

APA Newsletters

Volume 02, Number 1

Fall 2002

NEWSLETTER ON LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDER ISSUES

FROM THE EDITOR, CAROL QUINN

FROM THE CHAIR, MARK CHEKOLA

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FEATURES

DAVID L. HULL
"The Bad Old Days"

RICHARD D. MOHR
"Blueberry Pancakes"

D. SEIPLE
"Foucault's Masked Modernism"





APA NEWSLETTER ON

Philosophy and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues

Carol Quinn, Editor

Fall 2002

Volume 02, Number 1

FROM THE EDITOR

Carol Quinn

University of North Carolina at Charlotte

In this issue, LGBT Chair Mark Chekola shares very important information which came out of fruitful discussion at the April Committee meeting in Chicago. Also included in this issue are three featured pieces. Though short, they are important and interesting — and we even get a recipe for blueberry pancakes (I tried the recipe, and they're great!). I would like to take this opportunity to strongly encourage submissions of items to this newsletter; I would especially like to hear from new voices! Thanks.

Contributions Invited

The editor encourages contributions to the newsletter, especially essays that might fall through the cracks elsewhere for being untraditional in scope or content. Pieces may range from opinion pieces to book reviews to short articles. Commentary on issues important to professional life — teaching, research, and service — are especially welcome. Early contact with the editor is strongly encouraged. **The next deadline is February 1, 2003.** Please contact Carol Quinn at Department of Philosophy, 9201 University City Blvd., University of North Carolina at Charlotte, Charlotte, NC 28223.

FROM THE CHAIR

Mark Chekola

Minnesota State University, Moorhead

Since the Spring newsletter there are two main news items I would like to report. First, the Committee had a very productive session at the Chicago APA meetings in April on issues related to publishing. It was decided to start several projects. One is to do a survey of how many LGBT-related articles have appeared in journals which would be seen as likely places for such articles from 1990 through 2001. We are presently working on this survey, and plan to publish the results in the Spring, 2003 APA LGBT Newsletter. A second project is to collect reports of unprofessional referee comments. A third project is to encourage networking by compiling a list of people and research interests. There are separate announcements about each of these in this newsletter.

The second news item has to do with announcements about position openings. The Committee has been receiving some announcements about position openings from Universities welcoming LGBT applicants. It was decided to distribute such announcements on an email list which has been developed. (Anyone not on it who wishes to be can send a request to be added to the list to me at chekola@mnstate.edu).

Chris Horvath has just finished his term on the Committee, and we thank him for his participation on the Committee. Jacob Hale joins the Committee as of July 1, 2002, for a three-year term. Hale served on the Committee for a one-year term when the Committee was established in 1998. We welcome him back to the Committee.

Current Committee Membership

(with last year of term listed in parentheses):

Chair

Mark G. Chekola (2004)

Department of Philosophy
Minnesota State University Moorhead
Moorhead, MN 56563
Email: chekola@mnstate.edu

Committee Members:

Pamela M. Hall (2003)

Department of Philosophy
Emory University
Atlanta, GA 30322
Email: philph@emory.edu

Jacob Hale (2005)

California State University, Northridge
Department of Philosophy
18111 Nordhoff Street – 8253
Northridge, CA 91330
Email: zeroboyjh@aol.com

Kelly Oliver (2003)

Women's Studies
Old Chemistry Building, #105
SUNY
Stony Brook, NY 11794-3456
Email: koliver@ms.cc.sunysb.edu

Joseph Sartorelli (2004)

Stanford Humanities Center
Mariposa House, Stanford University
Stanford, CA 94305-8630
Email: jsart@quapaw.astate.edu

Kayley Vernallis (2004)

223 East Calaveras Street
Altadena, CA 91001
Email: kvernal@calstatela.edu

Ralph N. Wedgwood (2004)

Department of Linguistics and Philosophy
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
77 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139-4307
Email: wedgwood@mit.edu

Ex Officio:

Editor of *Newsletter on LGBT Issues in Philosophy*

Carol Quinn

Department of Philosophy
University of North Carolina at Charlotte
9201 University Blvd.
Charlotte, NC 28223
Email: cvquinn@email.uncc.edu

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. APA LGBT Committee to Look at Issues in Publishing

At its session April 25 at the APA in Chicago the APA Committee on LGBT Persons in the Profession discussed issues related to publishing, in particular with regard to submission of articles to journals. The Committee had received a complaint regarding poor treatment by a journal reviewer, including what appeared to be homophobic comments related to an issue raised in the paper submitted.

