



# The Society of Christian Philosophers



Linda Zagzebski, President • Kelly James Clark, Executive Director • Spring 2007

## From the President

*William Wainwright was elected President. We give our heartfelt thanks to our outgoing President, Linda Zagzebski.*

Dear Colleagues in the SCP,

I am deeply honored to have been elected President of the SCP, and look forward to working with you over the course of the next three years.

My predecessor, Linda Zagzebski, has left the Society in excellent shape, and I intend to actively pursue several initiatives begun under her leadership. These include promising discussions with the Templeton Foundation concerning the possibility of funding post doctoral and senior fellowships at Oxford University, as well as seminars, conferences, etc., of mutual interest. The activities of the China Committee under the able leadership of Kelly Clark and Mike Murray continue to flourish, and our initiatives in Russia have borne some fruit. But, like Linda, I would also like to strengthen our ties to our British counterparts, and explore the possibility of establishing connections with like minded individuals and societies on the European continent. Another "outreach" issue seems to me at least as important, however.

In my opinion, the Society should not only be an instrument for intellectually and spiritually nourishing one

another but also a means of witnessing to our non-Christian (and often non-religious) friends and colleagues. While we do the first very well, I believe that we are less successful at the second. To be successful we must not only model the Christian intellectual life but actively engage with the wider philosophical world. This involves doing first rate philosophical work of course. But it also involves addressing problems of general concern to the broader philosophical community in a spirit of collaboration and mutual respect. This is why, as important and stimulating as our Regional Conferences typically are, the meetings held in conjunction with the American Philosophical Association and the American Academy of Religion are so important, and why it would be advisable in my opinion to organize them around topics of general interest to other members of these associations. It is also why it is important to enlist Christian philosophers whose primary interests are not philosophy of religion or philosophical theology in the Society. It is an unfortunate fact that many Christian philosophers are not members of the SCP. This may be partly due to a mistaken impression that the Society is only for those Christian philosophers whose primary interest is philosophy of religion or to a belief



that their Christian commitments have little bearing on their work as epistemologists, philosophers of science, moral philosophers, or what have you. In any case, I hope that a reinvigorated Membership Committee will address this problem, and in the meantime urge each of you to invite Christian colleagues and graduate students who are not yet members to join the SCP.

These are some of my initial concerns, then. But there are of course others, and I welcome your suggestions and ideas.

With best wishes,  
Bill Wainwright

## SCP on the Internet

Listserves: subscribe by sending e-mail to: [scp-request@calvin.edu](mailto:scp-request@calvin.edu), with the subject "subscribe" (no quotes).

WWW: <http://www.siu.edu/~scp>

SCP Canada WWW: <http://iago.stfx.ca/people/wsweet/scp.html>  
or <http://www.ncf.ca/~ax448/scp.html>

## On teaching

"No man, however conservative, can stand before a class day after day and refrain from saying more than he knows."—Morris Cohen

"For every person wishing to teach, there are thirty not wanting to be taught."—Anonymous

## Executive Committee Candidates

**Michael Bergmann** has a PhD from the University of Notre Dame and is currently Professor of Philosophy at Purdue University, where he has taught since 1997. He is the author of *Justification Without Awareness* (Oxford 2006) as well as numerous articles including "Externalism and Skepticism" in *The Philosophical Review*, "Skeptical Theism and Rowe's New Evidential Argument from Evil" in *Noûs*, and (with Jan Cover) "Divine Responsibility without Divine Freedom" in *Faith and Philosophy*.

**Charles Hughes** has a B.A. from Biola University, two M.A. degrees, one from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School and one from Fuller Theological Seminary, and a D.Phil. from Oxford University. He is Associate Professor in and Chair of the departments of Philosophy and Religious Studies at Chapman University, where he has taught since 1992. He served for several years on the Program Committee for the Society of Christian Philosophers, Western Division. His publications include "Pluralism, Inclusivism, and Christology," in *Jesus Then and Now*, which he co-edited, "Belief, Foreknowledge, and Theological Fatalism," in *Faith and Philosophy*, and "Theism, Natural Evil, and Superior Possible Worlds," in *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion*.

**Janine Marie Idziak** received her Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Michigan and subsequently earned a M.A. in theology from Notre Dame. She is Professor of Philosophy and Director of the Bioethics Center, Catholic Studies Program, and Ethics and Values Program at Loras College. She has published two books on divine commands ethics and three books in bioethics. She serves as Consultant for Health Care Ethics and Life Issues for the Archdiocese of Dubuque, Iowa, and received the 2003 Trustee of the Year Award from the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging. She was involved in inaugurating the Eastern and Midwestern Regional SCP meetings.

