

# Philosophy Communique

Summer 2009

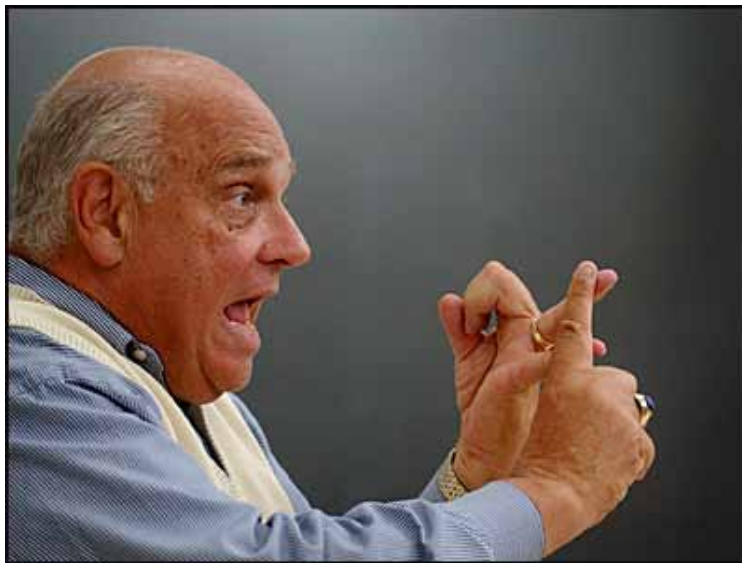
## Thank You, Bill

The department celebrates Bondeson's long career

By Matthew McGrath

Bill Bondeson likes to joke that when he first arrived at the University of Missouri, Providence Road was a dirt road and there were only three columns in the main quad (we got the rest of the columns from a federal grant, and they have to be returned in 2010). It's true: he has been here a long time. A newly minted University of Chicago PhD, Bill joined the philosophy faculty at MU in 1964. He must have done something right (or wrong, depending on your point of view), because within three years he was department chair. An assistant professor at the ripe old age of 26, he was the youngest department chair at the University.

Bill was something of a prodigy. After only two years of high school, at age 15, he passed a placement exam that allowed him to enter a pre-med collegiate program. The humanities seemed to have exerted a powerful sway on the young man, though, and he ended up triple majoring in philosophy, classics and German. He received his bachelor's degree from Augustana College in 1958 at the age of 18. Upon graduation, he was the recipient of a Danforth Fellowship, from 1958 to 1965, which changed his life, making it possible for him to attend graduate school at the University of Chicago. He took a break from his work at Chicago to complete a master's degree in Greek



Distinguished Teaching Professor of Philosophy William Bondeson.

at the University of Illinois, returning to Chicago to write a dissertation on the role of *logos* in Plato's philosophy under the direction of Professor Vere Chappell.

Early in his career at MU, Bill worked mainly on ancient philosophy, publishing papers on the *Theatetus* and Aristotle's conception of responsibility. One day Bill was asked by administrators of the MU medical school to teach a two-week course on medical ethics. The topic was certainly not something he'd worked much on, but he decided to give it a go and accepted the invitation. One thing led to another, and he became a regular lecturer in the medical school and began to shift his area of research to medical ethics. Since the late '70s, in addition to writing several articles on medical ethics, Bill has edited and contributed to five

books in the *Reidel Philosophy and Medicine Series*. He regularly works as consultant in medical ethics for the medical school here, for local hospitals and health organizations, as well national institutions such as the National Library of Medicine. Every semester he teaches a large undergraduate medical ethics course for juniors and seniors and gives regular lectures on medical ethics at the university and throughout the country. From 1979 to 1985, he served as co-director of the Health Care and Human Values Committee at the university

and brought in substantial grant money. He became professor of family and community medicine in 1988. If you see him these days, you might be surprised to see he carries a beeper with him at all times. He is on call as a consultant for patients for University Hospital. As he describes his responsibilities, his role is to outline clearly the options available to patients, but not to offer medical advice.

Bill's administrative work has not been limited to medical ethics. He served as director of the Honors College, founded the College of General Studies, and was assistant to the chancellor. One of his proudest accomplishments was directing the University Concert Series from 1976 to 1996, increasing the budget from \$30

Continues on Page 3

## From the Chair



By Andrew Melnyk

When I joined this department in 1991, I was its ninth member, and it did not offer courses in metaphysics, epistemology, bioethics, inductive logic, philosophy of biology, philosophy of language, philosophy and gender or the philosophy of cognitive science. Today the faculty numbers 16, it offers courses in all these areas, and it is nationally recognized as an up-and-coming department. Our philosophy majors regularly appear among the recipients of Latin honors at commencement ceremonies, and alumni of our doctoral program, such as Jared Bates, PhD, '00, and Edward Omar Moad, PhD, '03, have published papers in such internationally

read, peer-reviewed journals as *The Philosophical Quarterly*.

