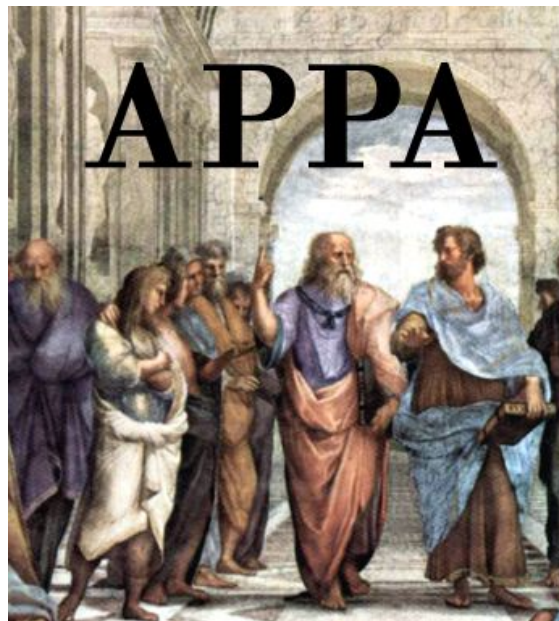


American Philosophical Practitioners Association
Annual Meeting, June 18, 2011
Faculty House, Columbia University



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Left to right, standing: Paul Trueblood, Yale Jones, Frank Simunek, Marianne Patinelli-Dubay, Donovan Irvén, Gabrielle Aruta, Andrew Taggart, Patricia Murphy, Barbara Jones, Vaughana Feary, Mark Murynek, Jim Fisher, Peter Simpson, Leodis Scott. *Seated:* M. Todd Shipley, Lou Marinoff

Lou Marinoff: Annual Report to the Members

Vaughana Feary: Rapporteur

APPA President Lou Marinoff opened the meeting with his Annual Report to the membership. The main points addressed were (1) our membership and its continued growth, (2) the increasing popularity of our certification programs, (3) our planned website upgrade, (4) our journal's forthcoming inclusion in EBSCO's flagship citation index, (5) next year's International Conference in South Korea, (6) Lou's unrelenting aspiration to establish an M.A. Program in Philosophical Practice, which is getting closer to fruition.

Lou prefaced his report by reminding us that he has been on sabbatical all year, free from onerous duties as Chair of Philosophy at CCNY, writing new books and traveling, but still taking care of essential APPA matters. Now to his agenda points:

1. Membership and Continued Growth.

As conceived by its founders, APPA has remained an independent, non-profit, tax-exempt educational corporation. We are 100% member-supported and member-driven, and beholden to no external entities in the fulfillment of our mission.

Now 12 years old, APPA has attracted members from 48 US states and 44 foreign countries, and continues its mode of slow and steady growth. APPA neither advertises nor proselytizes, and yet has attracted a wonderful variety and diversity of engaged and thoughtful members. Lou

remarked that the greatest reward for all the work involved has been the quality of our membership, and the joys of interacting with them.

2. Certification Programs

One of APPA's core activities is its certification programs. Since 1999, APPA has trained and certified more than 300 practitioners, in 32 states and 19 foreign countries. This summer's program will welcome practitioners, and aspiring practitioners, from Africa, Asia, Europe, South America, and the US. Our certificate is a valued and trusted professional credential, and our pioneering practitioners have taken great strides to advance the cause of philosophical practice.

South Korea affords a very good example. APPA certified two of its core practitioners -- Jinnam Yi and Young E. Rhee -- and they went on to form a national association with more than 50 members. They are now providing regular philosophical counseling to soldiers, with governmental approval, as well as to political refugees from North Korea, who have managed to escape but who now face the challenge of integration into mainstream South Korea, after years of deprivation in the North. The South Korean example is a model for how far philosophical practice can go, in a short time, when forces are concerted in its favor.

3. Website Upgrade

Some of our younger and more cyber-savvy members have pointed out that APPA's website is still using web 1.0 technologies, and really needs an upgrade to web 2.0 (if possible, before the advent of web 3.0!)

While it's true that not all philosophers are technophiles (some are still struggling with email), APPA's website deserves an upgrade, and will soon get one. We have found an ideal web-development outfit, that does fine aesthetic work, understands our mission, and has presented us with a great plan for a makeover.

The planned upgrade will give our members enriched access to the site, more control over their profile pages, and interconnectivity via Facebook and Twitter. This upgrade will be relatively costly, but will pay big dividends to the Association once it's up and running. Target date: January 2012.

