

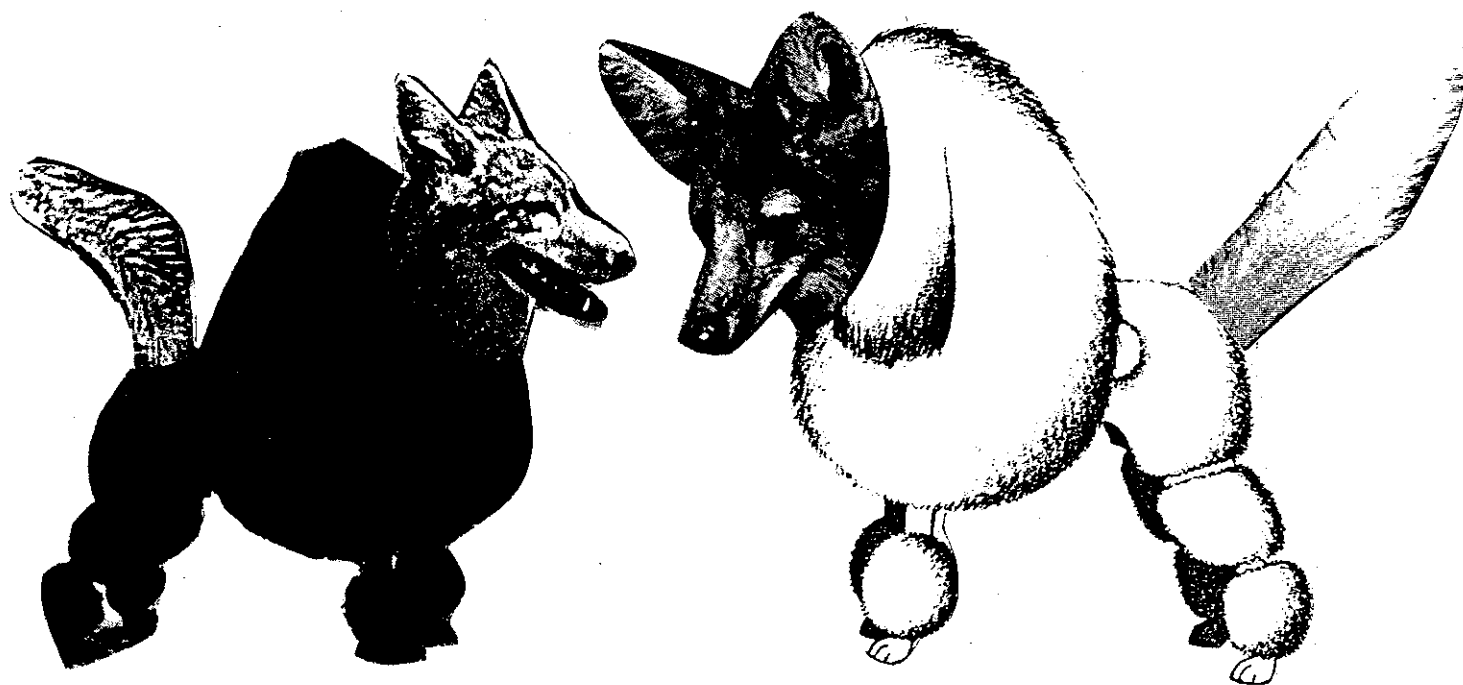
Special Double Issue!

\$ 2.00

PHILOSOPHERS ON HOLIDAY

Philosophical problems arise when language goes on holiday—LW

Volume 1, no. 2 Autumn 1997



FROM PETERSON'S FIELD GUIDE TO LESSER-KNOWN WILD ANIMALS:

POODLE-OTE (poo-dull-OATY; poo-dull-OAT in parts of the west)

SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Canis latans latans*

HABITAT: suburban

DISTINCTIVE MARKINGS: animals present the characteristic poodle body, covered with dense curly fur. They have the head and tail of a coyote. Most wear rhinestone collars, and those inhabiting colder climes have been spotted wearing garishly-colored knitted coats.

DIET: fiberglass lawn ornaments. particularly fond of deer and BVMs (Blessed Virgin Marys). avoids yard trolls; too bitter.

CALLS: yip predominates in all breeds

SOCIAL STRUCTURE: travels in packs. occasionally found locked in the backseat of four-door sedans with Afghans (the blankets, not the dogs) spread out on the backrests.

BEHAVIOR: packs often roam suburban lawns, wreaking havoc by leaping on lawn art, lunging for the throat and severing the jugular.

WARNING: If you should see a poodle-ote, do not attempt to approach it. While these animals prefer fiberglass, they have been known to attack humans, especially those wearing polyester.

