



# American Philosophical Practitioners Association

APPA  
The City College of New York  
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[www.appa.edu](http://www.appa.edu)

## APPA: Year End Report, 2007

January 1, 2008

**Dear APPA Members,**

This is a year-end report on APPA and its recent past and, more important, its immediate future. I write to summarize our present condition, to alert you to new positions that have become open in the organization, and to solicit expressions of your interest in occupying them.

Founded in 1999, APPA is halfway through its ninth fiscal year, and into its ten calendar year. Thanks to your loyalty and support, we have grown to more than seven hundred members, from forty-five US states and thirty-seven countries.

Beyond the numbers, APPA has attracted an insightful, congenial and engaged membership. This is clear from the postings on our Forum, from the articles in our Journal, and from the many accomplishments of our members. I greatly and increasingly value our unique association.

Our five agenda points are: 1. Service 2. Programs 3. Newsletter 4. Journal 5. Board

### **1. Service to APPA.**

On behalf of APPA: Thanks to Vaughana Feary, Pierre Grimes and Michael Grosso for their service on the Board of Directors; to George Hole for his service as Chair of APPA's Board of Examiners; to J. Michael Russell for his service as APPA Faculty; to Chris Johns for his service as Forum Moderator; to Andrea Messineo for her service as Communications Manager; to Jeanette Morris for her service as Program Coordinator; to Dorthy Wittman for her service as Memberships Coordinator and Webmaster. APPA could not function without your invaluable help.

In the course of serving APPA, many of our younger helpers have significantly advanced themselves on scholarly and professional pathways. Michelle Walsh was our enthusiastic memberships manager and newsletter editor for several years; she is currently working on a PhD in marine zoology at UNH. Chris Johns is ongoing moderator of the APPA Forum; he recently completed a PhD in philosophy at CUNY Graduate Center, and is teaching this year in Chicago. Andrea Messineo has been our communications manager (fluently in three languages) for a few years; she will defend a PhD thesis in philosophy in 2008, at the University of St Thomas in Houston. Dorthy Wittman, our current memberships

**APPA is a 501(c)(3) educational corporation. APPA members apply philosophical systems, insights and methods to managing human problems and ameliorating human estates.**

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manager and webmaster, is immersed in a program leading to a CPA. We wish all our youthful helpers continued success in their graduate and professional careers! APPA is fortunate indeed to have enlisted their talents.

Now, going forward in 2008, in order to serve our growing membership and expanding mission, APPA needs to enlist more of its talented members, and in each of the following areas: program initiatives, newsletter, journal, and possibly board of directors. As you read this report, please reflect on whether you would like to help, and in what capacity. If so, please contact me at [lou.marinoff@appa.edu](mailto:lou.marinoff@appa.edu) I will be glad to hear from you.

### 2. APPA Programs

APPA's certification programs continue to attract able and motivated participants, from around the USA and internationally. During the past nine years, APPA has certified more than two hundred practitioners, from thirty-two US states and fifteen countries. We have conducted certification programs in New York, Los Angeles, Washington DC, San Francisco, Louisville, Miami, Genoa and Palermo. Pending the establishment of graduate programs in philosophical practice in the USA, our three-day certification program continues to provide a rough-but-ready toolkit for degreed philosophers who seek to build practices to complement their other activities.

Even when graduate programs in philosophical practice will have inevitably emerged in the US, APPA's three-day certification programs will continue to serve worthwhile purposes, both as continuing education units for licensed co-professionals and as professional development courses for philosophers in practice.

In 2006, we launched a related program initiative, accepting affiliate members as participants in our three-day programs, and granting them certified affiliate status upon completion. This has proved interesting and beneficial for all concerned; as philosophically-minded physicians, psychiatrists, psychologists, lawyers, and social workers have greatly enriched our matrix of learning with their professional insight and experience. They are listed in our on-line directory of practitioners, under Certified Affiliates. APPA will happily continue this initiative. There is also follow-up from some of our certified affiliates, which can and hopefully will soon be reported in our newsletter (reference agenda item #3).