Meanwhile, Lou exhorted our members to please renew their dues and subscribe to our Journal, so we can comfortably foot the bills, and offer all the bells and whistles of web 2.0 to APPA members worldwide. Since our inception in 1999, we have never once increased our dues! So please help us, and yourselves, by renewing today!

4. Our Journal's Inclusion in EBSCO's Flagship Citation Index

EBSCO is a major licensor and distributor of academic and scientific citation indexes, as well as a broker of institutional subscriptions to journals (including our own). APPA was invited by EBSCO to have our Journal included in its flagship citation index, *Academic Search Complete*, and we now have a signed contract with them.

What does this mean for our journal? It means that every letter, article, and review published in *Philosophical Practice* will be searchable by author, title, keyword, and abstract. EBSCO will archive all our back issues, from 2005 to the present, and ongoing.

EBSCO's citation index is currently licensed to almost 20,000 libraries and institutions worldwide. So all of their subscribers, meaning hundreds of thousands if not millions of scholars and researchers, will start unearthing APPA's journal publications, and will be able to retrieve our letters, articles, and reviews.

Needless to say, this will be a significant boost to our exposure. It will be good for our contributors and for our Association, and may result in increased memberships and journal subscriptions at our end. It will also carry the professional literature of our movement into new and maybe even exciting places.

Enormous credit goes to our Journal's core editorial team: Lou Marinoff (Editor), Nancy Matchett (Reviews Editor), Kate Mehuron (Managing Editor), Greg Goode (Technical Consultant) and Thomas Griffith (Legal Consultant) for producing a product worthy of EBSCO's partnership. Likewise, we thank all our contributors, referees, and subscribers, without whom the Journal could not exist. We hope it will continue to thrive, now in partnership with EBSCO.

5. Next International Conference: South Korea, July 16-19, 2012

At last summer's very successful conference in Leusden, Netherlands -- the Tenth International Conference on Philosophical Practice -- South Korea won its bid to host the Eleventh ICPP. The dates are July 16-19, 2012. The exact venue will be announced, but it's likely to be Kangwon National University, in Chuncheon (a couple of hours from Seoul by car or bus).

Kangwon National University is the epicenter for philosophical practice in South Korea. They hosted the First International Conference on Humanities Therapy in 2009, and have a very supportive Dean of Humanities, namely Dr. Dae-beom Lee. On behalf of APPA, Lou Marinoff signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Dr. Lee's Humanities Institute in 2009, pledging cooperation to further the development of philosophical practice in Korea.

The main organizer of the 2012 event is Prof. Young E. Rhee. He has very astutely elicited collaboration with Chinese and Japanese practitioners, who will help shape and organize the program, thus making this conference an East Asian initiative. APPA will be well-represented, and we'd love to see as many members as possible participate. It'll be a great event



Dae-beom Lee and Lou Marinoff sign Memorandum of Understanding, 2009

6. Toward an M.A. Program in Philosophical Practice

Lou reported that he and two senior colleagues at City College have come up with a draft M.A. Program in Applied Philosophy -- including a branch for Philosophical Practice -- that was approved by the Philosophy Department in 2010. Departmental approval is always the first and necessary step in the process.

The next step is to draft a Letter of Intent, a fifteen-page document that must ultimately be approved not only by governing bodies at CCNY, but also by senior administrators at all CUNY colleges, before being ratified by the Board of Trustees and sent up to Albany for final approval by the Regents.

Lou also informed us that there's a 150-page Handbook that explains how to prepare the 15-page Letter. He asked one of his colleagues at CCNY if he had read the Handbook, and the colleague replied "No, I'm waiting for the movie to come out." This had Lou, and many of us, in stitches. Laughter is definitely therapeutic, and we can all use more jokes about bureaucracy. But Lou seems determined to see this through, and expressed optimism over CCNY's new administration. We wish him success in this quest.

That sums up Lou's annual report to the members. It's clearly been a great year for APPA, and for philosophical practice, and next year looks to be even better. Lou and I wish to thank old and new APPA members for their support. I think I can speak for everyone in the APPA in saying that we are also grateful to Lou for his creative leadership, his inexhaustible energy in supporting new initiatives, and his continued commitment to encouraging a wide diversity of perspectives on philosophical practice consistent with our high professional standards.

