

The Society of Christian Philosophers



Linda Zagzebski, President • Kelly James Clark, Secretary/Treasurer • Spring 2006

Letter from the President

Dear SCP colleagues:

As I near the end of the second year of my presidency, I am writing to keep you abreast of some of the ways in which the SCP is advancing, and to ask you to make a much-needed change in the organization of the Society.

For many years we have been gradually increasing our presence in professional philosophy and, indeed, in the world. The number and scope of our activities have increased, and that inevitably produces more work for the officers of the Society and the regional and standing committees. Kelly Clark, our indomitable Secretary-Treasurer, is spending much of his time on activities that did not exist at the time the SCP was formed. He is not able to give sufficient attention to the work of managing our finances while conducting the regular business of the SCP and continuing his work on international outreach, particularly in China. It is important for the health of the Society that we have a Treasurer who would manage our finances. Lee Hardy, Kelly's colleague at Calvin, is willing to take on this role with the assistance of a Finance Committee, which I will appoint to aid in making decisions about our investments. I am confident that Lee will make an excellent Treasurer.

Our Secretary-Treasurer has always been more than a secretary and a treasurer. He conducts the day-to-day business of the Society and he knows better than the President how the affairs of the SCP are administered. The President turns to the Secretary-Treasurer for advice on issues that arise during the course of his or her presidency. So the Secretary-Treasurer is *de facto* an Executive Director. In addition to splitting the office of Secretary-Treasurer into two offices, then, it seems to me that this is a good time to give the person who does what Kelly does the title of Executive Director. We also believe our international contacts will be better served if our liaison is an Executive Director. This change was endorsed in 2005 by the Executive

Committee. At the meeting in 2006 the Executive Committee decided to bring the issue to a vote of the entire membership. We propose to divide the existing office of Secretary-Treasurer into two offices: (1) an office of Executive Director, and (2) an office of Treasurer. In addition, the Executive Committee proposes to you to elect Kelly to the position of Executive Director, and Lee Hardy to the position of Treasurer. Each of them would have a three-year term, the same as the term of office of Secretary-Treasurer as currently specified in the Constitution.

This change will require amending the Constitution and Bylaws. The proposal we are presenting to you on the ballot in this newsletter would authorize us to make the minimum changes in the Constitution compatible with splitting the office of Secretary-Treasurer and making the name change. You can find a link to the Constitution and Bylaws at www.calvin.edu/academic/philosophy/ with the proposed changes indicated. These changes to the Constitution and Bylaws will be adopted if they are approved by two-thirds of the SCP members voting on the issue. You have also been asked on the enclosed ballot to indicate whether Kelly Clark should continue as Secretary-Treasurer if the measure is not passed.

The final item on the ballot is the election of four members to the Executive Committee. Ed Wierenga and Tom Hibbs helped me put together a terrific slate of candidates. A short biography of each candidate is included in this newsletter.

One of my aims as President is to increase the number of active members, to expand the membership of Continental philosophers and historians of philosophy, and to attract Christian philosophers from many different denominations. With your help, I am sending letters to members of philosophical societies with a large Christian membership. This past year I have sent letters or emails to the American Catholic Philosophical Association, the Baptist Association of Philosophy Teachers,



the Evangelical Philosophical Society, the Society for Continental Philosophy and Theology, the Society for Catholicism and Analytical Philosophy, and lapsed members of the SCP. Flyers were also distributed at the 2006 meeting of the Society for Philosophy of Religion. Executive Committee members have suggested other societies to me, and I will continue to send letters of invitation as I gain access to mailing lists. If you have any suggestions on mailing lists we might obtain, or would like to forward to me names of your own Christian colleagues who are not members, I would appreciate it very much. It is important to the work of the SCP that we have a large membership.

To help the President in the task of appointing members to committees, I have formed a Committee on Committees, consisting initially of Merold Westphal and Eleonore Stump. There are many members of the SCP unknown to the President who can make terrific contributions to the work of the Society. I hope, with the help of Merold and Eleonore, to continue to broaden the participation of SCP members on the various committees. Volunteers are always welcome as well.