Scientific Realism

"...there are many sorts of real things. The most obvious sort is that of food-stuffs.... Examples of other sorts in this many-sorted universe are: a toothache, a word, a language, a highway code, a novel, a governmental decision.... My thesis is that realism is neither demonstrable nor refutable. Realism like anything else outside logic and finite arithmetic is not demonstrable; but while empirical scientific theories are refutable, realism is not even refutable. ... But it is arguable, and the weight of the arguments is overwhelm-

ingly in its favor." Karl Popper, *Objective Knowledge*, pp.37-38

Sometimes when philosophers go on holiday, they get traffic citations, because of the way the world is constructed, in and of itself. If they happen to have the misfortune of being philosophers driving around in Oregon, in an aged VW with out-of-state plates, during Country Fair weekend, in fact, the universe is wired in such a way that they will get a citation. The real world is also constituted in such a way as to make traffic fines exceedingly stiff in Oregon. Being philosophers, and on holiday, our disposable incomes had already been disposed, when we met this fate. (Fate? Did we say fate? We meant pre-determined feature of the world-as-it-really-is.)

Furthermore, one of us (being a social constructivist at the time) believed that it was possible that we could argue about whether or not that light really was red. The other of us (being a Lockean, and therefore of the opinion that secondary qualities inhere in the perceiver and not simply in the thing itself) thought that perhaps we could persuade a judge that, in fact, while the color red might have been in the cop, the color yellow was in us. And still furthermore, we, being philosophers well-trained in both the adversarial method and Plato's *Apology*, thought that a trip to court could be, well, educational, a chance to show our stuff.

So, on our appointed date, off to traffic court we drove--very carefully. Where, to our dismay, we learned that if one wanted to plead innocent, one had to return to

Philosophers on Holiday

Published whenever we have the free time

Editors Peg O'Connor
Lisa Heldke

Submissions Always welcome. Send us evidence of your philosophical exploits in the form of art, essay, letter to editor, puzzle, dream narrative, multiple choice exam, restaurant menu, or anything else you think of.

Subscriptions If you want to be on our mailing list, send us a message. We'll send you the next issue and you can send us \$2.00 to cover production and postage. Honor system.

Direct all correspondence to

1002 Riverview Hills South
St. Peter, MN 56082
(507) 931-4296
poconnor@gac.edu
heldke@gac.edu

court four to six weeks hence to present one's evidence. And where we also heard a young man plead guilty to going through a yellow light-- exactly the thing we'd been planning to use as the basis of our plea of innocent! What were two philosophers to do? Thinking quickly, we pled guilty.

But not without deep misgivings on the part of one of us, who had an eleventh-hour conversion to realism. "I'm either guilty or I'm innocent," she began to pronounce, in her best arch-realist voice. "There is a fact of the matter. I either went through a yellow light when I could have stopped, or I didn't. And that fact of the matter determines my innocence or guilt. If I plead guilty when I am in fact innocent, just because I'm not going to be in town in four to six weeks, well, then I'm pleading guilty to a crime I didn't commit. But if I'm guilty, and I plead innocent, I perjure myself."

Pragmatism (of the crude, unphilosophical sort) won out, as it so often does; we pled guilty, knowing that it would at least reduce our fine by a third, and we skulked out of the courtroom, our record sullied, our wallet lighter, and our metaphysics sorely shaken.

GUEST LOG

Abby Wilkerson, Silver Spring, Maryland philosopher, poet, mother and originator of the amazing chipotle pepper sauce, writes of a recent trip with extended family, where they stayed in a cozy, homey chalet in the Great Smoky Mountains owned by the Jenkins family [ed note: the Jenkins

own the chalet, not the Smokies. The Smokies are owned by Pepsico]. There was a book at the chalet in which previous guests had recorded their happy memories of the time they'd spent there. The comments were heart-warming, yet somehow a certain dimension of family life seemed to be missing from the guest book, an oversight which Abby attempted to correct:

Dear Jenkins family,
Thanks for the use of your lovely home. You folks have thought of everything, down to keeping only small dull knives in the kitchen. Admittedly, this did slow us down when we were preparing meals, but preventing nasty felonies and carpet stains was probably worth it. We enjoyed the gorgeous view of the mountains from the deck, with that spectacular, breathtaking drop to the ground so far below. We all managed to stay well back from the edge at all times. After all, it only takes one person jumping or shoving to ruin the trip for everyone ;-) !!!
Thanks for the memories.

Sincerely,
The Wilkerson family

Phil Gal Stuck in Bloomington, IL for Summer

Alison Bailey, Philosopher at Illinois State University, writes: As of now, my summer R and R stands for "revise and resubmit" so I shall not be on holiday for some time. Yet philosophers not on holiday might imagine what philosophers on holiday might leave on their answering machines when they are out of town.

GAYATRI SPIVAK: "Hello, you've reached (number here) the subject with whom you want to engage in discursive practice is not presently situated here. Please inscribe your multivocality after the signifier..." (beep).

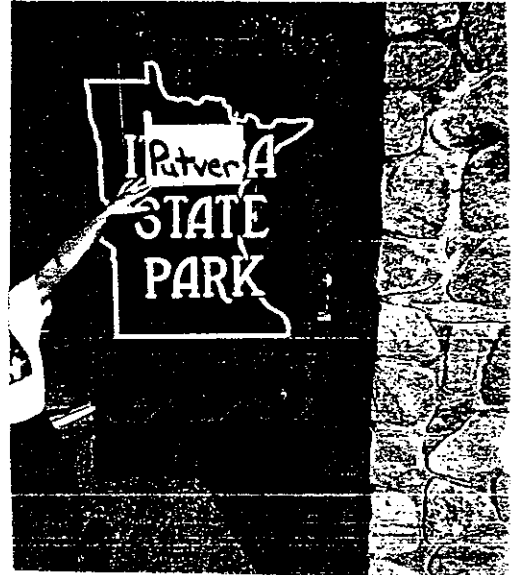
DAVID HUME: "Professor Hume cannot come to the phone right now. If you want to know about the missing shade of blue press 1, if you want more information on causality press 2, for the moral sentiments press 3, for anti-rationalist arguments press 4, and if you wish to speak to another skeptic please hold the line and one of our personal skeptics will be right with you."

tics will be right with you."

