With All Your Mind
The Newsletter of Talbot’s MA Philosophy Program at Biola University

Spring 2008, Issue 13

Some claim that in a democracy where citizens hold a “plurality” of views on fundamental religious and moral issues, it is not appropriate for citizens to debate public policies on the basis of their religious beliefs.

In this Issue:
+ Graduate, Russell DiSilvestro, relates his experience as a PhD recipient teaching in the areas of ethical and political philosophy.
+ Graduate, Ron Sanders, discusses his Talbot experience and its effect on his future choices.
+ The Talbot Philosophical Society holds its annual conference.
+ Faculty and Alumni Updates are featured

Table of Contents:
+ Speaking Freely 1
+ A Tribute to Tina Gamponia 3
+ As I See It 4
+ Departmental Happenings 5
+ Faculty Updates 7
+ Alumni Updates 10
+ Alumni Features 11
+ Ph.D. Acceptances 12
+ Ministry Partnership 15
+ Book Review 16

Speaking Freely: A Christian Teaching Philosophy in a Secular Setting

My name is Russell DiSilvestro, and I am a 2001 graduate of Talbot’s MA Philosophy program. I got my Ph.D. in philosophy from Bowling Green State University (in Ohio) in 2006, and I am now in my second year as an assistant professor of philosophy at California State University-Sacramento. I was hired to teach various ethics and political philosophy classes here, especially bioethics. I am also responsible for arranging for visiting scholars to come to campus through a relatively new Center for Practical and Professional Ethics in the philosophy department. When Scott Rae came here as my first visiting scholar, he suggested I write a short update of what I have been doing here.

One encouraging aspect of my work here has been the friendliness and willingness of my non-Christian philosophy colleagues to take Christianity seriously. For example, the most outspoken atheist of the department, who developed both a blog and a course devoted to atheism, invited me to speak to his philosophy of religion class about arguments for the miracles of Jesus. I am not the only Christian theist in the department, and there are lively (but friendly) departmental email debates about various topics at the intersection of Christianity and philosophy. I have also been encouraged by the freedom I have to allow my Christian worldview to affect my teaching. For example, students in my ethics course read, among other things, portions of Mere Christianity and The Divine Conspiracy, and students in my political philosophy course read, among other things, the debate between Robert Audi and Nicholas Wolterstorff in their book, Religion in the Public Square.

One memorable event from my first year here was a spring symposium.
**Teaching (cont’d)**

the philosophy department puts on for the whole campus. The speakers and respondents for the symposium come primarily from the philosophy department, and the event is very popular; it fills a large auditorium on campus for two days. Each session lasts two hours, and includes plenty of time for questions from the audience. The theme for 2007 was “Philosophy and Religion,” and I volunteered to write a paper. Well, the first faculty paper was titled “Why Religion and Science are Incompatible.” The second faculty paper was titled “Why Believing in God is Immoral.” I gave the third and final faculty paper. If I had known what the other talks were titled, perhaps I would have picked a more snazzy-sounding title than “Secular Disagreement, Religious Disagreement, and Public Policy Debates in a Pluralist Democracy.” But I didn’t, so I didn’t.

The gist of my talk was fairly simple: some claim that in a democracy where citizens hold a “plurality” of views on fundamental religious and moral issues, it is not appropriate for citizens to debate public policies on the basis of their religious beliefs, precisely because other citizens disagree with these religious beliefs. But I argued that, since disagreement, by itself, proves nothing at all in the case of secular disagreement, it should not prove anything at all in the case of religious disagreement. The main example for my talk came from a recent PBS documentary, in which U2’s Bono successfully persuaded then-Senator Jesse Helms to support federal funding for a certain type of AIDS program by reading him the parable of the sheep and the goats.

The talk was well-received, and I have since met twice for lunch with one of my respondents from the political science department.

---

**TINA’S FINAL JOURNEY**

*written by Tina’s Mom*

On October 24th, 2007, Tina Gamponia made Heaven her final home. She fought a good fight, she battled the cancer with grace and humility. She felt that God had chosen this trial for her to be a witness for Him. She never questioned why, or got angry – her desire was to please Him and to battle the disease to the best of her ability as unto the Lord. Whatever His plan was for her life, she would be a willing vessel to bring Him glory and honor.

Her battle began the day of April 3rd when she found out she had cancer. What a shock that was to all of us. I can’t even imagine what went through her mind. She was so brave and strong. She went through each chemo and radiation treatment with hope and trust – knowing her God would supply her every need, and give her whatever she needed to help her continue working for His glory.

So many people have been touched by her. The spirit of God was all around her, and it reached into people’s hearts and drew them to her. She loved her job at Biola so much, she loved helping her “guys” (the professors), and all the students (her kids) that came into her office for help. She had a crazy sense of humor and made everyone laugh and want to hang out at her office.