In 2007, the Directors approved a plan to establish a program of "Pen-pals for Prisoners." APPA has received a steady trickle of letters from inmates of the corrections system who have cultivated philosophical interests, and who seek to correspond regularly (e.g. monthly) with philosophers. APPA will assign pen-pals to inmates on a one-to-one, anonymous basis. APPA's pen-pals will invent pen-names, and all correspondence will be filtered through APPA's mailbox at City College to insure anonymity. This program is being coordinated by Ernest Courant, and is being mentored by Vaughana Feary. Vaughana pioneered the delivery of philosophical services to inmates of correctional facilities, and has helped APPA develop guidelines for participating inmates and pen-pals alike. In any case America's prisons are bursting at the seams, and a little philosophy might go a long way toward ameliorating the quality of time being served. I fail to see how we could do any harm in such surroundings.

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In 2008, I would like to turn APPA's attentions to our auxiliary membership, and ask them (you) two questions: What can APPA do to better serve your philosophical interests? What can you do to help us better serve your philosophical interests? The auxiliary category is our broadest and most inclusive, spanning students to retired persons; a rich assortment of people with diverse philosophical aims and backgrounds. Alexandra Gilbert suggested to me that APPA should conduct week-end philosophical retreats for auxiliary members, led by our fine faculty. I am certainly amenable to this suggestion. If any auxiliary member (or any other member) would like to assume a share of responsibility for establishing and coordinating such a program, please contact me.

APPA's programs have encouraged and helped pioneering philosophers establish practices in many places. For example, Carol Gould and Gary Seelinger opened a practice in Fort Lauderdale, as has Kerry Tobin in Lakewood, Ohio. Kathryn Russell is Chair of Philosophy at SUNY Cortland, where she and her colleague Andrew Fitzgibbon hope to undertake research in philosophical counseling. James Carey is Chair of Philosophy at Manhattan College, and has similar aspirations at his institution. Giselle Monges and Ray Dalton practice in Buenos Aires, Lydia Amir and Ora Gruengard in Tel-Aviv, David Wan in Hong Kong. Salvatore Geraci founded a school for philosophical counseling in Palermo, while Jose Barrientos Rastrojo recently established a graduate program in philosophical counseling in Sevilla. These among many other practicing philosophers are APPA-Certified, remain friends and supporters of APPA, and are credits to our profession worldwide.

### **3. APPA's Newsletter: *The Examined Life***

APPA last published its newsletter one year ago, in December 2006. We have generally published a couple of newsletters per year, but in 2007 we were unable to replace Mick Walsh, our fine former editor. Philosophical practitioners are always making news that our members would find interesting, but we need someone regularly and reliably to help APPA report it.

I therefore ask for your help in this regard: Is there among APPA's seven hundred members anyone who would like to edit *The Examined Life*, and/or play a role as a journalist? APPA can provide leads to stories, and can help with photos and also layout if need be. The editor of *The Examined Life* should be able to write brief, clear, reader-friendly pieces. Journalistic experience would be helpful but is not strictly required. The editor of *The Examined Life* will work with me at appropriate stages of each issue's conception and production. If anyone is interested in being our newsletter editor, please contact me. Alternatively, if you know someone who would be ideal but is not currently a member of APPA, then please facilitate a mutual introduction.

Previous issues of *The Examined Life* are archived in the Members Only section of our website.

### **4. APPA's Journal: *The Good, the Bad, and the Beautiful***

#### **The Good**

In 2000, the Directors charged me with the duty of founding a serial scholarly publication for the Association. It took five years to accomplish that mission. In 2005, we launched the maiden issue of *Philosophical Practice: Journal of The APPA*, published by Taylor & Francis of Oxford.

Scholarly journals are not born overnight. They require years of labor. In our case, I first negotiated standard institutional support from City College in order to function as Editor-in-Chief. In early

2000, City College was amenable to the project, and provided a reduced teaching load, a Journal office, a part-time assistant, phone and fax lines, and other in-kind support.