ANY LOGICIAN: "Hello. you've reached _____. I can't both be at home and not at home. That would be a contradiction and all contradictions are false. If it is the case that I'm not at home, then leave a message. If it is the case that I'm home, then I will answer the phone. Q.E.D."

VIRGINIA WOOLF: "You've reached the room of my own. Leave a message."

PATRICIA HILL COLLINS: I'm outside, but I'll be coming back in. Leave a message.



Dateline August 5, 1997:

ITASCA STATE PARK, MN: BIRTHPLACE OF THE MISSISSIPPI

Lisa writes: I've decided to rename this park Putver State Park, a more accurate name for it, given the intentions of its namer, one Joseph Brower. Brower, whom one effusive source describes as "'surveyor, archeologist, county auditor, seaman [in Minnesota?], cavalryman, state representative, lawyer and explorer,'"* was also responsible for the legislation which established Itasca State Park, the first state park in Minnesota, and one of the first in the nation (1891, if you're counting).

Our man Brower intended to give the park a name derived from the Latin words for "true head"--referring, of course, to the park's most famous landmark, the headwaters of the Mississippi. He invented the term Itasca, from "veritas caput," which he understood to mean "true head" in Latin. (I'm not making this
see Putver page 8

Peg and Lisa's Pantheon Gastronomique

A completely idiosyncratic and quirky list of foods we like-- and why we liked them.

We travellin' philosophers like to hit the local beaneries when we pass through a town. We take our inspiration from Jane and Michael Stern, whose books *Road Food* and *Eat Your Way Across the USA* have become bibles for cross-country travellers who want to avoid restaurants serving what appears to be real food but is actually only a representation on the wall of the fast food cave.

This means we eat a lot of terrible food; just because Mom and Pop own the restaurant doesn't mean they make real mashed potatoes. "Eating local" also means we encounter a lot of really weird, unknown food. For example, at Judy's Cafe in Two Harbors, Minnesota last January, the waitress informed us that we had "just missed" the day's special--a Finnish potato dumpling, roughly the size of your head, and stuffed with chopped pork. We tried to conceal our disappointment by ordering grilled cheese sandwiches on white bread, with french fries.

But sometimes we hit the jackpot; we come upon a restaurant that serves the *best* grilled cheese sandwich we've ever had, or some weird local specialty that involves whipped cream and homemade chocolate sauce. And we, dear readers, want to pass our good fortunes on to you, in this column.

This is a collective effort, folks. We encourage our readers to send their favorite restaurant finds to us, attn: Pantheon Gastronomique. You will be performing a much-needed service to other phi-

losopher-travellers. It's difficult to cast off the chains, climb out of the cave, and taste Real food, when one has become accustomed to consuming apparent food, served by the flickering light of the Burger King flame broiler.

Berry Medley pie at Mom's Pies, Nimrod, Oregon. Raspberries, marionberries, and blueberries commingle to create a flavor that is both sweet and tart. Cradled in a flaky crust, the berries are triumphant. In the words of Lisa, "I've never had pie this good that wasn't made by my mother. Mom, when did you move to Nimrod?"

Homefries at King's Korner, Lincoln, New Hampshire. Tiny bits of very well-browned onions are nestled in potatoes cooked through and evenly browned. They have a full-bodied taste, a combination of seasoning salt and a hint of bacon flavor stolen from the grill.

Restaurants We Never Visited Department



On the other hand, we gave this place a good leavin' alone.

RESTAURANT REPORT: INTERNATIONAL CUISINE IN HIBBING, MN

From Brita DeRemee, Mom,
Interior Designer, Household
Engineer, and Birthday Cake
Artist:

Greetings from Hibbing
[Minnesota], POHers! I'm
sitting solo at "The Atrium."
It strikes me that this res-
taurant's menu and decor are
designed to take diners on
holiday. Sitting in a teal
vinyl, channel-padded booth
surrounded by glass and sun-
shine: is this Hibbing--or is
it Costa Rica? The six-foot
tropical plants suggest the
latter. Or perhaps I could
imagine that this is Italy
because I just ate a Chicken
CAESAR--get it?? With parme-
san and mozzarella. Although
I did notice an oriental twist
in the flavor of the chicken
breast strips in the CAESAR.
I think the cook warmed up
some marinated chicken breast
tenders traditionally featured
in the ORIENTAL CHICKEN SALAD.
But what the heck, it all
tastes the same; the sodium
seems to gloss over the dif-
ferences between the Italian
and Oriental cuisines anyway.
And heck, cheese is cheese
whether it's white or orange.
Perhaps I should have ordered
IRISH NACHOS: (a real quote)
"Potato skins with seasoned
taco beef, cheese sauce;
topped with lettuce, tomatoes
and black olives." I've never
had Irish food before. What
color cheese sauce would the
Irish use? Where am I? Ahhh,
the MINNESOTA TROPICS TRAY
might have made me feel more
at home, or at least "in
state."