She worked until August. By then the cancer and the chemo treatments had just weakened her so that she finally had to throw in the towel. That was so hard for her. She was always thinking of ways to go in for just a little while, all the time knowing there was just no way she could do it, and it broke her heart.

Between the family at Biola, and her church family at Calvary Chapel Downey, all their dinners, gift certificates for food and groceries, and money to help with whatever extra expenses they were incurring was provided. People sacrificially gave of their time, money and talents to help Tina and Chris and the kids. The Lord made sure their needs were met.

I have never experienced such an outgoing of love and support. Even after Tina stopped working, people from Biola never stopped giving, or visiting or calling. Calvary people were there...
too, making sure Tina never felt alone or forgotten. Chris also felt the support, and this gave him the strength to keep up the good fight with her.

Our family will always be proud of Tina’s journey. She never questioned “why me” - she just accepted it and fought to the best of her ability. Those of you who prayed for our baby, who cooked for our baby and her family, who gave your money to use for whatever they needed it for, who visited her and gave her your love and lifted her spirits – God bless you all. There are not enough words to say thank you. I know that God will reward you for being obedient to His voice when He said to pray, or cook, or give, or visit, whatever He instructed – you obeyed and blessed Tina and Chris and the children. Seeing her blessed also blessed us – her mom, dad and sister so much. We also reaped the benefits of your giving just seeing the joy and relief your gifts brought to them.

We are really going to miss her a lot of course. I wish God could have healed her and left her here with us, but He knows best, and this was part of His plan for her life. We have such peace knowing that she is with Him, she is no longer in pain, and she is among family and friends praising God – that is God’s perfect and complete healing.

We thank the Lord for loaning Tina to us, for trusting her to our care all these 40 years. The day she called me to join her at the hospital to take the tests which revealed her cancer, I prayed all the way to the hospital. I thanked the Lord for allowing me to be her mom, to love her and take care of her and raise her the best I could. I acknowledged that she had always belonged to Him, and that as hard and scary as it was to think she might be leaving me to go back home with Him, I was still trusting Him to make the perfect decision according to His plan for her life. She belonged to Him first; she was only on loan to us for a short time, and if He called her back then there was a good reason for it. That is so hard for a parent to do – to release the child they have taken care of, but I have faith and trust in His perfect plan. I sure didn’t like it at times – I tried to accept it with grace like Tina did, but there were a few times I just really lost it.

Please continue to pray for Chris as he raises their children. There are now going to be many new jobs added to his family responsibilities that Tina took care of. He is also going to have to help the kids through the loss of their mom, the emotions that will come up at different moments. Lord, please give him the wisdom, patience and grace to handle them. Teenagers are tough enough, now they have a major loss thrown into the mix!!

Also pray for the kids to help their Dad get through the loss of his wife. He is going to need their cooperation in helping out around the house, doing good in school, and behaving as they have been taught to, and just being there for him.

Tina, we love you MUCHO, MUCHO, MUCHO and we can’t wait to see you again. Until then, watch over us, come visit in our dreams, whisper in our ears, keep us close together as we always have been – a united loving family.

God bless you all who loved our daughter. I pray the joy and love she brought to your hearts and lives will never fade.

Sincerely and with much love and appreciation,

Kathie, Armando and Angie
I’m glad that we can finally present this current issue of “With All Your Mind.” We hope you enjoy it and are encouraged by what God is doing in the MA Phil program. If you’ve been wondering, “What happened to that newsletter?” you’ll find part of the answer in the section on “Tina’s Final Journey.” Our long time assistant, Tina Gamponia, died of cancer last fall after a long and arduous six-month battle. We really miss her—her dry sense of humor, her refusal to take any of the faculty all that seriously (!), her deep care for our program and our students, and her always upbeat spirit that came out of her deep trust in God. If you think about it, remember her husband Chris and their four kids in your prayers. She had a lot to do with getting our newsletter out a couple of times a year, but when she got sick, even though she worked consistently (always ignoring my ordering her to go home!), it was rough on her. I think she continued to work because she treasured the support and community she found here. It was pretty difficult watching the cancer overtake her—I remember seeing her just a day or so before she died. JP and I went to see her at her home and she summoned all the strength she had just to try to sit up—and she whispered (that’s about all the voice she had left) to us that, “I’m going home real soon.” We’re glad she’s home and healed, but we do miss her—we really felt her loss. Gail Neal has taken her place and Gail gets all the kudos for this edition of our newsletter!

