Greetings from the heart of Texas to the former students of the philosophy department at Trinity University!

Speaking of Texas, I have to say that we enjoyed extraordinarily mild temperatures and lots of rain this past spring. The Guadalupe River was running deep, so I was able to do some kayaking.

Despite the cooler spring temperatures, the hummingbirds became regular visitors to my feeders and althea blooms as usual. I’ve managed to grow some tomatoes, instead of watching them wither in the sunshine as in some past summers, and until just recently, there were substantial stretches of time when my air conditioner is not crankng away. In fact, lately we had two July mornings with temperatures in the 60s!

We are coming closer to the renovation of Chapman and nearby buildings. Soon our offices will be moved into Halsell, which will be the new and permanent location of the philosophy department. It is not something we would have chosen ourselves, but we will make the best of it. At least we each have an office and new, modern surroundings. We are looking forward to seeing what this architectural firm, Lake Flato, will come up with for us.

Last October, we held our first annual Philosophy Department Alumni Mixer. We had a good turnout. A number of alumni traveled from out of town or out of state, and several philosophy majors attended as well. There were some great conversations! We will have another mixer this year and will send the details soon.

Judith Norman and Andrew Kania hosted some excellent guest speakers again this past year, and in March. Trinity was the site of a two-day, 42nd annual ancient philosophy workshop, hosted by Damian Caluori. This workshop is usually held at UT Austin, and Damian was invited to host it at Trinity this year.

We are very proud of the work our students are doing. Again the Philosophy Club was strong, with a steady attendance and an “Ethics Bowl” to wind up the last few meetings in the spring. The Hemlock Award for Best Philosophical Essay went to Mary Elizabeth Herring ’21 who wrote “Preserving the Derogatory Content of Slurs Descriptively.” The second-place winner was Carlos Coronado ’19, for his paper, “Perception and Sight in Aristotle.” Once again Kathy Schnare ’89 and her husband, William Reid, funded this award, and we are grateful to them and to the students who participated in the competition. We are fortunate to have Mary at Trinity for another year, while Carlos will begin the Ph.D. program at Emory University this Fall.

The department membership is undergoing drastic changes in the near future. Not only is Curtis Brown in a phased retirement now, which means he will leave in a couple of years, but also Damian Caluori and Rachel Johnson are leaving. In fact, Damian is already getting settled in his new home in Edinburgh, Scotland. I find myself depressed when I think about these good friends and colleagues leaving Trinity.

My remaining colleagues, Judith Norman and Andrew Kania, are doing amazing scholarship as usual. As for me, I am still thinking about what I am, what life is and why these things matter. I will be on leave in the Fall, so maybe I will make some progress. But the business of hiring, which I will help with in the Fall, will take a lot of time too.

I hope you will all consider emailing me some time. And let me know what you are up to. I am always happy to hear from students, whether they are here now or were here long ago.
Another academic year is gone, and a new one will start soon! My big news is that I am going on phased retirement, which means that I will teach only in the fall semester for the next three years, and then I will be through.

So far I am feeling good about this decision. My wife Karen and I also bought a second home in Kalispell, Montana, where I grew up and where my sister still lives. We have spent the summer and Kalispell, and are loving it. Just across the fence from our house is a state park whose trail system we can access in a couple of minutes. Glacier National Park is 45 minutes away. And there are lakes and parks everywhere. It feels like paradise!

I've been reading a few books about animal minds in preparation for my upcoming philosophy of mind class. Although it's a great topic to which philosophers should be able to make interesting contributions, I haven't (yet) found a philosophical book that I'm really excited about. The most comprehensive book I've seen is Kristin Andrews, *The Animal Mind*, which I'll be using in my class. But it's almost too comprehensive! It is so densely packed with material that it is sometimes hard to follow. I enjoyed Peter Godfrey-Smith, *Other Minds: The Octopus, the Sea, and the Deep Origins of Consciousness*, which is enriched by Godfrey-Smith's own encounters with octopuses during deep-sea dives, but the organization and selection of topics seemed a little random. I also enjoyed Michael Tye, *Shell-Shocked Bees and Tense Crabs: Are Animals Conscious?,* but the focus on consciousness was narrower than I wanted for my class. A book by a non-philosopher that I found fascinating was Jennifer Ackerman, *The Genius of Birds*.

I finally got around to reading David Lodge's 2001 novel *Thinks . . .*, one of whose main characters directs a cognitive science institute. There was more philosophy in the novel than I had really expected, including a delightful description of a mural depicting various philosophical thought-experiments (John Searle's "Chinese Room," Frank Jackson's example of Mary the color scientist, etc.). Lodge is a literary critic, and in his earlier novels his characters were too, but he seems able to write well about almost anything.

