have a spreadsheet, so it will be easy for the committee (or a subcommittee) to review these biannually. We found that the rolling system did not allow us to set clear priorities amongst highly variable projects.