Shirley's TRAVEL

In our last episode,
Shirley Freud left her natal
home to seek her fortune in
the wide world. She had
boarded a tramp steamer bound
(she thought) for Gloucester,
England.

Upon stepping ashore in
Gloucester, Massachusetts
instead of Gloucester, Eng-
land, young Shirley was
gripped by a hunger for adven-
ture, and more basically,
food. Unfortunately, Shir-
ley's funds were seriously
depleted, and she, like many
others who came to America,
sought work immediately. Her
first job was as a fisher,
wearing a yellow slicker and
yellow rain hat. Upon one
occasion, she made the
acquaintance of a certain
young Mr. Slade Gorton, who
was unsuccessfully attempting
to run a restaurant.

Desperately needing
someone to sling the shad, he
asked Shirley for her help.
Young Gorton was having trou-
ble cooking salt cod and salt
mackerel. No matter what
means of cooking he tried, the
result was the same--mushy
fish that fell apart on the
plate. Knowing that presenta-
tion is just as important as
taste, Shirley suggested a
radical approach to fish
cooking. Boldly making her
way back to the cooking area,
Shirley boned the fish, and
cut it into perfectly even
strips. Then, she concocted a
secret batter to slather over
the strips, and much to the
horror of young Gorton, she
threw it into boiling oil.
The result was a crispy stick
of fish. These sticks of fish
were an instant sensation in
Gloucester, and before he
could say "tartar sauce,"
business was booming.

The restaurant grew, and a not-yet-famous artist passing through town painted Shirley wearing her yellow slicker. The painting was as well-known as the food, for it too was sensational. Young Gorton was an honorable man, and he offered to call this new sensation, "Freud fish sticks." By nature a person who avoided the spot light, she demurred, though she was pleased that she had invented a food item that was so pleasing to so many. And years later when she would hear young school children complain that once again the cafeteria served fish sticks, she secretly delighted.

The next time you are in your grocery's freezer section, take a closer look at that "fisherman" on the Gorton's box.

Lisa writes: This summer, I finally achieved my heart's desire; to go to Burlington, Vermont, the holy city, the birthplace of the greatest philosopher you people will ever be lucky enough to read, should you live to be a hundred and fifty. It was a profoundly moving experience for me, despite the fact that it took my best Nancy Clue sleuthing skills to find the signs that He had once lived in the city. I had expected to drive up to the city limits and see a huge sign proclaiming, "Welcome to Burlington, Vermont, proud birthplace of John Dewey." Fat chance. In reality, it takes more than a bit of doing to find any traces that Dewey even lived here. I had to drag my amiable and compliant traveling companions, Peg O'Connor, Barb Heldke and Jay Benjamin all over the University of Vermont campus...

... In Search of John Dewey

Being good little academics, the first stop on our tour of UVM* was the library, where we asked a friendly and helpful (but woefully underinformed) reference librarian if there were any monuments to Dewey on the campus. He pointed us in the direction of the Dewey lounge, where he promised we would find a stained glass window depicting The Man himself, and also to Dewey Hall. I was a bit nonplussed to learn that Dewey lounge is the province of the **ENGLISH DEPARTMENT** and that Dewey Hall is occupied by the **PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT**. Hello???? Can we say philosophy???? Or at least education, for heaven's sake????

Anyway. Armed with a map, the four of us set out in search of Dewey Lounge, located in the Old Mill building. Naturally it was locked, and all we could do was peep through the door. Inside we found not one stained glass window, but three. I became suspicious about the stained-glass-window-of-Dewey story, however, when I noted that the figures in all three windows were wearing long robes. Dewey singing in the Burlington United Methodist choir, perhaps? Dewey at a toga party? Dewey in a cabaret number? I didn't think so. A passing graduate student confirmed my worst fears; this wasn't Dewey, this was Dante!!!** The only visual representation of Dewey in the Dewey lounge is a rather tattered painting of him from his Benevolent Grandfather period.

Off to Dewey Hall, which I must admit is a very distinguished red brick building,
see Dewey page 9

Vacationing at Home.....

or Some WORK isn't a 4-letter word

Barbara Heldke, Lisa's sister writes:

If you caught the summer reruns of 60 Minutes recently and saw Martha Stewart's interview with Morely Safer, you know that she finds work relaxing. (One of this zine's editors told me once that Martha vacuums to relax after long car trips.)

I can understand this. I don't like travel. I usually like what I do upon arrival (after the "traveling" is done), but I hate the "going" (and the packing and the staying overnight somewhere and paying for the "privilege"). The guy who said "getting there is half the fun" never went on a trip with me!