Next I built the editorial boards. My thanks to all APPA members who serve on these boards. Then I wrote a detailed proposal for founding the Journal, and sought out prospective publishers. After some rejections, a breakthrough: In 2003, Taylor & Francis of Oxford made a ten-year contractual commitment to publish the APPA's Journal.

Finally, in 2004 I recruited the editorial team, and we began to solicit letters, articles and book reviews. Thanks to the services of Ruth Kastner (letters editor), Greg Goode (managing editor), and Michael Grosso (reviews editor), we managed to bring out our first 6 issues (volumes 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2., 2.3) more or less on target. None of us had ever done this work before, but we learned the ropes. Everyone including contributors pulled their weight, and we got six issues out in two years.

In our first two years, we averaged about 150 annual subscriptions from our membership (thank you!), and attracted four subscriptions from libraries. Our publisher's interest lay primarily in library subscriptions, from which journal publishers derive their chief income, but most libraries will not even consider subscribing to a journal unless and until it has been published for at least three consecutive years. Hence the importance of Taylor & Francis's ten-year contractual commitment to APPA. A scholarly journal may come to exhibit longevity, but it's a slow-growing organ. We had made a very good start with our Journal, all things considered.

### **The Bad**

In 2000, a harsh administration with a mandate to suppress CCNY's liberal arts tradition in general – and liquidate its humanities division in particular – was installed at City College. Former City College President Yolanda Moses (1994-2000) was a visionary administrator, who not only endorsed philosophical practice but also invited APPA-Certified practitioners to provide services at the rejuvenated Wellness Center. Yolanda was replaced by her philosophical polar opposite: President Gregory Williams, an anti-visionary administrator who does not meet with faculty as a matter of policy, and whose administration has aggressively persecuted and unconstitutionally prohibited every form of philosophical practice on campus, for the past seven years.

This had an inevitable impact on our Journal. By 2004 City College had abrogated all its written promises of support, and has instead done all in its power to sabotage the project. My teaching load was increased overnight by 50%. Our journal's assistant was terminated, our phone and fax lines cut off, and the Journal evicted from its offices. City College refuses to recognize editing a scholarly journal as a legitimate professorial activity. At the same time, City College publicly advertises itself – to the New York tax-payers who support it – as an institution committed foremost to scholarship and research.

When I protested their breach of written promise of support, on which APPA had partly but vitally based its publishing arrangement with Taylor & Francis, the deputy counsel for the university offered to restore reductions in my teaching load in exchange for a proportionate reduction in my salary. Those of you who are academics know full well that the first criterion of tenure and promotion is publication, and that we professors expend considerable time and energy researching, writing and editing books and articles. That, in addition to teaching, is how we earn our bread. I happen to be a

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Commonwealth Scholar, and was educated in an academic ethos in which editing a journal was a valued scholarly activity, more valued even than publishing articles, because a journal creates opportunities for many scholars to publish. But at CUNY, editing a journal is transformed into an opportunity for the administration to extort salary from a professor. Is this the behavior of an institution devoted foremost to scholarship and research, or to racketeering?

Then, abruptly in 2007, Taylor & Francis unilaterally annulled our publishing agreement. They said there were not enough library subscriptions. But we had only been publishing for two years (out of ten, contractually). I was informed that they had shifted their strategy, and decided to axe a number of projects that had not yet reached fruition.

The cancellation of our publishing contract spelled the dissolution of our editorial team. Greg Goode's position as managing editor had been funded by the publisher. When those funds evaporated, so did the position. (Thankfully, Greg has reinvented himself as a technical consultant. See below.) At the same time, Michael Grosso just attained the milestone age of seventy (congratulations!), and remains an energetic philosopher, author, and painter. He wished to retire from editorial duties, and devote his time to purely creative pursuits – a compelling idea. We had to let Michael go, and with our blessing. He was a great reviews editor. I advised Ruth to abandon ship as well. I stayed on board, and sent an “SOS” to the Directors.

### **The Beautiful**

After deliberation, the Directors and I agreed to keep the journal alive if at all possible. We decided, for the time being, to have APPA publish it in soft copy format, available on-line to subscribers. Taylor & Francis were kind enough to cede the ISSN and associated copyrights to APPA. We have enough submissions for volumes 3.1 and 3.2, and have every prospect of continuing beyond that. Moreover, libraries are also happy to subscribe to soft copy journals.