With all good wishes,
Linda Zagzebski
lzagzebski@ou.edu

Executive Committee Candidates

Bruce Ellis Benson has a B.A. from Wheaton College and a Ph.D. from the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (Belgium), and was a Fulbright Fellow in Germany. He is Associate Professor and Chair (2006-) of the philosophy department at Wheaton College. He is a co-founder of the Executive Committee of the Society for Continental Philosophy and Theology and is the chair of the SCP Central APA Committee. He is the author of *Graven Ideologies: Nietzsche, Derrida and Marion on Modern Idolatry* (IVP) and *The Improvisation of Musical Dialogue* (Cambridge). He is co-editor of *The Phenomenology of Prayer* (Fordham) and *Hermeneutics at the Crossroads* (Indiana). He is also the author of various articles, book chapters, and review essays. Forthcoming books include a monograph on Nietzsche and religion and an edited volume titled *Evangelicals and Empire*. He is currently at work on a book on the arts and the church.

Stephen T. Davis is the Russell K. Pitzer Professor of Philosophy at Claremont McKenna College in Claremont, California, where he has taught since 1972. He has a BA from Whitworth College, a M.Div. from Princeton Theological Seminary, and a Ph.D. from the Claremont Graduate University. He has written over seventy scholarly articles and has written and/or

edited some fourteen books, including *Encountering Evil: Live Options in Theodicy* (Westminster John Knox Press, 1981/2001); *Risen Indeed: Making Sense of the Resurrection* (Eerdmans, 1993); *God, Reason, and Theistic Proofs* (Edinburgh University Press, 1997); and *Christian Philosophical Theology* (Oxford University Press, 2006). He is currently a member of both the SCP's China Committee and the Russia Committee.

John E. Hare is Noah Porter Professor of Philosophical Theology at Yale Divinity School. His book, *The Moral Gap*, develops an account of the need for God's assistance in meeting the moral demand of which God is the source. In *God's Call* he discusses the divine command theory of morality, analyzing texts in Duns Scotus, Kant, and contemporary moral theory. In *Why Bother Being Good?* he gives a non-technical treatment of the questions Can we be morally good? and Why should we be morally good? He has also written a commentary on Plato's Euthyphro in the Bryn Mawr series, and *Ethics and International Affairs* with Carey B. Joyn. His interests extend to ancient philosophy, medieval Franciscan philosophy, Kant, Kierkegaard, contemporary ethical theory, the theory of the atonement, medical ethics, international relations (he has worked in a teaching hospital and for the Foreign Affairs

Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives), and aesthetics (he is a published composer of church music). B.A. Oxford, Ph.D. Princeton.

Frances Howard-Snyder has BA from the University of Cape Town and PhD from Syracuse University. She is a Professor at Western Washington University in Bellingham WA, where she has worked since 1993. She has also taught at Wayne State University, and Purdue University. She teaches ethics, philosophy of religion and metaphysics. Her published work has focused mainly on ethics—particularly consequentialism and an ethics of love—but she has also published papers on philosophy of religion, metaphysics, epistemology and aesthetics. She has presented a number of papers at Society of Christian Philosophers meetings, and has served on the executive committee for the Society (1996-1999) and as a member of the program coordinating committee for the Pacific region of the SCP.

Thomas D. Kennedy received his B.A. from Calvin College and his Ph.D. from the University of Virginia. Since 1989 he has taught at Valparaiso University where he is Professor of Philosophy and chair of the department and was editor of *The Cresset: a review of literature, the arts and public affairs*. He has been a member of the SCP for more than twenty years

New Editor of Faith and Philosophy

The Executive Committee of the Society of Christian Philosophers is happy to announce the selection of Thomas P. Flint as the next Editor of *Faith and Philosophy*. Tom is Professor of Philosophy and Director of the Center for Philosophy of Religion at the University of Notre Dame. He has published numerous articles and has authored and edited several books, including *Divine Providence: The Molinist Account*. He will take over as Editor in the summer of 2007.

