



Mind & Soul Evolving

NEWSLETTER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION

University of North Carolina at Wilmington

Fall 2002 / Spring 2003



Fulbright scholarship winner, Evian Patterson, is getting into the world.

~ Stephanie Kirby

Even before Sept. 11, 2001, the U.S./Middle East divide interested Durham native Evian Patterson. As a recipient of the prestigious Fulbright grant, the 2002 UNCW graduate has been studying firsthand the cultural and religious distinctions between the two regions.

"I left for Cairo Oct. 12, 2002, ambitious, excited, nervous and anxious," said Patterson. "Of course, I was excited to embark on a new journey, but I also had the typical anxieties of leaving the recognizable home place."

Patterson's reactions to the culture of Egypt have been subtle. He said he has not felt an extreme culture shock and has gradually gotten used to the Islamic traditions of Egypt.

"Everyday I hear the call to prayer and have learned to embrace the call," said Patterson. "I even plan my day according to the times of the call. I am in class at the time of the second call, leaving school at the third call, at the café during the fourth call, and eating dinner during the last call. Subconsciously, I have become accustomed to the rhythm of the city."

Patterson thought that he would experience a strict Islamic culture in Cairo, but found that it is much more than a Muslim state. Cairo, Egypt is a hub for international influences and traditions. The majority of

Cairo is Islamic, said Patterson, but Cairo is also the home of one of the oldest Christian traditions, the Coptic Church.

"I had a chance to visit with some Copts for their Christmas celebration on Jan. 7," said Patterson. "What I found very interesting is how the Copts look no different than the Muslims."

There are many people in Cairo from other African nations like Sudan, Somalia and Kenya, "and let's not forget that Egypt is a major tourist destination," said Patterson.

Now Patterson is busy with Arabic work. He said that learning Arabic in an Arabic speaking country is like learning two languages at once. Everyday he goes to class for four hours of Arabic instruction. The first two hours are spent learning Egyptian Colloquial Arabic. For the other two hours Patterson is at the International Language Institute, where he devotes most of his time to a rigorous study of Classical Arabic, rather than Modern Standard Arabic. Studying Classical Arabic will be more useful in his study of Islam.

"This language study, although it may be difficult, its fun," said Patterson. "I feel like I'm getting something done."

Patterson, who is the son of Thomas and Rose Patterson, of Durham, NC, received a bachelor's degree in philosophy and religion from UNCW in May, 2002. He said he aspires to complete graduate work in Islam and international affairs, earn a doctorate and teach at a university.

Patterson was UNCW's third student awarded a Fulbright grant from among those who applied during the 2001-02 academic year, a record for the university. He recognized several faculty members for inspiring him to further his studies.

"I'd like to thank Drs. Herbert Berg, Samuel Murrell and George Zervos (professors in the Philosophy and Religion Department) for writing such strong recommendations as well as the members of the university's Fulbright advisory board – Drs. Don Habibi, Lisa Pollard and Yousry Sayed," said Patterson.

Patterson said that he will probably be returning to America "*inshaa'allah*" (Arabic for if God's willing),"

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New professor, Diana Pasulka, shines in the community of inquiry.

~ Heidi Belcher

UNCW's Philosophy and Religion department recently welcomed a fresh addition to their roll of faculty. Currently teaching PAR 125: Great Books of the World's Religions and PAR 225: Women and Religion, Diana Pasulka came to us from Syracuse University in New York.

Although she has been on the east coast for some time now, Pasulka is originally from Granite Bay, outside of the Napa Valley in northern California. In California Pasulka received her bachelor's at the University of California at Davis

and her master's at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkley.

Pasulka has traveled from one coast to the other due to simple curiosity, although, she is no stranger to North Carolina. While working at Syracuse, Pasulka spent her summers teaching gifted high school students at Duke University in Durham, NC. Since then Wilmington's beaches and weather have drawn her in.

When asked about how she felt about UNCW's Philosophy and Religion department, she described it as being "a super undergraduate program."

"Whenever I have a question about anything having to do with religion or philosophy, I have an expert down the hall that is happy to tell me everything I want to know," said Pasulka. "I have learned a lot already. I guess you can say that I enjoy the community inquiry here."

She also enjoys the students at UNCW. "Compared to Syracuse, the students here are much more interested in religion and philosophy, which is great." She adds, "so far, I really like teaching here and the weather is 100 percent better than the weather in upstate New York."

So what can we say; UNCW has the students, the weather and now, Professor Pasulka. Sorry, Syracuse.

Need a translator?

We've got the girl for you.