People present at the session discussed concerns about how papers are refereed for journals, and reported experiences of unprofessional behavior on the part of referees, sometimes homophobic and sometimes not. It was decided that it would be valuable for the Committee to collect copies of reports that people submitting articles have received which they have found to be unprofessional, particularly if they seem to involve homophobia. Copies can be sent to the chair of the APA LGBT Committee: Mark Chekola, Department of Philosophy, Minnesota State University Moorhead, Moorhead, MN 56560. Fax (218)236-3097; email: chekola@mnstate.edu.

The paucity of articles on GLBT issues in some appropriate journals was also discussed. Since people present had themselves submitted papers to some of them it is known that the lack is not due to there being no such submissions. It was decided to do a survey of relevant journals. A list was composed, and people present volunteered to survey particular journals for the years 1990-2001 for the number of articles and discussion pieces on GLBT issues. After the data have been assembled a report will be written, with the plan to submit it to the APA and publish it in the Spring, 2003 APA Newsletter on LGBT Persons in the Profession.

The Committee also received a proposal to encourage networking among philosophers, particularly with regard to people seeking reviewers of articles they have written and are intending to submit for publication, prior to their submitting them to journals. People present thought it would also be a good idea to have a list of people and areas they are working on for general communication related to research. It was decided to do two things: (1) Invite people to send requests for possible such reviewers to the chair of the APA LGBT Committee or one of the co-chairs of SLGP. That person would then try to identify a reader. (2) Establish a list of people and what they are working on to foster more networking, as well as to help identify possible reviewers.

2. Send in Your Journal Referee Horror Stories/Complaints

The APA Committee on LGBT Persons in the Profession wishes to collect reports of comments by referees for journals to which articles have been submitted for consideration that you have found to be homophobic, nasty or generally unprofessional. Send them to the chair of the Committee: Mark Chekola, Department of Philosophy, Minnesota State University Moorhead, Moorhead, MN 56563 Fax: (218)236-3097; email: chekola@mnstate.edu.

3. People Sought for Networking List

The Society for Lesbian and Gay Philosophy (SLGP) and the APA Committee on LGBT Persons in the Profession are seeking to establish a networking list. Its purpose is to enable people

to communicate about research. In addition, some people may be seeking someone to review and give comments on a paper the person intends to submit for publication. Please send your name, address, and email address to Wendy Lynne Lee, SLGP secretary: lamp@planetx.bloomu.edu.

4. Want a Reviewer for a Paper?

Would you like to find someone who can review a paper you're planning to submit to a journal? The Society for Lesbian and Gay Philosophy and the APA Committee on LGBT Persons are establishing a networking list (see note in this newsletter about it). Be sure to submit your name and indicate your interests. In addition, if you send a request to one of the SLGP chairs or the APA Committee chair, that person will try to help identify a reviewer:

SLGP Co-Chairs

Robert Hood rhood@frank.mtsu.edu

Peg O'Connor poconnor@gac.edu

APA Committee Chair

Mark Chekola chekola@mnstate.edu

5. APA LGBT Committee Session Planned for Philadelphia APA

The APA Committee on the Status of LGBT Persons in the Profession will be holding the following session at the APA Meetings in Philadelphia in December, 2002. Check the APA Program for details:

Homosexuality and Religion

Chair: Carol Quinn, University of North Carolina at Charlotte

"Homosexuality, Islam and Human Rights,"

Dana Flint, Lincoln University

"Buddhism and Homosexuality,"

Robert Hood, Middle Tennessee State University

"Gay Christian Neo-Liberalism,"

David Seiple, Union Theological Seminary

6. Call for items for the SLGP Newsletter

The deadline for items for the Society for Lesbian and Gay Philosophy newsletter is September 15th. Any items of interest, including short articles, book reviews, teaching materials, announcements, and so on, are welcome. Please send material to Carol Quinn, Department of Philosophy, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, 9201 University Blvd., Charlotte, NC 28223, or by email to cvquinn@email.uncc.edu.