The Committee is also pleased to report that Charles Taliaferro has accepted re-appointment as Book

Review Editor of the journal. Charles is Professor of Philosophy at St. Olaf College, and has been a visiting scholar at Oxford University, New York University, Columbia, and Princeton. He is responsible for a number of books including *Consciousness and the Mind of God* and, most recently, *Love, Love, Love, and Other Essays*. He has been Book Review Editor of *Faith and Philosophy* since 2000.

On behalf of the SCP, the Executive Committee would like to thank the search committee which consisted of Bill Wainwright, Mike Peterson, Linda Zagzebski, and myself.



and has hosted an SCP conference at Valparaiso, *The Significance of Christian Tradition for Contemporary Philosophy* (1991), as well as the department's annual *Norman Kretzmann Lecture*. He has published articles in bioethics, eighteenth century Scottish philosophy, and virtue ethics and is co-editor of *From Christ to the World: Introductory Readings in Christian Ethics* (1995) and editor of a contemporary edition of David Fordyce's *The Elements of Moral Philosophy* (2003). He is currently moving towards completion of an introduction to Christian moral philosophy.

Gyula Klima is Professor of Philosophy at Fordham University, New York, NY. He received his MA and PhD degrees at Lóránd Eötvös University, Budapest Hungary. Before taking up his position at Fordham in 1999, he had held a research position at the Institute of Philosophy of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and teaching positions at Yale University and the University of Notre Dame. He is currently a member of the SCP-Eastern APA committee. He has published three books and over sixty articles and book chapters in scholarly journals and anthologies in the fields of medieval and modern logic, metaphysics, and philosophy of religion.

Thomas D. Senor is Associate Professor and Chair of the Philosophy Department at the University of Arkansas.

Senor earned his bachelor's degree in philosophy from the University of Oregon, and did his graduate work at Syracuse University and at the University of Arizona where he earned his Ph.D. In addition to teaching at Arkansas, Senor has taught at Georgetown University and, thanks to a Fulbright Senior Scholar Grant, at Smolny College in St. Petersburg, Russia. Senor has published academic papers in epistemology, philosophy of religion, philosophy of mind, and political philosophy, and popular essays on what one can learn about the nature of faith by being a Cubs fan and on the nature of testimony in *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*. He has presented a number of papers at SCP meetings and has served one previous term on the Executive Committee of the SCP.

Dale Tuggy has a BA from Biola University, a MA from the Claremont Graduate University, and a PhD from Brown University. He is Associate Professor of Philosophy at SUNY Fredonia, where he has taught since 2000. He has presented a number of papers at SCP meetings, and currently serves on the Steering Committee of the Eastern Region of the SCP. His publications include "Reid's Philosophy of Religion" in *The Cambridge Companion to Thomas Reid*, "Three Roads to Open Theism" in *Faith & Philosophy*, and "Deception, Identity, and Social

Trinitarianism" in *Religious Studies*.

For Treasurer. **Lee Hardy** has been a member of the Calvin Philosophy Department since 1981. He received his MA and PhD in Philosophy from Duquesne University, and a secondary MA in Philosophy from the University of Pittsburgh. He served as the Senior Fellow in the Lilly Fellows Program at Valparaiso University in 1992-93, and chair of the Calvin Philosophy Department from 1996-2002. He specializes in Kant and contemporary continental philosophy. In addition to his own articles in various journals, he has published a translation of Edmund Husserl's *The Idea of Phenomenology* with Kluwer Academic Publishers, and a translation of Elisabeth Ströker's *Husserl's Transcendental Phenomenology* with Stanford University Press.

For Executive-Director. **Kelly James Clark**, Professor of Philosophy at Calvin College, has served as Secretary-Treasurer of SCP since 1994. He is the author, editor, co-author of over ten books including *Return to Reason*, *Philosophers Who Believe*, *When Faith Is Not Enough*, *The Story of Ethics* and *101 Key Philosophical Terms and Their Importance to Theology*. He also serves as co-chair of SCP's China committee.