~ Stephanie Kirby

Crystal Lubinsky, a UNCW alumna from the Philosophy and Religion Department, is the first UNCW student to graduate with a B.A. in Philosophy and Religion to go on to earn a graduate degree in Religious Studies.

Lubinsky graduated from UNCW in the spring of 2000 with a B.A. in Philosophy and Religion and a B.A. in History. She enrolled at New York University in the fall of 2000. NYU only accepts two graduate students in their religious studies program each year. She was also accepted as a teaching assistant, a position that is only granted once every other year. SEE LUBINSKY - 3



Patterson (continued)

in mid July. He said that it will not be the last time he will be in Egypt or the Middle East.

"I would like to call out to the UNCW student body, especially Philosophy and Religion students, and urge them to get out into the world. We are trained to be thinkers, but we also have the responsibility to experience and share. I can't tell you how many philosophical conversations I have daily, the daily conversations on religious phenomenon, and the amount of useful argumentative information I acquire from those I share. It's

grand! Look into the Fulbright program. It's a wonderful opportunity and worth a try," said Patterson.

The Fulbright Program, America's flagship educational exchange program, is sponsored by the U.S. Information Agency, an independent foreign affairs agency within the executive branch of the U.S. government. Established in 1946 under Congressional legislation by Sen. J. William Fulbright of Arkansas, the program is designed to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries.

Since the program's inception, more than 250,000

participants—chosen for their leadership potential—have had the opportunity to observe each other's political, economic and cultural institutions.

Both the U.S. and Visiting Fulbright Scholars lecture or conduct research in a wide variety of academic and professional fields ranging from journalism and urban planning to music, philosophy, business administration and zoology.

Dr. Raymond Burt, associate dean in the College of Arts and Sciences, is UNCW's liaison for the Fulbright Scholarship. He can be reached at (910) 962-3660 or burtr@uncwil.edu.





December graduates

Juliet Williams and Shane Oakley (Catherine Powell not pictured) Juliet, Shane and Catherine achieved alumni status in December. All three graduated December 20, 2002 with a B.A. in Philosophy and Religion.

Dr. T. Burgh Gives B. Frank Hall Lecture

~ Stephanie Kirby

Dr. Theodore W. Burgh, who will be joining the department of philosophy and religion faculty in the fall of 2003, gave this year's B. Frank Hall lecture.

In his lecture, "Do You Hear What I Hear? Music in Ancient Israel," Burgh discussed how the study of music and musical instruments helps understand life in ancient Israel. An archaeomusicologist, ethnologist and biblical historian, Burgh is proficient in Near Eastern languages including classical and modern Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek and Akkadian.



The B. Frank Hall Lecture, sponsored by the Department of Philosophy and Religion, is named in honor of the founder of the department.

NC Religious Studies Association brings conference to UNCW

~ Stephanie Kirby

The North Carolina Religious Studies Association chose UNCW for the location of its 2002 conference, held on Oct. 26, hosted by the Department of Philosophy and Religion. The president of the association, Dr. Nathaniel Samuel Murrell of UNCW, who also served as vice president the previous year, chaired and facilitated the conference.

UNCW was well represented at this conference. Murrell chaired a panel of UNCW students who gave a well received presentation, Dr. Michael Shaffer presented a paper titled, "Why Religious Belief is not a Private Matter: Hard Lessons about Moral & Epistemological Irresponsibility from a Pragmatist's Perspective," and Dr. Maurice Stanley presented a paper titled, "E.M. Adams: Rethinking God."

Murrell chose Lia Strickland, Jennifer Hanes, Emily White and Brian Johnson from his Caribbean Religion class to present a multimedia presentation. Their presentation was on the religion of Santeria and was called "Religious Myths of the Caribbean." According to Murrell the presentation "generated much discussion, questions, and controversy and was hailed the most entertaining and very provocative."

Lubinsky (continued)

One of the main reasons she wanted to pursue further education was to learn many languages. Her goal is to be a well known resource for archaeologists and anthropologists. She now knows French, German, Latin, biblical Greek, Arabic, Hebrew and Sahidic Coptic.

Lubinsky graduated from NYU in May, 2002, with a Masters in Religious Studies with a concentration in early Christianity .

In Shaffer's presentation, "Why Religious Belief is not a Private Matter: Hard Lessons about Moral & Epistemological Irresponsibility from a Pragmatist's Perspective," he observed, "It is a commonplace belief that one's religious convictions are a purely private matter." He contends, "This thesis is false, and that belief is really a public matter."

"Bona fide belief cannot be conceptually separated from action," reasons Shaffer. Conference chair Murrell said Shaffer's paper was so provocative; he had a difficult time terminating the lively discussion that ensued.