**Wes Morriston** received his BA from The Queen's University of Belfast, and his MA and PhD degrees from Northwestern University. He is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Colorado, Boulder, where he has taught since 1972. He has presented papers at a number of SCP meetings, and serves as a member of the Editorial Board of *Religious Studies*. His publications include "God's Answer to Job" and "Omnipotence and Necessary Moral Perfection: Are they compatible?" in *Religious Studies*, "Is God Significantly Free?" and "Must the Beginning of the Universe Have a

Personal Cause?" in *Faith and Philosophy*, "The Evidential Argument from Goodness" in *The Southern Journal of Philosophy*, "What is So Good About Moral Freedom?" in *The Philosophical Quarterly*, and "Must There Be a Standard of Goodness Apart from God?" in *Philosophia Christi*.

**Michael Murray**, Ph.D., is Arthur and Katherine Shadek Professor of Humanities in the Department of Philosophy at Franklin and Marshall College. He received his B.A. from Franklin and Marshall College and his M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Notre Dame. His areas of specialization are Leibniz, the philosophy of religion, and metaphysics. Michael has been actively involved with the SCP, serving on a number of committees, including the China and Russia Outreach Committees. He is the editor with Eleonore Stump of *Philosophy of Religion: The Big Questions* (Blackwell, 1999) and of *Reason for Hope Within* (Eerdmans, 1999). Besides many articles, he is also author of the books *Philosophy of Religion*, with Michael Rea (Cambridge, 2006) and two forthcoming volumes: *Creation, Providence, and the Problem of Animal Suffering* (Oxford) and *Leibniz's Philosophical Theology*. Murray is the recipient of numerous honors and fellowships including Sabbatical Research Fellowship from the American

## SCP/Calvin College Templeton Grant

Calvin/SCP have been awarded a Templeton grant in science and religion, titled "Science, Philosophy & Belief," for Chinese scholars/students. Kelly James Clark is Project Director. The grant will fund the following:

1. Visiting Student Program. Eight Chinese MA or PhD students per year to take courses and study at Calvin College, the University of Notre Dame, Baylor University or Hope College.

2. Visiting Scholar Program. Three postdoctoral fellowships per year for Chinese professors at Calvin College, the University of Notre Dame, or Baylor University.

### 3. Visiting US Professor Program.

Visiting US Professors to teach on related subjects at Chinese universities. We hope to place professors for periods of ten days to one semester.

4. Summer Seminar. A summer faculty development seminar for 16 Chinese professors and 6 postgraduate students to be held at Calvin College in 2008.

The seminar will involve Alvin Plantinga, Richard Swinburne, John Polkinghorne and Owen Gingerich. SCP members will be paired with

Chinese scholars for collaborative work in science and religion. Michael Murray and Del Ratzsch are Summer Seminar Coordinators.

5. Conference. Follow-up conference in late spring or early summer 2009.

6. Library Development. Library development (each visiting scholar will bring books for Chinese libraries, each seminar participant will receive books for his or her personal library and books will be shipped to China's major university libraries).

Further information can be found at the website:  
<http://www.calvin.edu/academic/philosophy/china/>



Philosophical Society, an Alvin Plantinga Fellowship, and a National Endowment for the Humanities Sabbatical Fellowship.

**John O'Callaghan** received his Ph.D. in Philosophy at the University of Notre Dame in 1996. He works in the fields of Medieval Philosophy, Metaphysics, and the Philosophy of Mind. He has taught at Creighton University, The University of Portland, and has been associate professor of Philosophy at the University of Notre Dame since 2003. He is Director of the Jacques Maritain Center at the University of Notre Dame. Among his publications are "Concepts, Beings, and Things: Aquinas and Contemporary Philosophy," in the *Review of Metaphysics*, "Aquinas' Rejection of Mind, Contra Kenny," in the *Thomist*, "Creation, Human Dignity, and the Virtues of Acknowledged Dependence," in *Nova et Vetera*, and "The Imago Dei: A Test Case for Aquinas' Augustinianism," forthcoming in the volume from Catholic University Press, *Aquinas as Augustinian*. He is the author of *Thomist Realism and the Linguistic Turn: Toward a More Perfect Form of Existence* from the University of Notre Dame Press, as well as editor with Thomas Hibbs of *Recovering Nature* from the University of Notre Dame Press. He is currently working

on analyzing the conceptual relations between competing notions of soul and mind in medieval philosophers in their engagement with the theological doctrine from Genesis that human nature is the image of God.