I hope you find the article from Russell DiSilvestro encouraging. He’s in a great spot to represent the Kingdom and he’s able to accomplish things that continue to amaze us. One thing that he mentioned in his piece is that he was given responsibility for his department’s visiting lectureship—they sponsor a Center for Practical and Professional Ethics and have an annual lecture. So he got to pick who the lecturer was last year. I was pleased that he asked me to come and speak on business ethics—it was great to see him and his family and I also spoke in a current issues class too. It is so encouraging to see that God has strategically placed him at Cal State Sacramento and the good work he’s doing. I could say the same thing about Ron Sanders and his work as Director of Campus Crusade for Christ at Stanford. I trust you’ll appreciate his article on his work there.

We hope you’ll be encouraged by hearing what many of our grads are doing—please help keep us up to date by informing us of what and how you’re doing—photos are welcome too!

As I See It
DR. SCOTT RAE, DEPARTMENTAL CHAIR

As the summer is just weeks away, please pray for the MA Philosophy community as its members look ahead to the many things that God will be doing in them and through them. The following is a small list of what is happening within the department:

Faculty writing and speaking events: Pray for God to strengthen our faculty and give them wisdom as they write journal articles and book chapters and speak at various conferences.

Graduates starting Ph.D. Programs: Ask the Lord with the MA Philosophy faculty for God to help our graduates as they move and adjust to new environments in the process of starting Ph.D. programs.

New students enrolling for fall semester: As our new students come for the fall, pray similarly that their transition into southern California is seamless and that God grants them understanding as they start the rigors of the program in August.

Staff working over the summer: Lift up our staff as they work throughout the summer to assist our faculty and prepare the events and activities of this coming academic year.

Remembering Dr. Clyde Cook: Pray for Anna Belle Cook and their children and grandchildren as they continue their lives without their beloved husband, father, and grandfather. Pray for all of Biola as we mourn the loss of this great leader and friend.
Dr. David Hunt, who teaches courses for us each semester, teaches philosophy full-time at Whittier College. He has been on the board of the Society of Christian Philosophers and is a specialist on Plato. We consider him an all around great brother who we’re very glad to have on our team. He spoke to the students on “The Lure of Open Theism and Why It Should Be Resisted.”

Dr. William Lane Craig taught a Seminar on Alvin Plantinga during Interterm 2008. During his time here he met on one Thursday evening with the students to discuss the topic “Tips from a Traveling Speaker”. He showed how to pack for quick and easy travel, ways to save money and earn points for later travel, and spoke of the need for time with the Lord while traveling.

Dr. JP Moreland was invited to the Philosophy House to share his spiritual walk and give advice to students as they prepare themselves for further studies and their life work. He shared from the heart and gave great encouragement. We also took time to celebrate his birthday with him - cake and all!

Social Events

In December, the department held its annual Christmas Party at Biola in the Board Dining and Conference Rooms. Students, faculty and staff and their families attended. Students shared their reflections on the rewards they are experiencing as they study in the MA Philosophy program. A major theme was the gratitude they feel for their relationships with faculty and other students.
MA Phil students, have had the great opportunity to meet with Dr. David Hunt, who teaches courses for us each semester. He has been available every other Thursday afternoon at Starbucks in uptown Whittier for time over coffee to talk with him about their interests in philosophy and any other matters that are on their minds. Dr. Hunt teaches philosophy full-time at Whittier College, has been on the board of the Society of Christian Philosophers, is a specialist on Plato and all around great brother who we’re very glad to have on our team.

The Talbot Philosophical Society has had several events this semester. On Friday nights, they have had “Faculty Nights” where MA Philosophy faculty and their wives gather with students and their families and friends to have an informal time to meet together and have a question and answer time.

On Saturday, April 19, 2008, the society held their 3rd annual Philosophy Conference. About 40 guests at the conference enjoyed several papers read by students. Dr. Crisp of Biola’s Philosophy Department spoke on the topic, “Speaking Loosely about the Past.” Pictures can be viewed below.
In 2006, www.reasonablefaith.org was launched. It includes the full text of many of Dr. Craig’s articles, debates, along with choice audio-visual material, an active open-forum, podcasts, and a blog. It also features a full schedule of his speaking engagements.

Forthcoming items to be published include:


“God, Time, and the General Theory of Relativity.” *Faith and Philosophy*

Published writings since 2006 include the following:


For additional information regarding published works, check for listings in the Philosophia Christi. Their website is www.epsociety.org

---

At the Evangelical Philosophical Society Conference in November, Dr. Deweese presented his paper, “Philosophers and Sages: Hokhmah vs. Sophia?” In January, he joined Dr. JP Moreland to teach a class at Talbot for the Doctor of Ministry program. The course was “Engaging Mind and Culture.”

The following month Dr. DeWeese was the keynote speaker for the Faculty Lecture Series of Talbot School of Theology, speaking on the very current topic of “It’s Not Easy Being Green (Evangelicals): Stewardship of Creation.” This took place on February 12 and 19, 2008.