Stanley's paper, "E.M. Adams: Rethinking God," argues that the humanistic concepts of value and meaning, which for Adams involve the idea of God as the value structure of the universe, are real and important, and that the scientific category of factuality is not the only source of knowledge.

"Religion and ethics are essential to really grasping reality," said Stanley. "The human is more important than the scientific, and indeed the scientific has importance only to human culture."

She eventually plans to earn her doctorate and become a professor specializing in early Christian communities, encratism and monasticism, Syriac Christianity and early Egyptian monastic communities.

She is now managing a Port City Java in Southport, NC and working on a thesis titled, *The Holy Apostles and the Holy Transvestites: An Intertextual Look at the Hagiographies of St. Marina and St. Matrona of Perge.*



Alumni News

~ Dr. George Zervos

Gina Gambony, 1996, is currently an eighth-grade teacher at Williston Middle School and is the Artistic Director of the Stageworks repertory Theatre Company. She has been Director of Children's Programs at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Wilmington and continues to be heavily involved in local theatre and film events.

Robin Gregg, 2000, is presently in Graduate School at UNC-G working towards a Master's Degree in Library Science. Robin plans to return to Wilmington upon completion of her degree program.

James Stuart, 1995, completed a Master's Degree program in English Literature at the University of Colorado at Boulder and is currently in Law School at that university. James is planning on being married in Wilmington in May, 2003.

Samuel Randall IV, 1995, entered Law school immediately after receiving his degree in Philosophy at UNC-W. He graduated from the California Western School of Law in San Diego in June and passed the North Carolina bar exam in July, 1998. Sam is currently practicing criminal law in Wilmington. He has been happily married since 2000 and he and his wife Julie were blessed with a son, Sam V, in 2001. Sam credits his background in Philosophy, with a minor in English, as being the best preparation for a the legal profession. In both Philosophy and Law one must be able to argue convincingly.

Faculty News

~Stephanie Kirby

Dr. Herb Berg recently had a publication titled, *Weaknesses in the Arguments for the early dating of Tafsir. With Reverence for the Word: Medieval Scriptural Exegesis in Judaism, Christianity and Islam*, to come out.

Dr. Candace Gauthier gave a lecture on "Health Care Ethics" for the Family Medicine Residency Program at the Coastal Area Health Education Center in Wilmington during December, 2002. In March, 2003 she will be speaking on "The Ethics of Social Work" at the spring educational meeting of the local chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, also in Wilmington. She will be presenting a paper entitled, "News Media Coverage of National Tragedies: Public Discourse as Public Grieving," at the annual meeting of the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics. This meeting will be held in March, 2003 in Charlotte, NC.

Dr. Donald Habibi was awarded a two-semester reassignment for the 2003-04 school year to accept a research fellowship at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Dr. Thomas Schmid, along with Dr. Richard Olsen in the Communications department, was awarded a "Learning Community" grant. They will be teaching an LC course next fall titled, "It's Greek [Logic!] To Me." This course will combine COM 110, Public Speaking, and PAR 201, History of Ancient Philosophy. Students will develop the skills of making speeches, logical reasoning, and competitive debate, focused on some of the great debates of ancient thought.

Dr. Michael Shaffer presented several papers in 2002 including: "Explanation, Unification and Scientific Understanding" at Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis Department of Philosophy; "Unification, Inference to the best Explanation and Scientific Understanding" at State University of New York at Oswego, New York; "Superseding Darwin: The Future of Biophysics" at The University of North Carolina at Wilmington Department of Physics; "The Correspondence Principle as Conservative Belief Revision" at East Carolina University; and "Response to Steib, Martin and Wisniewski: Rorty, Kripke and Wittgenstein on Realism" at the American Philosophical Association Eastern Division Meeting.

Dr. Maurice Stanley had the paper "Wittgenstein on Personal Time" accepted for presentation at the 25th Wittgenstein Symposium in Kirchberg-am Wechsel, Austria. It was published by the Austrian Ludwig Wittgenstein Society. Dr. Stanley also presented the paper "The Ideal of Personal Worth" at the T. H. Green Conference, Oxford University.

Dr. George Zervos had "Seeking the Source of the Marian Myth: Have We Found the Missing Link?" published in the volume *Which Mary? The Marys of Early Christian Tradition in the Symposium Series of the Society of Biblical Literature*. A hardback edition of this book is being published by Brill Academic Publishers. This publication is a collection of essays presented in the Christian Apocrypha section at the 2000 annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature held in Nashville.



Alumni! We want to hear from you!

Name: _____
 Dr./Mr./Ms./Mrs. First Middle (Maiden) Last Suffix

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