Over this past year we held two more very successful Kline Chair Workshops — on Ruth Millikan's philosophy of mind and language and on collective intentionality. But also thanks to the generosity of the late Harold Kline, we were able to institute a new program, the Kline Visiting Speakers program. This program enables distinguished philosophers to visit the department for two full days, thus allowing them to join in a graduate seminar that addresses their work, as well as to present a paper at the department colloquium and to discuss philosophical questions informally with students and faculty. Our visitors this past year were philosopher of language Kent Bach (San Francisco State University) and philosopher of decision theory Jim Joyce (University of Michigan). Furthermore, thanks to the generosity of the supporters of the Benjamin Endowment, which honors A.C. Benjamin, a distinguished former member of the department and pioneer philosopher of science, the department was able to host the first ever meeting of the Missouri Philosophy of Science Workshop, which brought to-

gether philosophers of science from several Missouri universities. The special guest was philosopher of science Michael Strevens (New York University), who also presented some of his work to the whole department.

There is much, then, of which we can all be very proud. The challenge we now confront, however, is to sustain these achievements in the face of budgetary uncertainties. At the moment it is impossible to know what will happen, though we are a cheap department compared with those requiring laboratories, we have a wonderfully supportive dean of the College of Arts and Science in Mike O'Brien, and we understand the need to husband our resources. In my report next year I will no doubt be able to tell you more, for good or ill.

Finally, I am sad to report that Brian Kierland has resigned from the department to pursue his career close to his family in Boise, Idaho. He was greatly admired by both faculty and students while he was here and will be much missed. We wish him well.

Have a great summer!

## Darwin on the "Mystery of Mysteries"

By André Ariew

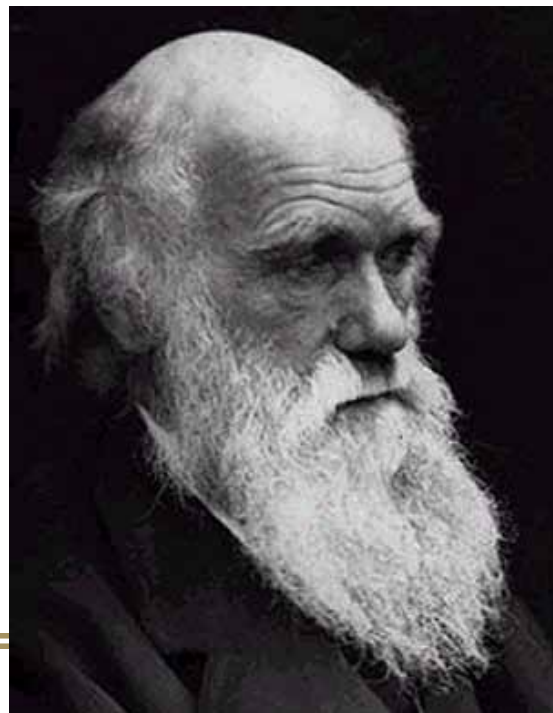


In the second line of *The Origin of Species* Charles Darwin refers to the origin of species as the "mystery of mysteries" and attributes the phrase to "one of our greatest philosophers." Darwin never tells us who the great philosopher is; nor does he mention the phrase again. Who is this great philosopher? Why did he call the origin of species the "mystery of mysteries"? In answering these two questions I believe we gain an insight into the nature of Darwin's theory of natural selection, and ultimately reveal significant differences between Darwin's and post-20th-

century modern versions of natural selection.

Most historians and philosophers cite the introduction of a genetic theory of inheritance as the most significant difference between Darwin's and modern versions of natural selection. I argue that this view is shortsighted and misunderstands Darwin's answer to the "mystery of mysteries." From a philosophy-of-science point of view the re-description of natural selection in probabilistic terms represents the most fundamental differences. The introduction of probability theory alters the nature of natural selection theory: how it explains, unifies and models the natural world. I then apply my theory to provide a new perspective

on a host of issues in contemporary philosophy of biology, including the question "To what degree is natural selection a causal mechanism?"



