

Report on APPA's 11th Annual Meeting Held June 5, 2010

Dear APPA Members,

It is my privilege to report to you on the proceedings of APPA's 11th Annual General Meeting, held at The City College of New York, this June 5, 2010.

Prior to the meeting itself, APPA's Directors -- Vaughana Feary, Michael Grosso, Pierre Grimes, and yours truly -- all agreed to serve new three-year terms, from June 1, 2010 through May 31, 2013. They also asked me to serve another three-year term as President, which I have agreed to do.

At the same time, it is my fond hope and fervent aspiration that as APPA continues to grow and the next generation of practitioners emerges, new initiatives will be taken, and future directors will assume leadership roles. Meanwhile, I am happy to report that APPA continues to fulfill its mission, and that its present and future prospects look bright indeed.

This year's annual meeting was held without a formal program, and in the spirit of a round-table brainstorming session. I am grateful to all who attended and contributed -- including Gabrielle Aruta, Charles Elin, Sara Ellenbogen, Vaughana Feary, Patricia Murphy, Mark Murynech, Frank Roel, Lyodis Scott, Peter Simpson, and Reinhard Zaiser.

As many of you know, I have just completed a year as Chair of the Philosophy Department at City College, and the onerous burdens of that office consumed more than their fair share of my hours and energies. This, in addition to managing APPA's daily affairs, editing its Journal, and honoring other commitments, left me precious little time to organize a program this year.

That said, I believe we achieved important results for APPA by virtue of our round-table dialogue. Here, then, is a synopsis of my report at the Annual Meeting (8 items), into which are woven some of the excellent suggestions that emerged from our interchange.

1. Membership, National and International

APPA continues its model of slow but steady growth. We neither proselytize nor advertise, yet our website still averages 75,000 hits per month. Many of these hits are from prospective clients, world-wide, who are seeking philosophical counselors.

Our membership itself has grown to more than 800, from 44 US states and 37 foreign countries. While this would be a negligibly small membership for a religious group, it is of significant size for a philosophical one. And growing.

It was suggested that APPA could and should make itself better-known via several well-established philosophical resources, including the Philosophers Index, the Philosophy Documentation Center, the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. (If we wish to open a

potential Pandora's box, we could also try Wikipedia.) I am all in favor of expanding awareness of APPA via these and other media. Does anyone volunteer to help with this mission? We need skilled writers. I am happy to collaborate as an editor.

2. *Philosophical Practice: Journal of the APPA*

Our Journal continues to publish leading-edge articles and reviews, three times per year, on schedule and to an enthusiastic subscriber list. Founded in 2005, *Philosophical Practice* is now into its fifth volume. The Journal was conceived by APPA's original Board of Directors at a retreat in 2000. It emerged at the top of our "do-list," and has proved to be a worthwhile endeavor for all concerned. Every issue is the product of a considerable investment of time by contributors, referees, consultants, and the core editorial team. But every issue is also another brick in the edifice of applied philosophy, as well as a valuable resource for individual subscribers and academic libraries.

The Journal has weathered some storms. It was evicted from its CCNY offices in 2005, by a controversial Dean. (His soul was evicted from his body soon thereafter, may he rest in peace.) Then it was dropped by its original publisher, Taylor & Francis, in 2007, in the third year of a ten-year contract. But thanks to APPA's spirited and loyal membership, we found sufficient resources to house, edit, and publish the Journal ourselves. Under our own stewardship, it is thriving.

As editor-in-chief, I must express gratitude to our fine editorial teams, past and present--currently Kate Mehuron (Managing Editor) and Nancy Matchett (Reviews Editor)--and of course to all our contributors and subscribers, without whom the Journal could not exist. We aspire to continue publishing, and have several fine future issues already planned.

3. Philosophy Inside

This program has launched, and is very gradually lifting-off. It constitutes APPA's response to a trickle of written inquiries by inmates of correctional facilities, who have discovered some merit in furthering their philosophical outlooks on life and who seek correspondence with practitioners.

The program, called "Philosophy Inside" is coordinated by Ernest Courant, an APPA-Certified practitioner with considerable experience in this area. APPA Director Vaughana Feary, who has a wealth of experience working with inmate populations and corrections systems, helped develop a set of suitable guidelines.

Ernest will endeavor to match inmates with philosophers, for an exchange of twelve letters each, over one year. The identities of the philosophers are protected; they adopt pen-names. Detailed guidelines are provided. Certified practitioners interested in participating should contact Ernest Courant: ecourant@gmail.com