FEATURES

The Bad Old Days

David L. Hull

d-hull@northwestern.edu

So the story goes, we are entering the Age of Diversity. We not only acknowledge diversity but also praise it. The rise of gay rights has played an important role in this movement. No longer is toleration enough. In this short note, I recount my own experiences in academia with respect to the persecution of gay people. We denounce Germany for its treatment of Jews both before and during World War Two. Even gay people have now been added to this list. We were sent to the gas chambers too. But all that took place a half-century ago. Some argue that we should just let it be. Others continue to demand that those organizations and even individual people who cooperated with the Germans and joined in the persecution of the groups on Hitler's list admit what they did and pay due penance.

Recently the head of the Max Planck Institute apologized for its duplicity in the Nazi regime. But where are the acknowledgments by universities and colleges of their persecution of gay people, not a half-century ago but a couple of decades ago? Administrators and professors alike assumed that gay people did not have the right to an education. Some universities and colleges (mainly religious) continue to hold this view and act accordingly. I do not know and have no way of knowing how typical my confrontations with academia actually were. All I know is that I succeeded in avoiding the wrath of university administrators. Some of those administrators are still alive. Some may still be active in academia. It is about time they stood up to be counted. Gentlemanly silence is not good enough.

I must admit at the outset that most of what I have to say is based primarily on my own memories, and I am well aware of how unreliable memories can be. As I searched my way through old letters and occasional news clippings, I realized even more strongly how much our memories can mislead us. Hence, take the following narrative with a grain of salt. It is as accurate as I can make it.

In 1960, when I entered the Department of History and Philosophy of Science at Indiana University, I heard rumors about a gay witch-hunt that had taken place several years earlier. A janitor had been upset by what was going on in the men's room of the main library. When the university administration did nothing, he hid in the attic above the men's room and took photographs of the activity below. Instead of taking these photographs to the administration, he passed them around at a meeting of the Student Senate. So the story goes, numerous students quit school. Whether or not they were expelled, I cannot say, but a professor committed suicide by stepping in front of a car.

In my final year at Indiana University, two male students were discovered having sex in a dormitory room. The administration grilled them, trying to force them to name names, the way that the members of HUAC used to do in the good old days. These two students finally broke and gave the names of eight other students whom they had heard were gay. No proof was required. A low-level administrator who was also gay got a hold of this list and called my lover. Now was not the time to admit anything. The administration had

no evidence. Dick called the others on the list and passed on this information.

I was the last to be interrogated. The administrator kept circling the issue, while I pretended not to know what he was after. Finally, he blurted out that some of my friends had been accused of being homosexual. "My friends are my business." He was somewhat taken aback. I was supposed to play the awe-shucks role. "But," he continued, "birds of a feather flock together. You might get a bad reputation." Once again, I replied that my reputation was my business. After muttering something about the evils of sin, he dismissed me. Nothing happened to any of us on the list. I do not know what was done to the two young men who had given our names in the first place.

One puzzle at the time was Herman Wells, the long time president of Indiana University. It was widely believed that this much-loved man was gay. He lived with his mother and a valet of many years. What he did or did not do down through the years to protect students who were accused of being gay, I do not know. When he died a couple of years ago, none of his obituaries mentioned anything about his private life.

In any case, I did get my degree, and twenty-five years later I was asked back to give a talk celebrating a quarter century of history and philosophy of science at Indiana University (see Grau 1999). As the first student to receive a Ph.D. in philosophy of science in the department, I was expected to reminisce about the good old days. Well, I did not look back at my years at Indiana all that fondly. The professors expected a lot from their graduate students and provided very little in the way of direction or support. I also mentioned that if the university administration had had its way, I would have been expelled from Indiana, and some of those administrators might well be sitting in the audience.

In 1964, I received a letter from the Department of Philosophy at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee offering me a job. In those days you could be hired without an interview. However, since the Philosophy of Science Association was meeting in Milwaukee that year, I took the occasion to meet my future chairman, Dick Peltz. After a bit of small talk, I mentioned that I was living with another guy and intended to live with him the rest of my life. Dick was taken aback a bit but replied, "That doesn't make any difference."