## Alumni News

Special request: Professor Robert Johnson is trying to compile a history of the department. He asks everyone to please pass along any memories of the department, philosophy classes or faculty, however brief. He'd like to include them as a part of that history.

**Jared Bates**, PhD '01, is assistant professor of philosophy at Hanover College in Indiana. This year his paper, "A Defense of the Explanatory Argument for Physicalism," was accepted by *Philosophical Quarterly*. He presented papers at the Pacific and Central Division meetings of the APA in 2008.

**Lily Chang**, PhD '06, lecturer at University of Texas Pan American has published a book, *Aristotle on Happiness*, with VDM (Verlag Dr. Mueller).

**Trent Dougherty**, MA '04, finished his doctorate at the University of Rochester. He will start in fall 2009 as an assistant professor of philosophy at Baylor University.

**Frances Gill**, PhD '00, is program director at LifeSpan in High Point, N.C. She published, *Moral Benefit of Punishment: Self-Determination as a Goal of Correctional Counseling*, with Lexington Books.

**Mat Konieczka**, PhD '07, has accepted a three-year renewable position at St. Anselm's College in New Hampshire.

**Ronald Novy**, PhD '07, is lecturer in philosophy and the humanities at the University of Central Arkansas. He published "What Is it Like to Be a Batman?" in *Batman & Philosophy* (Blackwell, June 2008), "Henchmen 101: Why Good Help is Hard to Find" in *Supervillains & Philosophy* (Open Court, forthcoming), and "Iron Man in a Chinese Room: Living Armor and the Possibility of Artificial Intelligence" in *Iron Man & Philosophy* (Blackwell, forthcoming). He gave a presentation at the Mid-South Philosophy Conference.

**Troy Nunley**, PhD '05, became assistant professor of philosophy at Denver Theological Seminary.

**Ted Poston**, PhD '06, is assistant professor of philosophy at the University of South Alabama. This year, his paper, "Similarity & Acquaintance" was accepted by *Philosophical Studies*, and he published a review of John Bishop's book *Believing by Faith for Mind* and a review of Michael Bergmann's book *Justification Without Awareness for Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*.

**Mark Price**, PhD '00, was granted tenure and promoted to associate professor of philosophy at Columbia College. He became chair of the humanities department in 2007, and he also serves on the MU Hospital Clinical Ethics Committee.

**Jon Trerise**, PhD '07, has accepted a three-year renewable position at Florida International University.

**Lori Underwood**, PhD '98, is associate professor of philosophy at Christopher Newport University. She has had two books published: *Kant's Correspondence Theory of Truth: An Analysis and Critique of Anglo-American Alternatives* in the *American University Studies Series and Terror by Consent: The Modern State and the Breach of the Social Contract*, published by Peter Lang Publishing Co. Underwood also published "Rationality and Narrative: A Relationship of Priority" (with Kip Redick) in *Philosophy and Rhetoric*.

**Paul A. Wagner**, MA '76, is director of the Project in Professional Ethics at the University of Houston–Clear Lake. He and his wife, Kerry, had a daughter, Emily Ryann Wagner, July 23, 2007. His latest book by Sage Publishers, titled *Leadership as Moral Architecture*, was published in 2008. He is the former executive secretary of the Philosophy of Education Society and vice president of the Association of Philosophers in Education.

*Communiqué* is published annually by the Department of Philosophy at the University of Missouri.

**Editorial Office**  
Department of Philosophy  
438 Strickland Hall  
Columbia, MO 65211  
Phone: 573-882-2871  
Fax: 573-884-8949  
E-mail: melnyka@missouri.edu  
Web site: philosophy.missouri.edu

**Editorial Board**  
Matthew McGrath  
Andrew Melnyk  
Melody Galen

The department appreciates hearing from alumni and friends. Send announcements or milestones to the address listed above.

## Bondeson

Continued from Page 1

thousand to \$500 thousand. While doing that he added the Chamber Music Series and the Dance Series. Through these efforts, he brought a host of distinguished artists to campus and garnered several million dollars worth of grants. According to Professor Joseph Bien, himself a longstanding advocate for classical music on campus, the University Concert Series "rose to new heights under Bill's leadership, never seen before or after his time."