APPA has also acquired all the back issues from Taylor & Francis. We are making them available for purchase at our website, and as always APPA members will be offered discounts. You can order volumes 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 securely on-line, while supplies last, at <https://www.appa.edu/backissues.htm>

In order for us to forge ahead with volumes 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 in 2008, we need candidates to fill two positions: managing editor, and reviews editor. The managing editor sends incoming manuscripts out for peer review, and communicates with authors and referees. Ideally, the managing editor would also generate new subscriptions from individuals and institutions. APPA is willing to offer incentives for this position on a commission basis.

The reviews editor solicits (and where necessary edits) reviews of selected books from qualified reviewers. Both the managing editor and the reviews editor coordinate their activities with the editor in chief, currently yours truly. If you are interested in filling either of these positions, please communicate with me.

We are fortunate that Greg Goode has offered his services as a technical consultant, to help our journal manage and sustain its transition from hard to soft copy. We will greatly value his expertise in the creation and management of our e-journal's PDF files, and their state-of-the-art embedment in cyberspace.

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Notwithstanding its growing pains, our Journal has made a wonderful impression on many readers. I believe, and the Directors agree, that we can successfully reincarnate *Philosophical Practice* in soft copy form, where it will prosper. But we need a managing editor and a reviews editor, starting early in 2008, or it could well wither.

The journal has added great value to our association, has given philosophical practitioners from around the world a respected venue in which to publish, has been strongly supported by our members, and has been thoroughly enjoyed by readers. I think it's a beautiful thing. I will be happy to continue serving as editor-in-chief if we can fill the positions of managing editor and reviews editor.

That said, if anyone aspires to becoming editor-in-chief, please let me know. I can certainly use the help of an associate editor now.

### 5. APPA's Board of Directors

APPA's current Board of Directors is entering the last six months of its second three-year term. In terms of board seniority, Vaughana and I will have served nine years each. Pierre and Michael will have served six years each.

In terms of chronology, Pierre Grimes is the doyen of philosophical practice in the USA, now in his mid-eighties and still going strong. He conducts weekly meetings with his Noetic Society in Orange County, CA. I attended one recently, and Pierre treated us to a learned and spirited exposition of Plato's *Parmenides*. Pierre has incredible lucidity and energy, and I hope he will continue to serve APPA.

Michael, as mentioned, has retired from editorial duties but is still willing to serve APPA in an advisory capacity, and we shall be glad of his advice.

Vaughana has been a pioneer of philosophical practice in many domains, is an original co-founder of APPA, and is a valued friend, colleague and advisor. In recent years, she has become matriarch of a sizeable family clan on the Delaware, but thank goodness is still willing to serve APPA in an advisory capacity.

That said, the Board of Directors may seek to expand in the coming year, if we can attract people who can help APPA take decisive steps toward realizing some of the opportunities it faces.

In any case, and in the first instance, the Directors and I will be guided by your responses, if any, to this report. As a Board, we are united in our mission to sustain and grow APPA as a premier organization representing philosophical practice in the USA and globally. With your help and your input, we will be assured of taking the most appropriate steps going forward in 2008 and beyond.

APPA is 100% member-supported, and our fiscal year runs from June 1 – May 31. If you have not yet renewed your dues for the current year 2007-08, please do so now, securely on-line, at <https://www.appa.edu/renew.htm>

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This concludes my year-end report to you, the membership. It remains for me to thank you one and all for your past and present support. I look forward to thanking you again in the future.

As some of you know, I also serve a number of global think-tanks, in philosophical and advisory capacities. Many people who strongly influence the future of the global village are aware of the philosophical practice movement, and on the whole are favorably disposed toward it. From that perspective, it appears that our movement will continue, on balance, to thrive, and will help create value for humanity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Meanwhile, on behalf of the Directors and others who serve our unique and vibrant Association, I wish you all a happy, healthy and fulfilling New Year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Lou Marinoff', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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