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Marianne Patinelli-Dubay

Environmental Philosophy as Consummatory Experience: From Sympathy to Agency



Marianne Patinelli-Dubay

Rapporteur: Donovan Irvén

On Saturday, June the 18th 2011, at the APPA Annual Meeting, Marianne Patinelli-Dubay delivered a presentation based on her paper, “Environmental Philosophy as Consummatory Experience: From Sympathy to Agency.” The presentation’s thesis was concerned with reconciling the “Sentimentalist Fallacy,” found in the work of William James, with the idea of a consummatory experience, qua John Dewey. The consummatory experience would, according to Patinelli-Dubay, move an individual from sympathy to agency so that effective action could be taken and the fallacy avoided.

In brief, the Sentimentalist Fallacy occurs when a person is moved by a great tragedy enough that they care or express concern for the victims of a tragedy or are disturbed by the consequences of a series of events. However, this care, the sympathy felt toward the suffering of others is not acted upon in a significant way.

The above represents a common dilemma for students of environmental philosophy. Students are moved. They care enough about the issues to base at least a part of their academic work on those issues. But circumstances, such as the need for employment, will often conflict with the student's desire to be helpful and to do the right thing. Further, conflicts within the academic community, between academics and businesses, and between these parties and government regulatory bodies obscure and confuse what environmentally minded thinkers may reasonably conceive as the morally right course of action. Thus, the move is never made from sympathy to agency, responsibility is diffused or misplaced, and the fallacy occurs.

Dewey's idea of a consummatory experience would be a vehicle to agency, argues Patinelli-Dubay. By internalizing the issues of environmental philosophy through an immersive, hands on experience, the student becomes empowered to leverage their roles in the system in order to effect change. This change is brought about by the combination of a restructuring of thought processes, a nuanced consideration of particular situation which call for our attention, and the development of a community within which effective agency can operate. Such communities of agents are marked by "deep," or broad, borders that allow interdisciplinary action and cooperative problem solving.

A lively discussion followed the presentation. Themes of discussion ranged from the concept of "phenomenological communities" which stressed the importance of deep boundaries, to Dewey's concept of "reconstruction" which explains how consummatory experiences provide the context within which a person's thinking can be examined and altered in light of new knowledge and perspective.

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Andrew Taggart

Toward an Alternative Business Model for Philosophical Counseling



Andrew Taggart

Rapporteur: Peter Simpson

Andrew began with the difficulties he had faced (and that other would-be philosophical practitioners face) in trying to set up a practice on the traditional model already developed and successfully applied by the medical, psychiatric, and psychological professions. The basic problem seems to be twofold: first and most obviously the high costs of entry, as advertising through professional journals and other outlets, overheads of running an office for conducting sessions; second the task of adequately distinguishing oneself from competitors while yet soliciting the same clients in the same ways. For some this model seems to have worked (especially in Europe where philosophical practice began and has been most successful). Andrew, however, tried this model and not only failed to make it work but spent, or wasted, a great deal of time and money in the process.

Andrew refused to throw in the towel and instead tried to rethink radically what he was really offering, to whom, and why. He came up with a new model which he dubs the whole person approach. To quote the abstract of his talk which he had submitted in advance: “What our clients desire is not to be fixed or cured but to lead an integrated life.” And again: “What we philosophical counselors have to offer is an exemplary way of life, a way of being in the world that is manifested in our public writings, our speaking engagements, our collaborative efforts, our educational mission, and, most obviously, our philosophical counseling.”

Noble aims. But how does one put them into practice? The clients Andrew has subsequently secured and developed are, first, people who are psychologically together and,

second, only a very few of these (he has currently limited himself to five and thinks more is too hard or even impossible to manage). These clients, moreover, have come to him after a lot of preparation and screening that seem to happen largely through his website and the writings thereon which interested people have perused but which the really interested have explored extensively and in detail, including direct discussion with Andrew online or via Skype or email or the like. Of these really interested people those who wish to go the whole way, and whom Andrew himself judges fit for him to take the whole way, become his philosophical friends, so to say. The meetings he has with them, whether face to face or long distance, are not so much counseling sessions as philosophical get-togethers (Andrew described one occasion where he and his client/friend spent six hours together over the course of a single day). These get-togethers are philosophical because the friend wants the philosophical insight, exploratory depth, penetrating initiative, and novelty of thought and suggestion that someone with philosophical training necessarily has and can share with others who, though not having such training themselves, are nevertheless able and willing to benefit from it in the relaxed and unstructured form of friendly conversation. The proviso – and it is a big proviso – is that the philosophical counselor must himself be living a thoughtful and virtuous life after the fashion indeed of the ancient philosophers – the Socrates of the Platonic dialogues especially. The counselor must be what he is saying; he must be a living example of what he is offering.