I do, however, like the "work as relaxation" idea that Martha seems to be touting. I once spent about 4 days at home, alone (partner and expected visitor went off alone "unexpectedly" after a tiff) doing "stuff". Painted the bathroom--no one knew I didn't have a clue what I was doing and just kept trying things til it worked out. Picked the wild berries in my "woods" and made jam with apples for pectin rather than go to the store for "Sur-Jel". Created new flower beds. Spent some "quality time" with the neighbor's dog. Ate peanut butter out of the jar.

There's "work" and there's "what we do to make a living" (and from which we take vacations). My (er) philosophy is that the two are in no way connected. Work - left to its own devices - can be "fun" (or at least relaxing and satisfying and revitalizing--my kind

of fun).

NEXT ISSUE: Spending your summer designing and constructing a "good thing" (that's Martha-ese for a neat project) for less than \$25.00. (Subtitle: If my time was worth anything, you couldn't afford me, Lisa!)

Putver, cont.

up.) Close, Joe: it actually means "truth head". The adjective "true" would be something more like verum--and it would come after the noun in Latin. "True head," then, would be caput verum, which leads me to my new name for the park, Putver. It's a lot homelier than Itasca. It's also a lot less Indian-sounding and, while I don't have any evidence that Brower intended for his made-up word to sound like it came from an Indian language, I think the chances are pretty good that he did. Many Minnesotans in fact assume that Itasca is an Indian word, and wonder, as I did, about its spelling; why not Itaska? Lots of products and companies are named Itasca. Most notable among them are a type of moccasin--that most cliched of cliched "Indian" souvenirs--and also a kind of motorhome. This means you can go to Itasca in your Itasca, and walk the paths wearing your Itascas, for that complete "Native American" experience.

*Mike Link, in *Minnesota State Parks: Celebrating One Hundred Years* (Voyageur Press).

Submit to *Phil on Hol*

PHIL GAL TRAPPED

"What is your aim in philosophy?--To shew the fly the way out of the fly-bottle."

Wittgenstein, PI §309

Peg writes: If Wittgenstein had been a camper, he would have asked a different question: "What is your aim in camping? To shew myself the way to the nearest screen house."

On a recent vacation/research venture, we were camping in a gigantic fly-bottle, also known as Itasca State Park (for more on this park, please see "Dateline August 5" p. 4). Itasca State Park is a mosquito and deer fly haven--dense woods and some serious weedy and reedy wetlands. This land's not your land, this land's not my land, this land is not Herland, this land's not Guyland. From the big pine forest to Itasca's waters, this land was made for swarms of flies....(eat your heart out, Woody). No amount of fly repellent could deter these hearty flies. Deep Woods Off was an aphrodisiac, and not even REI jungle juice had much effect. Jungle juice is 100 per cent DEET; no other ingredients, just DEET. The bottle recommends that one apply it sparingly every 8 hours to avoid contracting brain cancer, but with my sanity quickly leaving me (throwing me into a quandary about the mind/body relationship), I had to baste myself with it every five minutes. I was forced to abandon Summer Sartorial Tenet Number One: never wear long pants.

An ex post facto trip to REI found me in the mosquito wear section. I gazed longingly at a mesh suit, but decided I was opposed to

buying any suits that could not be worn to APA conventions. I settled on a lovely head net instead. Now it's all buzz, no bite.

Dewey, cont.

with a white, pillared entry (the guidebooks report that it is Colonial Revival architecture). But here too, Dewey's presence is decidedly ephemeral. The sign announcing that this is Dewey Hall is a makeshift wooden affair, slapped down on the sidewalk in front of the building where it is a sitting duck for vandalism or a runaway snowplow. In contrast, the building's original name ("Medical College") is permanently carved in stone above the building's entryway. Inside the building, we found a large cardboard reproduction of the Dewey postage stamp (I had no idea!) hanging, crookedly, above the elevator door. That was it for JD's presence in Dewey Hall. I was beginning to think that all traces of JD could be wiped off the campus by anyone with half an hour and a small book of matches.

But then we found it. Or rather, Peg found it. Sitting on the steps of Dewey Hall looking at the campus map, she read, "John Dewey Memorial by the north wall of Ira Allen Chapel is the resting place for the ashes of the noted educator and philosopher John Dewey...."*** His final resting place was right here, and that lunatic librarian never even told us???? Unbelievable. We quickly made our way to the memorial site, which is nestled against the chapel wall and sheltered by a large pine tree. There we found a granite memorial marker, inscribed with a

quotation from his book *A Common Faith*.

While we stood there--I am not making this part up--storm clouds suddenly rolled in, and what had been a beautiful, sunny day turned dark and somber. Within minutes, a torrential rainstorm broke loose. Of course this was no accident.

We concluded the Dewey tour with a stop for ice cream at the UVM Dairy Bar. Ben and Jerry's notwithstanding, the state of Vermont could stand to learn a few things from Wisconsin; the University of Wisconsin Dairy Bar serves up a far superior dish.