Please cut out and mail your ballot by Sept. 1 to: Society of Christian Philosophers, Department of Philosophy, Calvin College, 1845 Knollcrest Circle SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546-4402. Or email your votes to kruid0@calvin.edu with SCP Election as the subject.

SCP Ballot

I. Change in offices of SCP

Shall the SCP Constitution and Bylaws be amended as described in the President's letter, dividing the office of Secretary-Treasurer into two offices: (1) an office of Executive Director, and (2) an office of Treasurer?

Yes No

II. For Executive Director (vote for one):

[contingent upon passage of item I above]

Kelly James Clark

III. For Treasurer (vote for one):

[contingent upon passage of item I above]

Lee Hardy

IV. For Secretary-Treasurer (vote for one):

[contingent upon failure of item I above]

Kelly James Clark

V. Executive Committee (vote for four):

Bruce Benson

Stephen Davis

John Hare

Frances Howard-Snyder

Thomas Kennedy

Gyula Klima

Thomas Senor

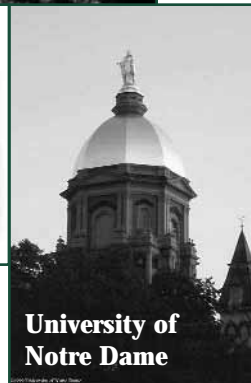
Dale Tuggy



Regional Conferences

The 2006 **SCP Mountain-Pacific Regional Meeting** “Selves, Souls and Survival,” was held at the University of San Diego, February 16–18, 2006. We received queries and submitted papers from around the world—including one from New Guinea! There were 57 participants on the program, including presenters, commentators and our three keynoters, Lynne Baker, Paul Churchland and, in absentia, snowed in at South Bend, Peter van Inwagen. Three of our presenters were from Europe, from England, Switzerland and Italy. There were 105 registered participants at the conference—and quite a number of others who were not registered, including USD students and faculty, and members of the community who attended sessions of special interest to the general public, on abortion, the evolution controversy and secular vs. religious law which we scheduled for Saturday morning to draw a wider audience.

The SCP Central Regional Meeting took place from April 20-22 at the University of Notre Dame. The primary theme of the conference was “Christianity and Mystery” and the keynote speakers were William Wainwright, Richard Cross, and Merold Westphal. There were thirty-seven con-



current paper presentations as well, and the conference concluded with a panel discussion with the keynote speakers and Alvin Plantinga. There were approximately 125 registered conference participants. Speaking as a participant myself, I’d say the conference was a great success. The facilities were of course top-notch, there were many fine presentations, and there was lots of opportunity for healthy and stimulating discussion.

Houghton College hosted the 2006 **SCP Eastern Regional Meeting** May 18–20, titled, “The Enlightenment Project, Revisited.” Seventy-five to

one hundred people turned out, from Houghton and other institutions—regional, national, and international—to hear not only keynote speakers Karl Ameriks and John Hare, but also an exceptionally strong group of concurrent papers. This year’s conference was unusual in that it was jointly sponsored by a group of Kant scholars working toward a volume on Kant’s metaphysical commitments. The conference theme, the degree to which Enlightenment thought in general and Kant’s thought in particular are inimical to serious reflection on what lies beyond this world, was an unusual one for an SCP meeting, and drew out many presenters and other registrants who don’t ordinarily frequent SCP events. In addition to a healthy number of papers on

Kant, the program featured papers on Butler, Descartes, Hume, Locke, Reid, Reinhold, Schopenhauer, Wallace, and others. Several attendees commented, afterward, on the quality of conversation, which brought together two groups (SCP members and scholars of the modern period) who don’t often overlap or meet together. It thus richly fulfilled the purpose of the SCP, namely, “to go beyond the usual philosophy of religion sessions at the [APA] and to stimulate thinking about the nature and role of Christian commitment in philosophy.”

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Kelly James Clark, Secretary-Treasurer

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