His most recent publications include “One Person, Two Natures: Two Metaphysical Models of the Incarnation,” in *Jesus in Trinitarian Perspective,* ed. Fred Sanders and Klaus Issler (B&H Academic, 2007) and “How Can Anyone Know Anything at All?” *Apologetics Study Bible* (Holman, 2007).

Dr. Horner published two commissioned book reviews, of Nicholas Rescher’s *Error (On Our Predicament When Things Go Wrong)*, in *Review of Metaphysics* (2007), and of Jean Porter’s *Nature as Reason: A Thomistic Theory of the Natural Law, in Faith and Philosophy* (2007). He also reviewed John Hare’s *God’s Call: Moral Realism, God’s Commands, and Human Autonomy* in *Philosophia Christi* (2006), where Dr. Horner serves as Book Review Editor in the area of history of philosophy. (If you would like to review a book in that area, please contact him.)

Dr. Horner presented a paper, “*Seminalia Virtutum: Aquinas on Natural Law and Virtue,*” at the 41st Annual Congress on Medieval Studies at the Medieval Institute of Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo (May, 2006), and gave ten presentations on a range of subjects related to moral apologetics at the European Leadership Forum held in Eger, Hungary (May, 2006). He spoke on “Moral Objections to the Gospel: How can God be good and the Gospel true, if Christians are neither?” at the Loving God With All Your Mind Apologetics Conference in McLean, Virginia (November, 2006). Finally, he lectured in numerous speaking engagements at various churches and conferences, as well as at Biola. In August, 2007, Dr. Horner participated with other specialists in a Workshop on the Vices at the University of Notre Dame. (He is now considered an expert on vice . . .)

Since summer, 2007, Dr. Horner has struggled with debilitating, allergy-related chronic sinus infections and resulting problems. He would greatly appreciate prayer for this. He is preparing to teach at a European pastors’ leadership apologetics institute next summer in Cambridge, to teach the next two weeks in Oxford and Cambridge at Oxbridge 2008, and to teach an ethics course in Hungary in November.

On the teaching front, he and Dr. Garry DeWeese began teaching their D.Min. course on philosophy, worldview and culture to a group of 17 pastors this January. It is the only D.Min. of this sort anywhere, and it was a joy to team teach it.

On the speaking front, he did some evangelistic talks at different colleges and presented two papers at this year’s national meeting of the ETS/EPS. He also spoke at five major conferences and about thirty church and parachurch organizations around the country.

We are pleased to announce that J. P. Moreland’s book *Kingdom Triangle* was given an Award of Merit in the *Christianity Today* 2008 Book Awards list. 49 publishers sent 359 books to *Christianity Today* to be evaluated. There were ten winners and eleven awards of merit in ten categories. Dr. Moreland’s book was one of two to be selected in the category of spirituality.

Join us in celebrating this good news with our brother.

---

**J.P. MORELAND**  
**FACULTY UPDATE**


On the teaching front, he and Dr. Garry DeWeese began teaching their D.Min. course on philosophy, worldview and culture to a group of 17 pastors this January. It is the only D.Min. of this sort anywhere, and it was a joy to team teach it.

On the speaking front, he did some evangelistic talks at different colleges and presented two papers at this year’s national meeting of the ETS/EPS. He also spoke at five major conferences and about thirty church and parachurch organizations around the country.

---

**SCOTT RAE**  
**FACULTY UPDATE**

Dr. Rae continues to consult regularly for three Southern California area hospitals (Coastal Communities Hospital, Western Medical Center, Fountain Valley Regional Hospital), doing regular education for physicians and nurses and providing case consultation services. This work was extended by his being a keynote speaker at the Kaiser Permanente Internal Medicine Annual Conference (July 06). He recently was the plenary speaker at the annual meetings of the Hospital Chaplains Ministry of America, speaking on the intersection of ethics and chaplaincy (May 08).

Dr. Rae and Dr. Moreland team-taught at the Advance Bioethics Institute at the Center for Bioethics and Human Dignity (July 06) on the topic of “Body, Soul, Mind and Spirit.” Dr. Rae was a plenary speaker at the Center’s conference on “Neuroethics.” His presentation was titled, “How Much Brain Do You Need to be Human?” Dr. Rae will be directing the Pre-Conference Institute this July on “Health Care Reform and the Common Good.”

Other speaking engagements include two local church courses on ethics (Mariners Church, May, 07; Rock Harbor Church, April 08), a lecture on faith and business for Covenant Presbyterian Church (February 08), preaching at Grace Fellowship Church (January and April 08) and Beach Cities Community Church (December 07). Dr. Rae also participated in the California Public Schools Project, speaking at two area high schools on “Morality and Relativism” (October 07).