A year or two later, a friend who was a student at the Madison campus informed me that a gay witch-hunt was underway. Any student who broke under questioning was sent packing with a note to his parents informing them that they were sending their fairy son home. Of course, they did not put it quite so bluntly. My friend showed up for his inquisition with a lawyer. Suddenly the university realized that it might be sued, and the investigation was brought to a halt. At roughly that same time, I was up for tenure. One of my fellow professors went to the chair to pass on the rumor that I was gay. "Rumor? He told me that years ago."

In 1971, a couple of gay students at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee approached me about a university policeman who was hanging around the men's rooms on campus in plain clothes, trying to lure students into making a pass. When they did, he arrested them and turned them over to the administration. I asked for a meeting with the relevant administrator to see if such things were actually going on in the Age of Aquarius. They were. Although this assistant chancellor himself did not see anything wrong with homosexual behavior, he also saw no reason to go out on a limb to protect gay students. After all he was jockeying to

become chancellor. I pushed a bit harder, and he informed me that I was in no position to insist on anything, given the rumors that were going around campus about me. "Rumors? I thought that everyone knew I was gay." When I alluded to some rumors going around campus about him, he decided he would do something. As a good administrator, he found a way around this dilemma. He promoted the campus policeman to a desk job.

That same year I asked to attend a meeting of the University Committee of UWM to discuss the rights of gay and lesbian professors. Could the administration fire us at its leisure? A couple of months went by, and I heard nothing. One day I met one of the members of this committee. I asked him what had been decided. He replied that they had voted to expunge my visit from the minutes of the meeting and, in case I asked, tell me that they were not touching the issue. A half dozen years later, I introduced a resolution at the University Faculty Meeting to add "sexual preference" to its Policy on Equal Employment Opportunity. The only objection raised was that "sexual preference" might include necrophilia. The motion was passed by a voice vote. A couple months later, on February 15, 1978, Werner A. Baum, the Chancellor, sent out a memorandum informing the faculty and staff of this resolution.

During the years that the advocates of women's rights were trying to get the Equal Rights Amendment ratified, numerous professional societies voted to meet only in those states that had ratified the amendment. The Philosophy of Science Association was one of these organizations. I could see why a professional society might choose not to get involved in political matters, but if discrimination against women was a legitimate cause for our society to take action, I thought that protecting our gay members also called for some action. Granted, anti-sodomy laws were rarely enforced, but when they were, gay people were sent to jail. At the 1984 meeting of the Governing Board of the Philosophy of Science Association, I introduced a motion for our society not to meet in states with anti-sodomy laws. The motion passed but seemed to have no effect. We continued to meet in states that had anti-sodomy laws. In general, scientific societies found sufficient reasons to take action; philosophical societies did not. Why am I not surprised?

Finally, last year, the Pacific Division of the APA in San Francisco passed a resolution stating that it would no longer meet in "states with anti-sodomy laws but no mitigating laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation." At that meeting I participated in a session entitled "Before the Era of Diversity," implying that we actually were in the Era of Diversity. If the papers presented at this session showed anything, it was that we are not living in the Era of Diversity quite yet. One African-American philosopher participating in this session told about his first APA smoker, where he was asked to get some more chairs. An African-American student in the audience volunteered that the night before, he had been asked to do the same thing. We have come a long way, but we have a long way to go.

References

- Grau, Kevin T. (1999) Force and Nature: The Department of the History and Philosophy of Science at Indiana University, *Catching Up with the Vision*, Supplement to *Isis* 90:S295-S318

Blueberry Pancakes

Richard D. Mohr

r-mohr@staff.uiuc.edu

It all started when Bob and I were in our mid-thirties. “Winnie the Pooh” and “The House at Pooh Corner” came first. Then we read “Moby Dick.”

We went back to pick up “When We Were Very Young” and “Now We Are Six” before moving on to “Remembrance of Things Past.” Proust’s “Giants in Time” took us twenty-two months. And we trudged through some history — Herodotus and Thomas Hobbes’s translation of Thucydides. But we got bogged down in Gibbon and let that book fall before its Empire did. After Proust, we figured we were allowed at least one punt.