To students at MU, Bill Bondeson is a teaching legend. He always likes to start class with a good joke. A sample: "Wouldn't you say that a man who goes off to live in the woods by himself is Thoreauing his life away?" Bill has many times been featured in campus magazines as one of the students' favorite or most-interesting professors. He has received numerous awards for his teaching, including the coveted William T. Kemper Fellowship for Excellence in Teaching in 1997 (coveted in part because of the generous cash award). He is known also for his work as co-director of the highly successful Wakonse Conference, a

Continues on Page 5

# Faculty Kudos

**André Ariew** worked on a book manuscript on Darwin's theory of natural selection supported by a grant from MU's Research Council during the 2007–08 academic year. He hopes to complete the project by next year. Ariew wrote several articles including "Selection and Cause" with Mohan Matthen, "What Fitness Can't Be" with Zac Ernst, and "Invention and Innovation from a Logical Point of View" which is forthcoming in a volume on evolutionary archeology edited by Michael O'Brien and Stephen Shannon from MIT Press. In fall 2008 he resumed teaching the department's critical thinking course and a graduate seminar on philosophy of science. He currently supervises Michael Hartsock's dissertation on causation and is the department's undergraduate adviser.

**Joseph Bien** spent part of his leave this year in Santiago, Chile, working on a volume dealing with the philosophy of music with Roberto Escobar, a noted Chilean twelve tone composer.

**Bill Bondeson** became director of the Center for the Arts and Humanities. The mission of the center is "to nurture disciplinary and interdisciplinary research, teaching and public performance in the humanities and all the arts." Through its programs and activities, "the Center seeks to contribute to the intellectual, creative and cultural life of the University and the State of Missouri by promoting and celebrating innovation and excellence in the humanities and all the arts." Bondeson gave several talks on medical ethics and on teaching, including the keynote address to the Midwest Nursing Conference in Kansas City.

**Sara Chant's** paper, written with Zachary Ernst, titled "Epistemic Conditions for Collective Action," was accepted by *Mind*. Chant also presented her papers, "Where the Distribution Problem Ends and Real Collective Responsibility Begins," and "The Role of Non-observational Knowledge in Collective Intention," at the Collective Intentionality conference at the University of California, Berkeley and the annual meeting of the Society for Exact Philosophy, respectively.

**Bina Gupta** finished and submitted her book manuscript *Reason and Experience in Indian Philosophy* for publication. She published a paper titled "Freedom in Indian Philosophy," in *Journal of Indian Council of Philosophical Research*. Among her talks over the past year were "Frameworks of Peace in Indian Philosophy," and "Can an Advaitin Pray? The Role of Upasana in Advaita Vedanta," presented to the Indian institute of Social Sciences and the Department of Sanskrit in Madras, India, respectively.

**Claire Horisk** published "Truth, Meaning, and Circularity" in *Philosophical Studies* and "The Expressive Role of Truth in Truth-Conditional Semantics" in *Philosophical Quarterly*. She is writing a paper on truth for *New Waves in Truth*, edited by Cory Wright and Nikolaj Pedersen. She presented part of a new project on conventional implicature at the Pacific Division of the APA. She has developed a new course for philosophy majors and minors serves as the department's graduate adviser.

Fourteen entries by **Robert Johnson** are forthcoming in the *Kant-Lexikon* (de Gruyter); "The Moral Law as Causal Law" is forthcoming in *Kant's Groundwork: A Critical Guide* (Cambridge); "Good Will and the Moral Worth of Acting from Duty," is forthcoming in *Blackwell Companion to Kant's Ethics*. A book manuscript, *Self Improvement*, which argues that we have a duty to improve ourselves, is now under review. Several irons are in the fire. First, "The Anti-deontological Revolt in Kantian Ethics" for *Philosophy Compass*, which will evaluate the variety of anti-deontological Kantian views that have sprung up in recent years. A contribution, "Falk on Prichard," to appear in *Reasons to Be Moral Revisited*, a special volume from the *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, which develops a normative argument for internalism based on W.D. Falk's views. A contribution to *Kant's Metaphysics of Morals: A Critical Guide* (Cambridge University Press) "Duties to Others" defending the view that the 'to' [gegen] relation in the Kantian notion of duties to others should

be analyzed in the standard way, in terms of the reciprocity of rights and duties.

**Peter Markie** has continued his work in epistemology on the nature of justification and in political philosophy on the nature of political obligation. Some recent results of his efforts have been published in *Philosophical Studies* and accepted for publication in *Ratio*.

**Matthew McGrath** has been finishing his book with Jeremy Fantl titled *Knowledge in an Uncertain World*. He also published a paper "Conciliatory Metaontology and the Vindication of Common Sense," in *Noûs* and presented a paper at the LOGOS conference in Barcelona. McGrath also served as one of the editors for *Epistemology: An Anthology*, published by Blackwell.