Dr. Rae’s recent publications are highlighted by a groundbreaking work on biotechnology. It’s co-authors include Edmund Pellegrino, the current chair of the President’s Bioethics Advisory Commission. It’s entitled *Biotechnology and the Human Good*, published by Georgetown University Press, 2007 (with C. Ben Mitchell, John F. Kilner, Edmund D. Pellegrino and Jean B. Elshtain).

He authored the journal piece “On the Connection Between Sickness and Sin: A Commentary,” *Christian Bioethics* 12 (2006): 151-56 (one of the managing editors of this journal is Chris Ralston, one of our program’s graduates, currently pursuing a Ph.D. at Rice University. He contributed articles on “Genetic Engineering,” “Homosexuality,” and “Capital Punishment” for the *Apologetics Study Bible*, published by Broadman and Holman. He also wrote the editorial for the Orange County Register entitled “Think Before Changing Health Care Priorities” (January 14, 2007).

Dr. Rae has three writing projects to complete in 2008—3rd editions of his books *Moral Choices* and *Beyond Integrity*, and a new work entitled, “Working with Excellence and Integrity: On the Intersection of Christianity and Business”, to be published by IVP (co-authored with Kenman L. Wong).
Mike Austin (’00) is an associate professor of philosophy at Eastern Kentucky University, specializing in ethics. He has written one book, Conceptions of Parenthood: Ethics and the Family (Ashgate) and edited two others, Running and Philosophy: A Marathon for the Mind (Blackwell) and Football and Philosophy: Going Deep (University Press of Kentucky). His wife Dawn is teaching at the school where their three daughters attend. They are also excited to be involved in a church that is focusing on reaching out to the poor and disadvantaged.

John Basie (’99) is leading academics and student life for IMPACT 360 (www.impact360.net), a 9-month academic program in biblical worldview and leadership for recent high school graduates. It is affiliated with Union University (TN) and their corporate affiliate is Chick-fil-A, Inc. JP Moreland was a guest speaker last fall. Additionally, Dr. William Lane Craig is teaching for them. Other guest faculties have included Dr. Os Guiness, Dr. Norman Geisler, and Dr. Charles Thaxton. He expects to complete his Ph.D. work at Baylor University (Church-State Studies) in May ’09. He and his wife, Marana, have three children, Patrick (5), Rebekah Ruth (3), and Rachel (2).

Matthew Bazemore (’07) and his wife and two-year-old daughter have settled in Bloomington, IN and have begun working with professors at Indiana University through Faculty Commons, the academic and professor outreach of Campus Crusade for Christ, while partnering with the student ministry.

Greg Bock (’04) is finishing up his Ph.D. coursework at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and will start his dissertation soon, probably on a topic in bioethics. He and his wife, Heather, have recently welcomed their first child, Clayton Lawrence, born 02/01/08, weighing 7lbs. 2oz.

Tomas Bogardus (’04) is defending his prospectus in April. It is concerned with defending dualism in the philosophy of the mind. He will go on to the dissertation stage of the program and hopes to graduate by Spring 2010.

Ryan Bradley (’05) will begin working on a Ph.D. in Spirituality at The Catholic University of America in the fall. Since graduating, he has been working at Biola as an adjunct professor for Talbot’s ICD program and for BOLD, as well as a Staff Spiritual Director for ISF.

Travis Dickinson (’06) is finishing up course requirements at the University of Iowa and will start studying for his comprehensive exam this summer. God has richly blessed his family with a wonderful church and a number of fellow evangelical philosophy grad students. It has been wonderful to go through the program with great brothers (no sisters yet). He and his wife, Shari, have also welcomed a second daughter, Delaney Grace. Shari has made the transition from teaching 40 elementary students to teaching two. She is doing an amazing job in this new role.

Mike Harper (’02) recently took a position as an assistant philosophy professor at Southwestern College in Winfield, KS. He plans to finish his dissertation by the end of summer, 2008.

John Kwak (’04) has enjoyed completing two years of doctoral course work at the U. of Rochester, but is even more excited to be transferring in the fall of 2008 to USC to complete his degree (AOS: Philosophy of Language). He and his wife, Kelly, are looking forward to returning to the sunny days of LA!

Corey Miller (’01) is working on his dissertation at Purdue in philosophy. He is also teaching philosophy, religious studies, and communications at both Purdue and Indiana Universities. Later this year he will be traveling to France and Kenya to do seminars on evangelism and teaching on Islam. He is involved in campus ministry as well as in his local church with his lovely wife, Melinda, and their two children. Their contact information is www.pursuingthetruth.com.

Sudhakar Mondithoka (’01) In September 2007, he had the joy of seeing over 350 people (mostly from other
faiths) turning to the Lord as he spoke in Machiplipatnam and Vizag mainly to engineering students and then to polytechnic and other college/university students. It was raining for three days and the Lord stopped the rain just for their meetings. It was amazing and miraculous.