We read a couple of Victorian novels, “David Copperfield” and my favorite, “Wuthering Heights.” I remember murmuring “perfect book” as Bob intoned its necromantic final lines in which the narrator contemplates the triple grave of Edgar, Catherine, and Heathcliff.

We worked through some of the “queering the canon” literature — “Billy Budd,” “The Picture of Dorian Gray,” “The Young Torless,” and now, in our early fifties, we are reading Melville’s “Pierre.”

It’s sometimes as little as a paragraph, sometimes as much as ten pages. It is not every night, but nearly so. It is bedtime story — our main daily ritual. Bob reads; I, with the “Concise Oxford” ready in hand, look up the weird words.

Not on every Sunday, but nearly so, we have blueberry pancakes — and not just any blueberry pancakes. These are industrial strength. To be palatable, they have to be prepared the night before so that the buttermilk, egg-whites, and nutmeg have a chance to saturate the rolled oats. About fifty percent of the time, I drop the nutmeg stone into the batter as I sleepily grate away. In the morning, Bob plucks out the stone before adding whole-wheat flour, baking soda, brown sugar, and a generous packet of frozen blueberries, which we’ve preserved from the one Saturday of the year when berries appear bulk rate at our village’s Farmers Market. Fried at a low heat on a cast iron griddle, the cakes take about fifteen minutes to cook through. I get the better part of the “New York Times” read as Bob stands guard and flips. We save our pennies so that we can top the cakes with real maple syrup. Hours in the making, they are savored in minutes. The work and wait stand to the eating as fasting stands to receiving the Eucharist. House guests get our Sunday morning ritual on any day of the week they chance to visit.

Our daily and weekly rituals have been joined by annual rhythms as well. In the early years, we took separate vacations, but now we jointly organize our holidays around carefully plotted trips to mountain lodges — masculine buildings in masculine setting, the interface of manly Culture and manly Nature, or so the fantasy goes. We mockingly call these adventures our Annual Teddy Roosevelt Memorial Treks. They have included journeys to Lake McDonald Lodge in Glacier National Park, The Grove Park Inn in Asheville, North Carolina, and, our favorite, Timberline Lodge on Oregon’s Mt Hood.

Our rituals are not the glue of our relationship. Our love is that. Rather our rituals are a way of placing worth on our relationship, to value it as beyond calculations of interest, well-being, and happiness.

In their book “The Male Couple,” David McWhirter and Andrew Mattison report finding that in long-term gay male

relationships an aspect of the relation itself is frequently experienced as a third element or ‘partner’ over and above the two men themselves. This third element is usually the focus of significant investments of time, energy, care and concern — a home, business, joint avocation, a companion animal, or sometimes civic, political, or religious work. This external incarnation of the relationship relieves some of the confining centripetal pressures frequently found in small families. But, I suggest, it does much more.

The third element ritualizes the relationship. It is the vehicle by which gay men configure their relationships as sacred, as having the same status in an individual’s personal life as divine worth has in the lives of the religious. Sacred values are those for the sake of which one stands prepared to sacrifice one’s interests and happiness in order both to ratify them as one’s basic values and to establish them as a source of one’s identity and sense of self. A sacred object is one that is priceless — one that is not for sale and is irreplaceable — even though its commercial worth may be precisely known and its kind readily available. A few twigs of little or no commercial value can become valuable beyond measure to a religious order through ritual. The rituals surrounding it also define what the order is. Domestic rituals are the means by which the divine continuously dwells within our love relationships even in an era without gods. They stamp on lovers the mark of who they are as a couple.

And as too many gay men now have had to know, they are two things more. They betoken the great sacrifices one is willing to make for one’s lover when opportunity turns cussed, the material fabric of our existence wears beyond mending, and the cycles of life course their final wending. And there, beyond the last post, they provide the substrate and bridge of memory to the beloved.

