

Dean's Weekly

Department of English and Philosophy

18 April 2012

Past Events

1. Dr. Stephen Finn, LTC Jesse Zuck, MAJ Chris Case, and MAJ Robert Underwood pose with their new book, *The Philosophy Skills Book: Exercises in Philosophical Thinking, Reading, and Writing*, just published by Continuum Press. The book offers a large number of exercises and tips that help students develop skills necessary for success in introductory philosophy courses. Dr. Finn, Assistant Director of the Center for Faculty Excellence, has been a presence in our philosophy classrooms for several years; the three officers are completing USMA assignments this semester (for LTC Zuck, a second tour) and heading back to the operational Army this summer.



2. Professor Elizabeth D. Samet has been named a 2012 Fellow of the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation in the area of Creative Arts, General Nonfiction. Her fellowship will support the research and writing of “Crimes of Odysseus: Imagining Postwar America,” a book about mythologies of the war veteran in American culture, specifically in Hollywood cinema. This year the Foundation “awarded Fellowships to a diverse group of 181 scholars, artists, and scientists in its eighty-eighth annual competition for the United States and Canada. Appointed on the basis of prior achievement and exceptional promise, the successful candidates were chosen from a group of almost 3,000 applicants” (<http://www.gf.org/news-events>). Past winners include John Updike, Frances FitzGerald, Martha Graham, Linus Pauling, and Henry Kissinger.

3. On April 2-4, three faculty members from the Department of English and Philosophy represented the U.S. Military Academy while presenting academic papers at the “Royal Body Conference,” held at Royal Holloway, University of London, in Egham, Surrey. The conference theme was based upon the important historical notion of “the king’s two bodies, the body natural and the body politic, founded on the distinction between the personal and mortal king and the perpetual and corporate crown.” MAJ Karin Gresham presented “Performing Elective Amputation and Self-Mutilation of the Territorial Body in King Lear.” MAJ Nicholas Utzig presented “‘Don't Even Think About It!': Imagining Regicide in Tudor England.” Dr. Terri Sabatos presented “‘Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none’: The Body of Henry Stewart, Lord Darnley, King of Scots.”

4. On April 5 & 6, Professor Richard Schoonhoven attended the Pacific Division meetings of the American Philosophical Association in Seattle, Washington, where he commented on papers by David Rodin (University of Oxford), Richard Miller (Cornell University), and Helen Frowe (University of Kent) in a symposium on Ethics and War.

5. On Wednesday, 11 April, SGM Eric Sheffler and members of the Quintette 7, one of the USMA Band's chamber ensembles, presented a dynamic, interactive class on music and film to cadets enrolled in EP342, the department's Film and Film Theory elective, who were joined on this occasion by students in LTC Mark Gagnon's DFL elective on German film. SGM Sheffler led the audience on a fascinating journey through the history of film music, while the Quintette 7 illustrated various principles and concepts. This musical adventure marked yet another in a series of classroom partnerships between the USMA Band and the Department of English and Philosophy. The band's enrichment of our cadets' educational experience continues to be most significant.



6. MAJ Maurice Wilson was the guest speaker during the Blue and Gold Banquet for local Cub Scout packs and their families on Friday, 13 April, at the Cortlandt Colonial in Westchester County. The annual event is a chance for the scout packs to celebrate their year's activities, recognize individual achievements, and thank pack leaders. MAJ Wilson, speaking to an audience of forty scouts and their families, remarked on living a life rooted in strong values, being a good citizen and leader, the value of a West Point education, serving the country with pride and courage, and—in his capacity as a proud Army aviator—flying planes and helicopters.



7. On Saturday, 14 April, Dr. Rebecca Wisor escorted members of the Elsie Pinnell Art Appreciation Forum to Beacon, New York, where they visited Dia: Beacon, a museum specializing in contemporary installation art. The cadets viewed, among other installations, Sol LeWitt's "Drawing Series" and Richard Serra's "Union of the Torus and the Sphere."



Sol LeWitt, Drawing Series



Richard Serra, "The Union of the Torus and the Sphere"