Jonathan & Mandi Morrow ('07)
John is an equipping pastor at Fellowship Bible Church in Murfreesboro, TN. He has also published a book, Welcome to College: A Christ-Follower's Guide to the Journey. They have recently welcomed a baby girl, Sarah Beth (01/29/08). Austin will turn 3 in June.

Gary Osmundsen ('06) has recently accepted an assistantship to the University of Oklahoma. He will be entering OU's Ph.D. program in philosophy this fall. Presently he is working as an adjunct professor of philosophy at Atlantic Community College in Cape May Court House, NJ. He and his wife, Julie, are expecting a baby girl in June.

Jamey ('00) and Gretchen Papas have been serving Campus Crusade for Christ for nearly 20 years, the last ten years at Cal-Poly, San Luis Obispo. They have organized a library/study center for Christian students at Cal Poly and Cuesta called The Swanson Center. To check out more about their ministry, visit their website, www.slocrusade.com. See their story, p. 13.

Mark (B.S. '02) & Celia (M.A. '06) Stepp. Celia is finishing her doctoral program at USC. In January Mark began working at Oceanside Christian Fellowship in El Segundo as the Director of Student Ministries. Mark has the privilege of co-pastoring with Dr. Joe Hellerman and Brandon Cash.

Luke Van Horn ('05) has completed his coursework at Notre Dame. He is currently studying for orals (Metaphysics). He is attending an excellent Evangelical Free church and just finished giving three Sunday evening lectures on Mormonism there.

Joshua Wes ('02) went on to study at Loyola of Los Angeles Law School (Loyola Marymount) and graduated in '05. He is now living and working in Downtown Los Angeles (just blocks away from Biola's original campus). He is currently practicing business litigation in the Los Angeles office of Tucker Ellis & West, LLP.

Jeff Wisdom ('01) is currently in his third year at the University of Connecticut. He has begun writing a dissertation on moral psychology; particularly on the nature of moral judgment. His essay entitled, “Base Property Exemplification and Mixed Worlds” will appear in a forthcoming issue of the journal, Philosophical Studies. His wife Angela (ISF, '03), still works part-time for the Biola music conservatory (via phone, mail. and the internet). She also facilitates spiritual retreats in conjunction with faculty from Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary. They have an 18-month old son, Benjamin.

“A JOURNEY FROM TALBOT TO STANFORD TO FULLER
A REFLECTION OF TALBOT FROM ALUMNI RON AND BONNIE SANDERS

“Your organization is one step away from getting removed from campus.” Those were the first words Bonnie and I heard nine years ago as we stepped on campus at Stanford University. As recent graduates of Talbot’s Philosophy of Religion and Ethics program and the new directors for Campus Crusade at Stanford we had high hopes for seeing the values of academic excellence, community, activism and tender-hearted devotion to Christ translate from our time at Talbot to our ministry at Stanford. We left that first meeting asking God to change the perception of CCC at Stanford.

Talbot left an indelible mark on our approach and ability to navigate the intricacies of ministry at one of our nation’s elite private universities. In the philosophy program we were trained to take ideas seriously and treat people compassionately, even when we disagreed with their ideas. Through the example of our professors, especially Dr. Holloman, we learned that academic knowledge and humility are not mutually exclusive.

One of our first priorities was to change the perception on campus that Christianity and academic excellence did not go together. We have invited Dr. Edwin Yamauchi (history), Dr. Alvin Plantinga (philosophy), Dr. Fritz Schaeffer (chemistry) and Dr. Dallas Willard (philosophy) to campus over the past nine years. Three years ago, we sponsored a discussion between Dr. Willard and Dr. Richard Rorty on the “Nature of Authority.” After the event, the dean for religious life on campus commented that this was one of the best events he had ever seen on
Another priority was to develop a relationship of trust with the administration of the university.

After three years of doing our best to contribute to the religious life on campus, Bonnie and I were both asked to serve on the Executive Committee of the Stanford Association of Religions (SAR). The Executive Committee of SAR helps lead the gatherings of all the religious leaders on campus, consults with the deans for religious life and helps address controversial religious issues. I have been asked to sit on a panel on same sex marriage, to consult on the controversy over Mel Gibson’s movie, “The Passion of the Christ,” and to participate in the remembrance service on campus after the tragedy of 9/11. I have had the opportunity to have dinner with Dr. Marcus Borg and lunch with Dr. Rorty. The values we learned at Talbot all contributed to our ability to repair our perception on campus.

We have also seen God provide for our financial needs in one of the most expensive places to live in the country. We have seen some of our students go into high-level government positions after graduation. We have seen God capture the hearts of our students for missions and spend their spring break, a summer or a year overseas. We have seen students take their Stanford education and invest it into a lifetime calling to ministry. We have also experienced a lot of failures. We had a failed attempt to establish an intellectual mentorship program. We had a failed partnership with three other ministries. And in my sixth year I began to feel like my spiritual, emotional and ministry tanks were running on empty.