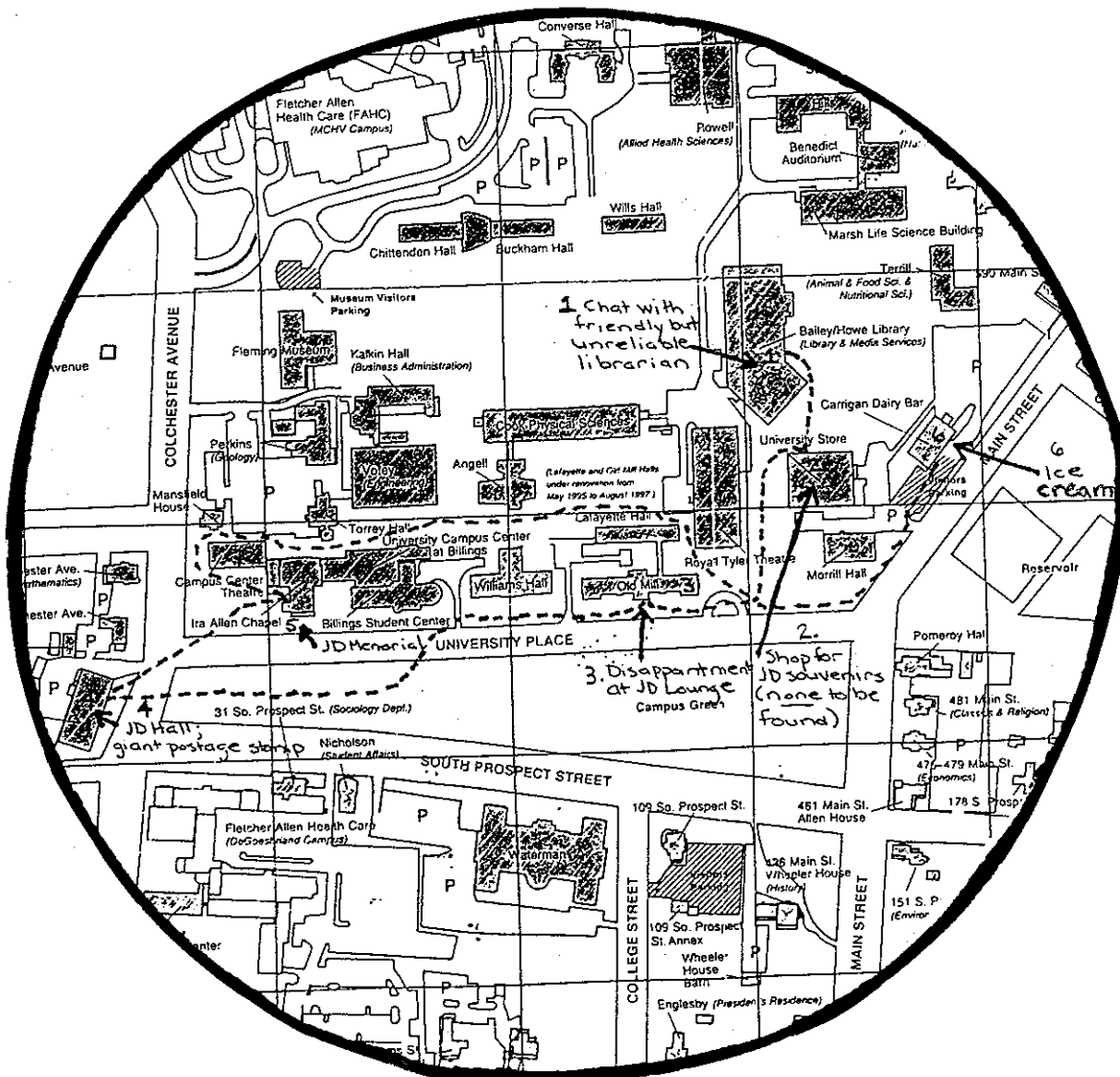
Readers' contest Ever wonder why

the University of Vermont is abbreviated UVM? Well, we know. If you know, or don't know but can spin some plausible tale, send us your entry on a picture postcard (attn: **UVM Readers' Contest**). The lucky winner will receive a lovely gift. There are no lovely consolation prizes for our departing contestants.

**The campus map helpfully notes that the windows "honor such noted figures as Dante and Plato." Guess they couldn't figure out who the third guy was either.

***It adds "and his wife Harriet." Harriet? No, she was Ozzie's wife.

DOLLY--ER LISA--GOES IN SEARCH OF JOHN DEWEY



Flying the Friendly Skies



Ann O'Connor,
Peg's mum,
writes:

After board-
ing an air-
plane for a
trip to
London, I
began to hear
strange
noises and
voices.
Thinking my
ears were
ringing in

anticipation of the flight, I
tried to ignore it. Finally,
I said to my husband, "do you
hear strange little voices
coming from the little lady
sitting beside me?" As usual,
he was busy reading his papers
and told me not to be looking
at people and listening to
things. Never having taken
such advice in my life, I
smiled at the little lady and
asked her what was her final
destination. She replied,
"London" and proceeded to tell
me a long story about abandon-
ment. It seems there was
nobody to care for her friend.
She then announced, "I have a
secret."