**Andrew Melnyk** published two papers this year: "Conceptual Analysis: A Two-step Program," in *Noûs* and "Philosophy and the Study of Its History" in *Metaphilosophy*. His paper "Can Physicalism Be Non-Reductive?" is forthcoming in *Philosophy Compass*. He gave talks at the Kline Chair Workshop on Ruth Millikan's Philosophy of Mind and Language and at the School of Advanced Study at the University of London.

**Philip Robbins** published two papers this year: "Consciousness and the Social Mind," in *Cognitive Systems Research*, and "Minimalism and Modularity," in *Context-Sensitivity and Semantic Minimalism*, edited by G. Preyer and G. Peter and published by Oxford University Press. He also was editor for the newly published *Cambridge Handbook of Situated Cognition*. He gave talks at the APA Central Division meetings in Chicago, at Arkansas State University, as well as two talks for the MU Department of Psychological Sciences.

During the spring semester, Mike Bostwick, MU graduate and philosophy major, continued to sit in on discussions with Kirk Rankin and **Don Sievert** about Wittgenstein's consistent appeal to showing throughout his career. Rankin defended his honors thesis in May 2009. This past summer Sievert completed an

essay on Wittgenstein's unusual claim that one cannot say that one thing has two colors all over at once. In the fall, he taught some Leibniz and, correlatively, responded to a paper on Leibniz at the meetings of the Southwest Philosophical Society.

**Alex von Schoenborn** recently received word from the Swiss Academy of Humanities and Social Sciences that they have elected him, for a three year term, to the Board of Curators for the *Collected Works of Karl Leonhard Reinhold*. He has also been asked — and has consented — to edit and annotate the 11th volume of this series.

**Peter Vallentyne** published nine articles in 2008, including "Brute Luck and Responsibility" in *Politics, Philosophy & Economics*; "Left-Libertarianism and Liberty" in *Debates in Political Philosophy*, edited

by Thomas Christiano and John Christman; "Libertarianism and the State" in *Social Philosophy and Policy*; and "Paretian Egalitarianism with Variable Population Size" with Bertil Tungodden in *Intergenerational Equity and Sustainability*, edited by John Roemer and Kotaro Suzumura. He made nine professional presentations at SUNY Brockport, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Washington University, Glasgow University, Bowling Green State University, Oxford University, the 5th International Congress of the Ibero-American Society of Utilitarian Studies, University College London and Tulane University. His doctoral students, Eric Roark and Alan Tomhave, completed their dissertations titled "Using and Coming to Own: A Left-proprietarian Treatment of the Just Use and Appropriation of Common Resources" and "The Nature of the State" respectively.

## Graduate Program News

**Soon-Pil (Phil) Choi** successfully defended his dissertation, "In Defense of Scientific Realism."

**Joel Ditmer's** paper, "Raising Revenue for Persons with Disabilities" was accepted for publication by the journal *Res Publica*.

**Christopher Haugen** successfully defended his dissertation titled "Intuitions and Adequate Philosophical Solutions." Congratulations, Christopher! Christopher entered the Dominican Novitiate in fall 2008.

**Jason Hedderman** successfully defended his dissertation, "The Phenomenal Brain: Making Room for a Phenomenal-Neural Type Identity Theory of Phenomenal Consciousness."

**James McBain** successfully defended his dissertation, "Philosophical Intuitions – Philosophical Analysis," and became assistant professor at Pittsburg State University.

**Justin McBrayer** successfully defended his dissertation, "A Defense of Moral Perception," and became assistant professor of philosophy at Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colo. His paper, "A Limited Defense of Moral Perception," was accepted for publication in *Philosophical Studies*. He will present his paper, "Moral Perception and the Causal Objection," at the Pacific APA in Vancouver.

**Melanie Johnson-Moxley** successfully defended her dissertation, "Vasubandhu's Consciousness Trilogy: A Yogacara Buddhist Process Idealism."

**Andrew Moon's** paper, "Gibbons on Epistemic Internalism" was accepted for publication in *Mind*. He also presented a paper at the Society of Christian Philosophers meeting at the University of California–Riverside.