**Alexander Pruss** has a PhD in philosophy from the University of Pittsburgh and a PhD in mathematics from the University of British Columbia. He has just started as Associate Professor of Philosophy at Baylor, previously having been at Georgetown. He has recently published the book *The Principle of Sufficient Reason: A Reassessment* (Cambridge, 2006), and his papers include "Prophecy without Middle Knowledge" (*Faith and Philosophy*, forthcoming), "David Lewis's Counterfactual Arrow of Time" (*Nous*, 2003) and "A New Cosmological Argument" (with Richard M. Gale, *Religious Studies*, 1999). He has presented four papers at Society of Christian Philosophers sessions, and has also published a number of mathematical papers in probability theory and geometric optimization. Currently he is working on the book *One Body: An Essay in Christian Sexual Ethics* for Notre Dame University Press.

**David White** received his Ph.D. in philosophy from Cornell University, where he worked with Norman Malcolm and Norman Kretzmann.

After two years teaching in Nigeria, he returned to New York, where he has taught philosophy at St. John Fisher College in Rochester for the past thirty years. An Episcopalian, he is involved in interfaith action and religious dialog, as well as debate with atheists and secular humanists. He has served as an officer or director of many organizations including the New York State Philosophical Association, the international Bertrand Russell Society, the Interfaith Alliance of Rochester, the English-Speaking Union and the International Institute of Field-Being. At St. John Fisher College he organized an Eastern Regional meeting of the SCP and has sustained the UNESCO World Day of Philosophy, now in its fifth year. For over twelve years, he has taught a Sunday morning Christian formation class. His scholarly work has concentrated on Bishop Butler. He is the editor of the University of Rochester Press edition of the *Works of Bishop Butler* (2006), and the author of numerous academic papers comparing Bishop Butler with such expected subjects as David Hume, Jonathan Edwards and Adam Smith as well as less obvious choices such as Bing Crosby, Lenny Bruce and William S. Burroughs. In all his work, White is an advocate of enthusiastic evangelism in conjunction with a broad evidentialism.

"A vision of truth which does not call upon us to get out of our arm chair—why, this is the desideratum of mankind."  
—John Jay Chapman

Please cut out and mail your ballot by Sept. 30 to: Society of Christian Philosophers, Department of Philosophy, Calvin College, 1845 Knollcrest Circle SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546-4402. Or email your votes to [kruido@calvin.edu](mailto:kruido@calvin.edu) with SCP Election as the subject.

## SCP Ballot

### Executive Committee (vote for four):

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Michael Bergmann    | <input type="checkbox"/> Michael Murray  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Charles Hughes      | <input type="checkbox"/> John O'Callahan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Janine Marie Idziak | <input type="checkbox"/> Alexander Pruss |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wes Morrison        | <input type="checkbox"/> David White     |

# Executive Committee Minutes

## April 20, 2007 The Palmer House, Chicago

1. Report from the Executive Director: the wording of the constitution of the SCP has been changed to reflect the split of the Secretary/Treasurer position into two separate positions (Executive Director and Treasurer); the membership of the SCP now stands at 1,010; it was agreed that the membership committee should be re-invigorated, with an emphasis on the recruitment of grad students; it was suggested that the SCP offer 3-year memberships.

2. Treasurer's Report: At the end of FY 2005-2006 we had a balance of 17,951.16; as of the March 2007 bank statement, SCP has just over \$43,000 in its regular account, and just over \$8,000 in its China account. The China account stands to receive a large amount of money from the Templeton grant. In September of 2006, with the advent of the new

Treasurer position, SCP re-negotiated its status with Chase Bank, resulting in an account with lower fees and higher interests rates on its CDs. It was decided by consensus that each of the regional divisions of the SCP could receive up to \$1,000 of support for their annual meetings.

3. *Faith and Philosophy* Report: this is a year of transition. Tom Flint will be taking over the editorial reins from Bill Hasker. Hasker reported that as of this year the members of the Board of Editorial Consultants will be appointed for a term of 5 years, renewable by mutual agreement (rather than indefinitely, as has been the case); a financial report for F&P was distributed by Mike Peterson.

4. Committee Reports: only one regional report (Central) received for information; no ACPA report; the China

committee reports that the medieval philosophy book (based on the proceedings of an SCP conference in China) will be coming out soon, and that the SCP has received a \$2 million grant from the Templeton Foundation for its China program. Mideast: William Craig made an exploratory visit on behalf of the SCP to Tajikistan. The Russia committee is planning a conference at Baylor. It was decided by consensus that fund raising should be handled per project rather than by a standing committee.

5. Other business: it was noted that next year will be the 30th anniversary of the SCP, and that it would be appropriate to put on a special session to mark that event at the 2008 meeting of the Central APA.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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