I am now back in the San Antonio heat and grateful for Trinity's air conditioned offices and classrooms!
I have had a busy and productive year this year, with a much-appreciated leave in the spring to pursue research projects. I spent most of the leave organizing and developing curricula for my Philosophy For Children classes. I've been teaching philosophy in elementary schools for several years now, and although the program is fun and successful, I am trying to think of ways to expand the program to reach more children and make it more sustainable.

I am firmly convinced of the importance of public-facing philosophy (philosophy in the community) – I want not only to expand my schools program, but to find new venues for introducing philosophy. I have started attending a community class in Nahuatl linguistics and philosophy – the language of the Aztees. I recently learned about the notion of “epistemicide” – the erasure of indigenous knowledges through colonialism (from Dan-El Padilla Peralta in the Princeton Classics Dept., who recently gave a talk in San Antonio). I imagine this what happened regionally, in San Antonio. But community groups are active here, working to maintain and revive Nahuatl, including Nahuatl philosophy. (I highly recommend Aztec Philosophy: Understanding a World in Motion, by James Maffie, as an introduction.) It is amazing to discover regional philosophies. The European tradition I work with (like much of the Anglo-American tradition, I believe) tends to be anti-regional, and work with a sense of philosophy as a universalizing enterprise. But I wonder if this attitude often winds up falsely generalizing regional prejudices, and working in the service of epistemicides.

The other public philosophy I am interested in doing is teaching in prisons. This summer I have started teaching in the Dominguez State Jail – as a teaching assistant with a literature and philosophy program run by UTSA. I am amazed by the conversations I have had with the students in jail – the varieties and depths of perspectives they bring to the texts. I am looking forward to working with this program more, and helping open up more opportunities for the Trinity community to be involved with prison education.
Last August, I returned from a year’s academic leave in New Zealand, where I had been working on an introduction to the philosophy of music. I felt refreshed, but a little concerned about the readjustment to teaching life. I needn’t have worried – I had a great fall, teaching Philosophy of Music (incorporating a test run of my book and a visit from Dr. Kathleen Higgins, University of Texas at Austin) and Introduction to Philosophy, using a new book for the first time in many years: *The Norton Introduction to Philosophy*. The new second edition of the anthology features a section on the metaphysics of race and gender, a topic with which I replaced my warhorse section on free will, with considerable success. In the spring, I taught just two upper-division courses – Metaphysics and Philosophy of Film – each with a great group of students.

Along with the teaching, I managed to draft the balance of my book – chapters on recordings and the definition of music. This summer, I am revising and polishing the entire manuscript to submit in August. Despite the book’s being pretty much my sole project for three years, I am still very much enjoying writing it. The chapters on the value of music and music & morality have been a challenge, as has trying to cover a range of musical examples, but I’m pretty happy with the result. I look forward to hearing the thoughts of the readers for Routledge (with whom the book is under contract), and then finally seeing it in print sometime next year.

This coming fall, I have the opportunity to teach a seminar, and I have (unsurprisingly) chosen a topic in the philosophy of music – music and values. I hope not only to pass on some of what I’ve learned writing those parts of my book, but also to learn from my students how they think about music, value, and morality. I’m also excited to host Dr. Julian Dodd, from the University of Manchester, who will be visiting as part of the Stieren Arts Enrichment series, giving talks on musical understanding and the nature of cover versions.

Though I don’t have the same time and opportunities to make music in San Antonio as I do in Auckland, I was pleased to be able to participate in Trinity’s Choral Union in the spring for the first time in several years. I look forward to playing with the revitalized Trinity Symphony Orchestra as part of Trinity’s 150th anniversary celebrations.

As always, I’d love to hear what you’ve been up to, so drop me a line if you have the chance.
I am writing this in the beautiful city of Edinburgh. I moved here for a new job as senior lecturer at the University of Edinburgh. So, sadly, this will be my last contribution to the newsletter.

It has been an eventful year. In the Spring, I organized the 42nd Annual Workshop in Ancient Philosophy. After a hiatus of twenty years, it took place at Trinity for the second time. The workshop was a two-day event with seven talks, each followed by a response, and a keynote address by Yale’s Verity Harte. We had speakers from four continents, talking about Plato, Aristotle, and Plotinus, the three greatest philosophers of antiquity. It was, if I may say so myself, a blast. I would not have been able to manage organizing this event without the help of the incomparable Shirley Durst.