**Eric Roark** successfully defended his dissertation titled "Using and Coming to Own: A Left-Proprietarian Treatment of the Appropriation and Just Use of Com-

Oxford University Press is publishing **Paul Weirich's** new book, *Collective Rationality: Equilibrium in Cooperative Games*. It formulates standards of rationality for acts that groups of people perform. Weirich is also the editor of a special issue of the journal *Synthese* titled *Realistic Standards for Decisions*. This collection is the product of a conference he organized at MU during spring 2008 with the support of a grant from the National Science Foundation. In 2008, the *Journal of Moral Philosophy* published his article, "Utility Maximization Generalized," *Simulation & Gaming* published his article, "The Explanatory Power of Models and Simulations: A Philosophical Exploration," and the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* published his entry, "Causal Decision Theory."

mon Resources," and became assistant professor of philosophy at Millikan University.

**Alan Tomhave** successfully defended his dissertation titled "An Analysis of the State." He was visiting professor at Occidental College and will start as assistant professor of philosophy at Youngstown State University.

### Bondeson

Continued from Page 3

summer teaching program reaching over 120 faculty from the Midwest, which has taken place annually for 20 years. The motto of the conference is an apt description of Bill's own teaching: "To teach is to inspire."

It has been an honor and a pleasure for us to have had Bill Bondeson on the philosophy faculty at MU for the last 45 years.

# Conferences and Workshops

## Kline Chair Workshop on Ruth Millikan's Philosophy of Mind and Language

Ruth Millikan has long been well known in philosophy of mind for her biologically inspired account of how human beliefs and desires come to have the representational content that they have. What is less widely appreciated is that this account is just one member of a large set of strikingly original and systematically interconnected views in the philosophy of mind and language that she has developed over the past 25 years. These views concern such topics as the representational content of natural languages; mental representation in animals and how it differs from mental representation in humans; what it takes to know the meaning of a word and to understand a sentence; the conventional character of public language; the role that language plays in facilitating thought; the possession and acquisition of concepts, especially via language; how we explain behavior by appeal to beliefs and desires, and more. The objective of the Kline Chair Workshop on her work was to promote discussion of these comparatively neglected views. The main speakers at the workshop in spring 2008 were Ruth Millikan of University of Connecticut, Jesse Prinz of University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill,



Ruth Millikan

© Steve Pyke www.pyke-eye.com

Peter Ludlow of Northwestern University and MU's Andrew Melnyk.

## Kline Chair Workshop on Collective Intentionality

We often are told by presidential spokespersons that "the administration" has certain intentions, that it plans to carry out certain policies, etc. How should such talk be understood? Is collective intention and collective intentional action reducible to facts about individual actions and intentions, and, if so, how? Are there any reasons to think that there are collective agents over and above individual agents? These were some of the questions investigated at the Kline Workshop on Collective Intentionality in fall 2008. The main speakers were Michael Bratman from Stanford University, Kirk Ludwig of University of Florida and Abraham Roth from Ohio State University.

## Missouri Philosophy of Science Workshop (MOPS)

MOPS is supported by the Benjamin Endowment, which is dedicated to the memory of A.C. Benjamin, distinguished former member of the department and pioneer philosopher of science. Speakers for this year's workshop included Michael Strevens of New York University; Gualtiero Piccinini, Anna Alexandrova and Robert Northcott, all from University of Missouri–St. Louis; Kent Staley of St. Louis University; and MU's Philip Robbins, André Ariew, Andrew Melnyk, Sara Bernal and Paul Weirich.

## Realistic Standards for Decisions Conference

Much of classical decision theory relies on idealizations about decision makers and their decision problems. For example, it is common to suppose that decision makers are cognitively unlimited and assign precise probabilities and utilities to options'

possible outcomes. Recent work removes some of the idealizations and extends decision principles to cases in which decision makers and decision problems are nonideal. Organized by Paul Weirich, this conference explores methods of adding realism to decision principles. It hopes to stimulate reflection on realistic standards for decisions.

Speakers include Paul Weirich, of MU; University of Alberta's Adam Morton; José Luis Bermúdez of Washington University in St. Louis; University of Idaho's Raymond Dacey; Mark Kaplan of University of Indiana, and Stephen Ellis from University of Oklahoma.

## Quine Workshop in Honor of Roger Gibson



Roger Gibson

This workshop, organized by Peter Markie, brought together friends and admirers of the work of Roger Gibson, PhD '76, professor of philosophy at Washington

University in St. Louis. Gibson is one of our most-celebrated graduates, and this course was an occasion to draw together long-time friends and admirers of his work on the philosophy of W.V. Quine. Speakers included Alex Orenstein of City University of New York, James Higginbotham of University of Southern California, and Rutgers' Ernest LePore, with a keynote address by Roger Gibson.



Willard van Orman Quine