I immediately thought
"Bomb!" and decided that this
little old lady was going to
take us all with her. Not
knowing whether to revert back
to my old stewardess days and
report her to the captain, or
engage in further conversa-
tion, I decided on the latter.
She rummaged about in her
belongings under the seat in
front of her and pulled out a
rather large parcel. All
sorts of noises were coming
out of it. It turned out to
contain a real, live talking
bird. With great relief, I
wished her and the bird a long
life and a happy trip and

settled into my reading mate-
rial, *Weighed in the Balance*,
by Anne Perry.

Did they really say that?

Another occasional feature of
Phil on Hol

Remember that song from
"Fiddler on the Roof?" The
one where the daughters are
all singing about getting hus-
bands? Yeah, that one.
Remember the line, "For papa,
make him a scholar?" Would
you believe that one philoso-
pher in our acquaintance
(okay, it was Peg) heard, "For
papa, Mickey Mouse collar."

And then there was the
park ranger at Itasca, giving
a talk on bears one evening,
and explaining that bears are
sometimes hunted for their
organs only, because "Bear
gall bladders are a delicates-
sen in China." Would you like
that on rye or wheat?

SPORTS REPORT: RINGSIDE SEATS

an irregular feature of *Phil
on Hol*

Forgive us for asking,
but isn't there something just
a bit ironic about the sport-
ing world's outrage over the
whole Mike-bites-Evander
thing? We are talking about a
sport in which your job is to
hit someone, a sport in which
you get *extra points* if you
hit the other person (okay,
the other guy) in the *head*,
and in which you *win* if you
knock the other person uncon-
scious (so long as you do it
according to the established
rules of the sport, of
course). It's in *this*
sport--boxing, for heavens
sake!--that we hear sports-
casters angrily announcing

they will "never cover another Mike Tyson fight again," as a result of Tyson's postmodern reinterpretation of the whole Van Gogh deal. Hello? Never cover another Tyson fight? How about saying you'll never cover another *fight* again? Now that would be saying something.

For heaven's sake, Evander Holyfield can still hear after being munched by Mike. He can still even get his ear pierced--probably even wear an ear cuff, after a little reconstructive surgery. He could likely have several more bites taken out of his ears, with no lasting damage to his hearing--or to his mental faculties. Would that Muhammad Ali could say the same; he has been rendered permanently disabled by blows he suffered in the ring--and hitting someone in the head is not only *legal* in boxing, it's the whole *point* of boxing.

If you had dropped an intelligent Martian into the bleachers (or whatever they call the viewing area at boxing matches--"witness stands," perhaps?), we can only imagine that the poor being would have been left very confused by the spectacle that unfolded. At the sound of a bell, two very big, very powerful men wearing thick, padded gloves, fancy shorts and no shirts start hopping around on a raised platform, aiming blows at each other's heads. They do this for several minutes, in front of thousands of other people, none of whom attempts to stop them! Indeed, one man in a striped shirt carefully monitors their activity, and intervenes only occasionally, when a blow hits particular areas (such as the area below their belts), or when the boxers drape themselves across each other like teenage Mar-

tians at the Blorg Dance. Then the bell rings again, and each warrior goes back to his corner for some neck rubbing, spitting and inspiring. Another bell, and the thousands of spectators go wild as the men stand up and go at each other again. The Martian cringes as some of the men's blows find their mark. Perhaps one of the guys starts bleeding a bit from the nose. Maybe one of them staggers a bit, or has to pause to shake off an especially strong blow. But still the two men continue to hit each other, Stripe Shirt allows the activity to go on, and the people in the stands watch intently and noisily. Then, in the midst of all this bludgeoning and attempted bludgeoning, one of the big men bites the other one on the ear, removing a chunk of flesh. Then, after sustaining a good blow to his own head, Biter chomps down on the guy's *other* ear. Striped Shirt gets so upset about this biting that...that he makes the men stop hitting each other in the head! The Martian is left thinking that perhaps this biting should have happened several minutes earlier, so that the hitting could have stopped sooner too.

Yeah, we know what you're going to say. Boxing isn't just hitting someone in the head; it's hitting someone in the head *skillfully*. But really, does the fact that skill is involved mitigate the fact that the whole aim of the game is to knock out the other guy before he knocks you out? A boxing match can even be a fight to the death for one of the opponents. While death isn't the goal of a boxing match, boxers have died as a consequence of being hit--legally hit. Boxing actually is a lot like pit bull fighting, except that pit

bull fighting is illegal. Oh that's right--boxing involves skill too.

Of course we think it's scandalous that Mike Tyson bit Evander Holyfield on the ear. But what is even more scandalous to us is that he did so during the course of a "sporting event" that is nothing more than organized, highly-paid thuggery.

Call for submissions:

Special issues of Philosophers on Holiday

Please send your contributions to these special theme issues. See page 2 for submission information.



Phil on Hol: the Winter Holidays Issue. Anything from November 1 to March 1 is fair game. The deadline for submissions is November 15)

Feminist Phil on Hol. No deadline for submissions; no pub date set at present.



Phil on Hol: Philosophers as Kids. Real kids; not your immature colleagues; no deadline, no pub date.

Your ad here!!!