The Recipe: Bob and Richard’s Blueberry Pancakes

Mix together at least one hour before cooking, but preferably overnight:

1 1/2 cups old fashioned rolled oats (*not* the instant kind)

2 cups buttermilk

3 egg whites (no yolks)

Cinnamon

Several dashes of clove

Some freshly grated nutmeg (the pancakes can absorb quite a lot of these spices to good effect)

Just before cooking stir in:

2 teaspoons baking soda (*not* baking powder)

2 tablespoons dark brown sugar (or honey)

1 cup whole wheat flour

About 2 cups blueberries, fresh or frozen

Preheat griddle or frying pan and brush with butter or margarine before

each use. Cook on low heat. The pancakes will take about ten minutes on

one side and five minutes on the other.

Makes six large pancakes.

Foucault's Masked Modernism

A work in progress

D. Seiple

dis3@columbia.edu

Michel Foucault, the “Saint” of the Queer Movement, has virtually defined one style of postmodern criticism. He has made language an ally to power, and this has informed the standard activist paradigm within Gay Philosophy. By what Foucault called “genealogical” criticism, it’s deemed possible to unmask the normalizing discourse that has been so oppressive to a great many of us. Then, like the Wizardry behind Oz’s curtain, the regime of truth ontologically deflates, and its power is broken.

However, at the philosophically interesting level, this appears to reduce human relations to a play of power. And some — not all of whom are on the “other” side, politically — find this a pretty grim reduction, because it seems to impose upon us a rather narrow range of self-referential categories. For what are we to make of the idea that radical politics is “not liberation but resistance” (Halperin, in *Saint Foucault*)? Isn’t there more to be made of oneself and one’s life, than just a paragon of queer transgression? Wonderfully interesting writers like Halperin may be more complex than this, but even such a simplistic way of putting the issue does raise one of the basic questions of ethics, one that has really taken hold only since Nietzsche and late Romanticism.

For if the personal really is the political, is “resistance” all there is? Is “resistance,” existentially speaking, enough? Not quite, says the Nietzschean — there is *self-invention*. But then here’s the rub: if one is only resisting, how can one create? Unless it involves more than mere transgression, resistance to discourse is still controlled by the terms of that same discourse. Notice here the ghosts of Isaiah Berlin and John Stuart Mill rattling around this assumption — that all one has to do is resist coercion.

This might lead us to give up on Foucault altogether. But this would be a mistake, because it would be missing the promise of Foucault’s later work. There, we notice two things: not only that there are multiple ways of describing any interpersonal dynamic, but also that some of the most fertile discourses for that are precluded by the hegemonies we resist — which is why we resist them. We fight vehemently over language — one of the contested sites these days is around the term “terrorist” — and this is because we sense just where the power resides at our particular cultural moment. Moreover, the power of language lies in the ways it construes objective “truth,” and no construal has any power unless one subjects oneself to the objectivity of the language game being played. So here then is the lesson of the later Foucault. Objectivity is at least partly a performative category, which cannot be simplistically dismissed in the way that postmodern rhetoric often suggests.

The question is not whether “objectivity” is reducible to totalizing hegemonic discourse — it’s not — but rather, which objectivist discourses still support autonomous self-reference. The outcome of any interesting human event is always a function of the discursive power at work in self-reference, and it makes a difference which discursive categories are in play for us. Foucault would say as well that it makes a big difference whether we take seriously the “care of the soul” — for self-invention is a matter of “subjecting” our selves to the discourses most historically and culturally suited to our own

autonomy, which always employ the language of objectivity. Only by doing that will we ensure our own *freedom*.

Here “freedom” becomes synonymous with an “autonomy” that cannot be reduced to merely “transgressive” impulses, because it constitutes, as Foucault mysteriously declares, “the ontological condition of ethics.” This, I think I can show, makes the late Foucault into a closet liberal — which has a real irony to it. Foucault’s preoccupation over the “care of the soul” did not appear much before his own death was approaching. Foucault himself, whose last college course was devoted to the classical practice of “truth-telling,” never got to tell the whole truth about what he was up to. That leaves his commentator the odd task of constructing an intellectual biography for the one who, as the “masked philosopher,” so conscientiously resisted the hermeneutics of authorship. With his own robust sense of irony, Foucault himself would probably be laughing.