4. Certification Programs

a) Sweden. APPA has partnered with leading-edge Swedish physicians and staff at Stockholm's Rehabstation, a rehabilitative facility serving spinal-injured and newly-MS-diagnosed patients. In collaboration with the Spinalis Foundation, and with Prof. Drs. Richard Levi and Claes Hultling, APPA designed and delivered a series of programs that resulted in the successful implementation of philosophical practice in a state-of-the-art clinical medical setting. APPA's Journal (Volume 5.2, July 2010) has just published an article by Dr. Richard Levi, representing his informed and informative account of this project. See www.appa.edu/journal.htm

b) East Asia. Philosophical counseling has arrived in East Asia. APPA now has two certified practitioners in Hong Kong: Virginia Wu and David Wan. David has just published the first indigenous book, in Chinese, on PC. There is also interest in China: philosophers at Nanjing University have formed a philosophical practice study group. Taiwan and South Korea have taken larger steps. President Bernard Li of Fu-Jen Catholic University, in Taipei, is encouraging courses and a possible program in PC. Kangwon National University, in Chuncheon, South Korea, recently hosted the First International Conference on Humanities Therapy. It was organized by Prof. Young E. Rhee, who is also an APPA-Certified counselor. The South Koreans have formed a national association, and are doing PC with soldiers on the front lines -- approved by both the military and the ministry of education. Philosophical practice has enormous potential in East Asia.

c) New York. We have just completed our annual certification program in New York. Once again, APPA attracted a very talented and diverse group of practitioners and aspirants, this year from Canada, Colombia, Hong Kong, Israel, and the US. If the "class of 2010" is at all representative, which I believe it is, then the immediate and further- futures of philosophical practice are in very capable hands.

5. Tenth International Conference

The 10th International Conference on Philosophical Practice took place in The Netherlands this August 11-14, 2010. Practitioners from all over the world participated, including many APPA members. APPA was strongly represented on the program: in master classes, workshops and other presentations. There are sure to be interesting repercussions from this event, and we will keep you informed.

6. M.A. Program in Applied Philosophy Approved by Department at CCNY

One of the (very) few advantages of being a Department Chair is this: The position provides a slightly elevated platform, from which strategic initiatives are sometimes more readily launched (and, *mutatis mutandis*, similarly take longer to crash). This happily proved to be the case during the academic year 2009-10, when as Chair of Philosophy at CCNY, I was fortunate to have coordinated two important academic steps. First, a collaborative effort with Profs. Jeff Blustein and Nick Pappas has produced an outline for a two-year M.A. Program in Applied Philosophy. It entails three branches: clinical ethics,

critical aesthetics, and philosophical practice. Second, our program outline and syllabi were approved by an overwhelming majority of our full-time departmental faculty. This is only the beginning of a lengthy and demanding process, but a beginning it surely is.

I am committed determined to furthering this process, and winning the necessary approvals by governance bodies at CCNY, then CUNY-wide, and ultimately by State entities in Albany, up to and including the New York State Board of Regents. Should this be achieved, I would then direct the program at CCNY. The timeline to implementation is two or three years (or possibly lifetimes). Stay tuned.

7. Clinical Ethics

In recent discussions with my esteemed CCNY colleague Jeff Blustein, Zitrin Professor of Bioethics and an experienced clinical ethicist, I have learned that clinical ethicists in the US are not (yet) nationally certified. This is understandable, as certification initiatives can prove difficult to launch, and for a variety of possible reasons. It is my sense that a good many clinical ethicists in the US deserve to be nationally certified, and moreover would like to be.

As if on cue, two clinical ethicists from San Francisco enrolled in our July 2010 program, and in consequence are now certified by APPA. They are Katrina Bramstedt and Kate Michi Ettinger. It was very interesting working with co-professionals in this emergent field, which is undeniably a form a philosophical practice. Perhaps APPA can develop more "species-specific" programs for clinical ethicists in the future.

8. Web 2.0

In consultation with some of our younger and more web-savvy members, APPA is in the throes of upgrading from a web 1.0 to a web 2.0 environment (before web 3.0 overtakes us). Still in the planning stages, we intend to roll out some significant improvements in the coming year. They will include a website upgrade, as well as utilization of social networking utilities, that will among other things facilitate contact among APPA members. Please stay tuned.

Sincerely,
Lou Marinoff
President, APPA



Some AGM participants, L to R: Gabrielle Aruta, Lou Marinoff, Patricia Murphy, Charles Elin, Reinhard Zaiser, Vaughana Feary, Sara Ellenbogen, Frank Roel, Mark Muryneec, Peter Simpson



APPA Certification Program, New York, July 2010

seated left to right

Kate Ettinger, Gabrielle Aruta, Marilyn Piety, Laura Templeman, Martha Patino

standing left to right

**Michael Russell, Jorn Kroll, Valerie Russell, Virginia Wu, Stuart Cedrone,
Katrina Bramstedt, Donovan Irvn, Marina Ozernov, Joshua Mandelstam, Tania Fierro,
Andrew Taggart, Leslie Miller, Anita Norton, Lou Marinoff**

APPA-Spinalis Project, Sweden, 2008-2010

See Levi, Richard (2010), "Philosophical Practice in Rehabilitation Medicine," *Philosophical Practice*, 5.2, 607-614. Available at www.appa.edu/journal.htm



L-R: Dr. Claes Hultling, Dr. Richard Levi, Mr. Jan Aronssen (Stockholm, 2008)



On retreat at Landsort Island, in the Baltic Sea (2009)



Certification Program at Rehabstation, Stockholm (2009)