Normal Science at the Minnesota State Fair

"Perhaps the most striking feature of normal science...is how little it aims to produce major novelties, conceptual or phenomenal.... [T]he range of anticipated and thus of assimilable, results is always small compared with the range that imagination can conceive. And the project whose outcome does not fall in that narrower range is usually just a research failure, one which reflects not on nature but on the scientist." Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*

I hope Thomas Kuhn made it to the Minnesota State Fair before his death. Specifically, I hope he made it to the Creative Activities building to have a look at the baked goods (a precious few sporting a prize ribbon) displayed there. There could not be a better location from which to see embodied his theory that, as a paradigm begins to crumble, its adherents cling more fervently to it, in a desperate (but hopeless) attempt to fend off rival paradigms. The judges of baking at the Minnesota State Fair are engaged in a life-and-death struggle to preserve the Wonder Bread Paradigm, even as they see the approach of Artisanal Bread.

Now this isn't just sour grapes talking. This is the observation of a dispassionate observer. The blue-haired cartel (Peg's description of the folks who run the judging) is on the run. They know the days of bread that looks like cake are numbered. They have seen the big, crusty, LUMPY! loaves people are carrying under their arms as they emerge from the new European-

style bakeries that have cropped up advertising "artisanal breads". They've sat in restaurants and watched people rip off hunks of tough, chewy, HOLEY! bread to sop up the extra virgin olive oil they've poured on their plate. They've watched people skip by the yeast in the supermarket with the words "I use my own sourdough starter." And they have panicked. They have seen their lives flash before their eyes. They know the days of soft, airy, sweet, sweet, sweet breads are at an end. And they have thrown themselves into protecting one of their last pieces of turf: the State Fair. Here, at least, they can make sure that the Old Ways, the Wonder Ways, prevail. Consider:

1) In the Premium booklet, which explains the rules and regulations for entering baked goods, the section on breads begins thus: "It is advisable to bake bread for exhibition in individual loaves approximately 4x8x2-3/4." Loaves. As in neat rectangles of dough, birthed and raised up in the restraining confines of loaf pans. Have you looked in the window of any of those European-style bakeries--the ones with lines of people standing outside, waiting to get their hands on some real bread? Have you seen a rectangular loaf in any of them? I think not.

2) In their scathing criticism of my white bread (a rebellious bread; I used a rye sourdough starter to fashion a round loaf with a chewy crust and a mixture of small and VERY LARGE airholes), the tsk-tsking judges wrote "Thick crust" (this is a criticism???), "Many large holes" (exactly!!) and "All white flour should be used in a white bread" (just exactly WHY, Cheveaux Bleus?)

3) While they were favorably inclined toward my oat-meal-cornmeal bread (of course they were! I'd made it in a loaf pan!), they did note that it was "heavy" and advised me to "Allow it to rise longer." Well, excuse me, Blau Haar, but the recipe specifically advises you NOT to let it rise high, because it gets too airy to slice for toast. Heavy? I'll show them heavy.

4) Winners in each category tended to look like homemade Wonder Bread; big, puffy, pale loaves that threatened to float off the display shelves. In any category involving filled or sweet breads, a suspiciously large number of the winners included (are you ready?) maraschino cherries! (You can imagine that my bold, inventive use of raisins--dried cranberries--did not garner any points with this crowd.)

I don't think it's at all accidental that the rule book under which this bunch operates includes page after page of admonitions to present only baked goods that are the products of "home" kitchens (their quotes, not mine), and to eschew mixes, whipped cream, cheese cake, and who knows what else, but nevertheless positively EMBRACES the bread machine, which is nothing other than a little factory for your house. And why, you ask, such enthusiasm for this contraption? Because bread machines produce masterful Wonder Bread, that's why.

MINNESOTA STATE FAIR		
Score Card		
BREAD - YEAST		Entry No. 1754
Lot No.		SCORE
APPEARANCE - General impressions	<i>thick crust</i>	25
LIGHTNESS		10
Heavy or too light	Light	
TENDERNESS		10
Tough or hard	Tender	
TEXTURE		10
Streaks (poor handling)	No streaks	
Too coarse or fine	Fairly fine	
Many large holes	Uniform cells	
MOISTURE CONTENT		10
Dry or soggy	Slightly moist, baked well	
FLAVOR AND ODOR		35
Flat, sour, yeasty,	Slightly sweet	
Off flavor from fat, etc.	Nutty, fresh, mild	
		100
		86
Remarks <i>all white flour should be used in a white bread</i>		
Signature of Judge <i>Ju</i>		Signature of Clerk <i>ld</i>

Where Are They Now?

So much for renouncing the pleasures of the body for the sake of the purity of the soul. We caught up with Him to Whom the Rest of Philosophy Is a Footnote in a small republic in Minnesota bearing his name.



Have you sent in your subscription to this cutting edge 'zine? Subscribe today, at this low, low introductory rate of two clams per issue! Don't delay; you'll want to be able to say you were a charter subscriber.



Yes! I want to be on the cutting edge of discursive practices that explore the interstices of travel and philosophy!!!! Please deploy future issues of *Philosophers on Holiday!* to my situatedness. I'll send you two George Washingtons every time another fabulous issue appears in my mailbox.

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

Return to: O'Connor and Heldke
1002 Riverview Hills
St. Peter, MN 56082
poconnor@gac.edu; heldke@gac.edu