In these philosophical get-togethers between friends money is furthest from anyone's mind. Andrew specifically said that he always puts the question aside and tells his friends that it is not important now. What is important now is the philosophy, the reflective thinking. But, and here's the success of the model, these friends are so grateful for the philosophical friendship they are getting, and for the opportunity thereby to live a thoughtful and examined life, that they insist on paying, even over Andrew's initial protests. They *want* to pay. The thought is not so hard to understand. Protagoras allegedly told his students to pay him what they thought his teaching was worth. And while Socrates never charged anyone anything for his conversations, how much would his friends then or we now be willing to pay to spend but one afternoon with him?

Andrew is not Socrates – who of us ever could be? – but all philosophers to some extent imitate Socrates, or are capable to doing so in friendly conversation. How much then do his friends pay him? What they can and think they should. How much is that? Andrew of course gave no specifics. He did say, however, that since developing this new way of being a philosophical counselor by being a philosophical friend, which is little more than a year, he has managed to pay off his student loans (which, as we all know, are not small). Success, surely. But Andrew himself regards financial success as secondary. The prime and primary success is introducing people, a few to be sure but enough, to the more fully human existence of the examined life.

Where to from here? For Andrew it's more of the same. Perhaps some of his friends will move on and others take their place. Perhaps some will stay indefinitely. Andrew himself will be selective about whom else he takes on. In the meantime he writes extensively, both for his website and for whatever other outlets are willing to take him on. He is also writing a book about what he is doing and about living philosophically for non-philosophers who want nevertheless to live philosophically. Way to go, Andrew, and keep us all posted on developments.

But a note to readers: Andrew's model is not only novel, it is also limited and partial. It is not the only model. The traditional model is still there and, for some, still works. Andrew is nevertheless right that we philosophical practitioners need to think up new models, to experiment, to engage in trial and error. Above all, whatever we do, we need ourselves to be thoughtful and virtuous people. The whole person approach, which in its universal form is applicable to us all, means the whole person of the counselor as much as, if not more than, the whole person of the client.

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Barbara Jones

Accentuate the Positive: A One-Woman Cabaret on the Virtue of Optimism



Barbara Jones

M. Todd Shipley, Rapporteur

It was a scene that has taken place in very few conference rooms, mid-afternoon on Saturday:

Barbara Jones, a psychotherapist from Taos, New Mexico, stood in her beautiful golden dress at the end of the conference table behind a microphone. Professional philosophers and philosophy enthusiasts sat with their pads in hand ready to take notes about the virtues of optimism. Then she said, “Lou would you introduce me again? You need to hear it and so do I.”

The ‘Lou’ she was referring to of course was Dr. Lou Marinoff, one of the hosts of the APPA Annual Meeting held at the Columbia Faculty House in New York City. What followed that second introduction was a true cabaret performance from start to finish. It was not ONLY a very entertaining performance. Using such songs as “Young at Heart,” and “Start All Over

Again,” Dr. Jones proposed that optimism is one of the virtues, and that developing ‘the virtues’ are key to living a fulfilling life. Her list of virtues comes from *Character Strengths and Virtues*, a handbook of human strengths and virtues written by Christopher Peterson and Martin Seligman, two of the seminal figures in the Positive Psychology movement. They outline the virtues in the following ways:

- Wisdom and Knowledge: creativity, curiosity, open-mindedness, love of learning, perspective, innovation
- Courage: bravery, persistence, integrity, vitality
- Humanity: love, kindness, social intelligence
- Justice: citizenship, fairness, leadership
- Temperance: forgiveness and mercy, humility, prudence, self control
- Transcendence: appreciation of beauty and excellence, gratitude, hope, humor, spirituality

Dr. Jones understood optimism to be a member of the 6th set of virtues or ‘Transcendence,’ and between songs and jokes (even a few props) she spoke of how the use of this whole schema has helped her practice.

It was clear from the questions that followed the performance that a few of the professional philosophers in the room found a connection between the list of virtues Dr. Jones referenced and the virtues as espoused by Stoic philosophers such as Epictetus and Seneca the Younger. Regardless of the views on virtue ethics held by the members of the APPA in attendance, it was quite clear that the performer herself held optimism, especially in the face of personal obstacles, in high regard. Understanding she was speaking to a group of philosophical practitioners who themselves hold practicality in high regard, she ended the show by announcing, “I am an optimist that carries an umbrella.” Dr. Barbara Jones plans to create a series of cabaret performances based on the 6 virtues of positive psychology. Look for them in a conference room near you!

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