As Bonnie and I graduated from Talbot we were trying to decide if one or both of us should continue on to do a PhD or to return to campus ministry. When we were asked to consider directing the CCC ministry at Stanford we thought that this would be a perfect combination of academic ministry and evangelistic ministry. Sensing God’s call we decided to take the position at Stanford. After those first six years, God used my unsettled feelings to reconsider a PhD. After a year of deliberation, prayer and studying for the GRE, I applied and was accepted to Fuller Theological Seminary’s ethics program.

At Fuller I was awarded a prestigious scholarship based on my experience and record at Talbot. The theological and philosophical preparation I received at Talbot has contributed to the success that I have had. And even though I commute from the Bay Area to go to class in Pasadena I think that I have been able to contribute to the academic community at Fuller. I think that the lessons I learned and the community I experienced at Talbot shaped how I view our calling as ministers and intellectuals. Instead of competing for resources and ideas, we have the great opportunity to distinguish ourselves from the world by forming a community of scholars that help one another in their work and contribute to the progression of the Kingdom of God.

Ron “Black Box” and Bonnie “Wanmug” Sanders

---

**I THINK THAT THE LESSONS I LEARNED AND THE COMMUNITY I EXPERIENCED AT TALBOT SHAPED HOW I VIEW OUR CALLING AS MINISTERS AND INTELLECTUALS.**

---

**PH.D. ACCEPTANCES**

Recent MA Philosophy graduates have received acceptances and have chosen the following graduate schools:

- **Ryan Ashlock** (‘07) – University of California, Irvine
- **Chad Houchin** (‘03) – PsyD program at George Fox University
- **Jeffrey Cervantez** (‘07) – University of Tennessee
- **John Craw** (‘08) – University of Illinois, Champaign/Urbana
- **Kari (Ensing) Dyer** (‘03) – Bowling Green State University
- **Daniel Fogal** – New York University
- **Sanjay Merchant** (‘05) – Claremont Graduate School of Religion
- **Gary Osmundsen** (‘06) – University of Oklahoma
- **Alex Plato** (‘07) – St. Louis University or Rochester
- **Jonathan Reibsamen** (‘06) – St. Louis University or UC Santa Barbara
- **Bradley Rettler** (‘08) – University of Notre Dame
- **Woldeyohannes, Tedla** (‘04) – St. Louis University

Congratulations, graduates and alumni on this achievement! We are praying for you!
Jamey and I have been serving with Campus Crusade for Christ for nearly 20 years, our last 10 years here at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. We have the privilege of leading a movement of over 800 students, striving toward the vision of being “a transformational community of multiplying disciples who live out the Great Commandment and Great Commission throughout Cal Poly, Cuesta, and the world.”

Cal Poly has been dubbed “the best bargain Christian school in the state of California” by many local pastors and parents. It is true that many Christians choose Cal Poly because of the strong Christian community here, but our desire is not that Cal Poly would be a place to merely gather Christians. Our dream is that it would be a place to build, train, and send students to the world, equipped to be missional wherever they go, whether Indonesia, IBM, or working for the IRS.

Jamey’s time in the MA Phil program at Talbot gave him the training and vision for recapturing the original purpose of the American University. That is, to be a place where Christians are trained and equipped to be missionaries to a lost world; a place where they are strengthened in the Christian world view and not discouraged from believing it. We dreamed of hosting events, both organized and casual, where students and professors, pastors and lay people, could gather and connect and talk about ideas that really matter.

I will never forget a dinner we had with Dr Moreland during our first Veritas Forum. We told him about our dream of starting a library / study center for Christian students at Cal Poly and Cuesta. He encouraged us to continue to pray about it and pursue it; 4 years later, thanks to the generous giving of students, alumni, parents and local churches and businesses, we opened The Swanson Center (see theswansoncenter.org) in the empty classroom of an unused elementary school right across the street from Poly. There are daily office hours when students can come and study and do research (the center is home to a large number of academic books compatible with the Christian world view – previously unavailable on the central coast). In addition, we’ve hosted discussion groups of all kinds as well as classes. A couple times a year our students will put on a coffee house so that new students can check out the library and find all it has to offer. We love it when, for example, a student can come and find a respected source for her paper on intelligent design for her philosophy 101 class, and can back up her view with intellectual authority.