I taught Classical Greek Philosophy, Hellenistic philosophy, Intro, two reading groups, and a new course “Ancient Science and Medicine”. In this course we discussed the first attempts in the history of mankind to systematically and rationally tackle such issues as cosmology, cosmogony, astronomy, biology, and medicine. We also discussed whether ancient science is science which, of course, led to the question of what science is. I much enjoyed teaching this class.

I contributed four chapters to the Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie. Philosophie der Kaiserzeit und der Spätantike (Compendium of the History of Philosophy. Philosophy in Roman Imperial Times and in Late Antiquity). Three dealt with Platonism and one chapter covered skepticism in late antiquity. In addition, I published a paper ‘Socratic Methods in Damascius’ for a volume on the reception of Socrates as well as a review on a new book Plotinus on Consciousness. I continued working on my commentary on Plotinus Enneads VI.1 and VI.2.

I had a wonderful ten years at Trinity and would like to thank my colleagues at the philosophy department, not least Shirley, for everything they’ve done for me during this time. I would also like to thank all my students for their interest and enthusiasm; they made teaching at Trinity a joy. A special thanks to all the students who attended my reading groups over the years.

If you ever visit Edinburgh (which you should), do get in touch.

from DAMIAN CALUORI . . .
This was my sixth year teaching at Trinity. In the fall, I taught Philosophy of Law and Metaethics. Metaethics considers the question of whether there are objective moral truths. My research is in this area of philosophy, so I am always particularly interested to see how students with a variety of personal and philosophical backgrounds understand and approach answering this question.

In the spring, I taught Environmental Ethics and Social & Political Philosophy. Having now taught two sections of Environmental Ethics every year for the past six years, I am amazed and very pleased by how different the class is each year as different groups of students approach the material with different perspectives and interests, raise very different kinds questions and objections, and take class discussions in very different directions. This year’s classes were no exception. I revised Social & Political Philosophy this year to spend more time considering questions of racial justice. I learned a lot from class discussions on this difficult topic.

As for my research, a paper of mine entitled “Practical Deliberation and Background Conditions on Normative Reasons for Action” was published in Ergo this winter.

This coming year will be my last year at Trinity. I am exceedingly grateful to my wonderful colleagues and to the many talented, insightful, and engaged students I have had opportunity to teach in my time here.

The Department of Philosophy thanks Kathy L. Schnare ’89 and her husband, William Reid, for their generous support of the Hemlock Award.
2018-2019 Philosophy Events

2018 Stieren Arts Enrichment Series—Philosophy Lecture

Kathleen Higgins, Ph.D., Yale
Professor, Department of Philosophy, The University of Texas at Austin
President, American Society for Aesthetics
Public Talk: “Aesthetics, Empathy, and Bereavement”
First Year Experience Talk: “Why Is Music So Emotional?”
Department Host: Dr. Andrew Kania

The Stieren Arts Enrichment Series is made possible by Jane and the late Arthur Stieren of San Antonio.

The department also hosted the following Trinity campus events.

"An evening of Spoken Word Performance & Politics"
Remi Kanazi, Palestinian-American performance poet, writer, and organizer, New York City, NY
Host: Dr. Judith Norman

"Freedom & Autonomy as the Justification of a State"
Dr. Oliver Sensen, Tulane University
Host: Dr. Damian Caluori

42nd Annual Workshop in Ancient Philosophy
"Socrates’ Fourfold Classification and the Ethical Project of the Philebus"
Keynote Speaker: Verity Harte, Yale University
Host: Dr. Damian Caluori

“Palliative Care”
Dr. Jason Morrow ’89,
University of Texas Health Science Center Biomedical Ethics class, Dr. Steven Luper Instructor
“Appreciating Characters as Characters”

Colloquium Talk
Dr. Wesley Cray, Texas Christian University
Host: Dr. Andrew Kania

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Keep Calm & Take the Philosophy Alumni Survey
AT
https://inside.trinity.edu/Philosophy

Thank you!
There is a crack in everything. That's how the light gets
Upcoming 2018-2019 Events

Sept. 23, Stephen Sheehi
College of William and Mary
“Decolonizing the Humanities”
4:00PM Northrup Hall 040

Oct. 16, Julian Dodd
The University of Manchester, UK
Stieren Arts Enrichment Series Philosophy Lecture
“Appreciating Covers”
7:30PM Chapman Great Hall

October 4-6, Alumni Weekend
https://new.trinity.edu/alumni/alumni-weekend
https://www.facebook.com/trinityuniversityCAVE

Trinity University

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