The Swanson Center has a world map framed above the white board on one wall and several clocks hanging on another showing the time at various locations where our students are serving overseas. These all serve as constant reminders of the scope of our vision and purpose. Someday we hope that San Luis Obispo to be better known as a sending ground of missionaries to the world than for being a nice weekend getaway from the craziness of LA or the Bay Area. To check out more about the ministry here, visit our website, www.slocrusade.com.
PICTURES FROM AROUND THE PHILOSOPHY DEPARTMENT
DEAR FRIENDS,

Recently, David Dockery, of Chuck Colson’s Wilberforce Forum, said that God continues to surprise us with what is going on in the program. We are at roughly 115 students and the last two years have had the largest graduating classes of any of the programs at Talbot. When we began the program in 1993—we never dreamed that it would grow like it has. We thought if we got about 20-30 students that would be a huge success; and if a handful got into some good doctoral programs that would be even better. We set a goal of sending 100 of our graduates to Ph.D.’s and guess what—we’re almost there! With this year’s group, we’ll be at roughly 90 of our grads who are either in or have finished Ph.D.’s.

Our grads are doing so many good things—teaching in a variety of settings—state universities, community colleges, and high schools. They are pastorizing in local churches, both as lead pastors and staff pastors. Some have gone on to law school, and to graduate study in theology, literature, biblical studies and education. Many have gone to parachurch ministries such as Intervarsity, Campus Crusade and Ravi Zacharias Ministries. Some are serving internationally—we have grads in Belgium, Sweden, India, Australia, and others on track to return to Ethiopia and Kenya. Others are serving the Kingdom in business, some have gone to medical school, and others have returned to family businesses. We highly value all of the arenas of service in which God places our grads. We are so much more than a doctoral preparation program and the majority of our grads are serving the Kingdom outside of academia. Our continued vision is to equip our grads to do philosophy at the highest levels in order to prepare them to represent a Christian worldview in whatever arena God calls them.

We couldn’t do this without your support—your prayer, your encouragement and your financial support. Over the years many of our grads have generously provided financial resources for our program, from the gracious provision of the Phil. House to consistent, year after year, monthly support. This helps us provide financial assistance to students with needs (which is most of them!!) and helps faculty with conference travel, writing and research. It also enables us to bring notable people to campus for very stimulating times—Robert Audi, for example, comes and lectures almost every winter for us.

For those of you who support us financially, thanks! We appreciate your commitment to what God is doing here and we are so encouraged by that. If you’re not giving to the program, would you consider it? Either a one-time gift or a commitment of monthly support would be a great encouragement to us and a source of real, tangible help for our program and our students. You can fill out the form below to indicate your desire to invest in the program in this way. We now offer the ability to debit an account you choose on a monthly basis, and have it done automatically, if that would be of interest. You can visit http://www.biola.edu/admin/donations/eft for more information. At the least, fill out the form below and send it back to us with updated information about what you’re up to.

Together serving the Kingdom,

Scott B. Rae
Chair, MA Philosophy Program
Talbot School of Theology

Mail to:
Talbot Department of Philosophy
13800 Biola Avenue
La Mirada, CA 90639

Name: ________________________ Email: ________________________ Phone: ________________
Address: ____________________________ City, State, ZIP: ____________________________

☐ I will commit to praying for the MA Phil Program. Please regularly send me a list of prayer requests.
☐ I would like to give financially to the MA Phil Program. Enclosed is my check made to Biola for $______.
☐ Please send me a copy of Faith, Film and Philosophy. I’ve enclosed a check for $21.00 (includes $3 for shipping and handling) made out to Biola University.
☐ Effective on _______________, my contact information changes to the following:

☐ Please send me information on giving to MA Philosophy using EFT (automatic debit).
**BOOK REVIEW**

**FAITH, FILM AND PHILOSOPHY, BIG IDEAS ON THE BIG SCREEN**

*Faith, Film and Philosophy, Big Ideas on the Big Screen*

“THOSE WHO TELL STORIES RULE SOCIETY.” –Plato

So who today are our principal storytellers? Not philosophers, but filmmakers. For those who know both the enormous entertainment potential and the culture-shaping power of film, this book will stir mind and imagination. For great stories freight world-sized ideas, ideas worthy of contemplation and conversation. Great cinema inspires wonder. But another philosopher, Aristotle, reminds us that wonder is the true source of philosophy. So perhaps Plato or Aristotle might have a shot at ruling society, even today—if they took an interest in film.

The fourteen essays of Faith, Film and Philosophy explore big ideas as they are treated on the big screen. The book explores classic and contemporary films, together with several major philosophical themes, all from a Christian perspective.

**Features & Benefits**

* Uncovers the deeper messages encoded in film and the power of film in popular culture
* Selects familiar films especially suited to the exploration of big ideas on the big screen

*Develops major philosophical themes typically addressed in introductory and upper-division courses in philosophy*

* Can be used as a text for a variety of courses in the Christian college context: philosophy, theology, film


The MA Philosophy Program has limited copies available of *Faith, Film and Philosophy* for a special price of $21.00. Once they are gone, we will not be able to offer any more at this price! To order, see the response card on page 15.