



## Volume 2 December Issue

- *Dr. Brenda A. Wirkus was elected Shula Chair and will hold the position for a four year period.*
- *Dr. Michael Shim delivered a paper entitled "Objectivity and Husserl's Theory of Constitution" at the Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy in Boston in November.*
- *Earl Spurgin's "The Problem with 'Dead Peasants' Insurance" has been accepted for publication in Business & Professional Ethics Journal. In addition, Joseph Desjardins and John McCall have requested permission to include the paper in the next edition of their business ethics anthology.*
- **NEW BOOK!**  
*Routledge Press has just published, Ethics: Contemporary Readings which was a collaborative effort by three members of our philosophy department: Earl Spurgin, James Swindal, and Harry Gensler.*
- *Harry Gensler has been awarded a Grauel fellowship for the 2004-05 academic year. Instead of teaching he will be working on two books to be published by Ronman and Littlefield: an encyclopedia of logic and a Catholic philosophy anthology (the latter to be co-edited with James Swindal of JCU and Tim Clancy of Gonzaga).*

## NEWSLETTER FOR THE PHILOSOPHY DEPARTMENT

### Chair's corner:

As the semester draws to a close, a couple of items of note.



We will have two members of our department who received Grauel Research Grants for the 2004-2005 school year: Fr. Gensler and Dr. Spurgin. Congratulations to them.

We are planning to have a lecture and departmental colloquium given by Dr. Joseph Kupfer (Iowa State University) in mid-February of next year. More details on that as time draws nearer.

Special thanks goes out to Steve Halady, who is graduating this month. Steve took the helm of our

philosophy club for the past semester. He organized several events: a planning meeting, a "workshop" on applying to graduate programs, and a reading group (that is ongoing). He plans on graduate studies in philosophy in the near future.

We currently have 40 majors and, at last count, 22 minors in philosophy.

We are all looking forward to a restful and peaceful holiday.

Jim



*Merry Christmas*

### Five Proofs for the Existence of Santa Claus

*(With apologies to St. Thomas Aquinas, who, qua saint, forgives all).*

We proceed thus to the article: It seems that Santa Claus does not exist. OBJECTION 1: Presents may be given to us by the good elves, so there is no need for Santa Claus. OBJECTION 2: If Santa Claus existed, there would be no chimneys too narrow for him. But there are chimneys too narrow, and sometimes none at all. So Santa Claus does not exist.

ON THE CONTRARY, the singer says "I saw Mommy kissing Santa Claus".

I answer that, the existence of Santa Claus can be proved in five ways. *The First and most manifest Way* is the argument from Christmas trees. It is certain and evident to our senses that some things in this world are Christmas trees.

Now, no fir becomes a Christmas tree unless it is trimmed, but to be trimmed means that one receives an ornament by a trimmer who in turn must have gotten the ornament from someone with the capacity to trim. And since one cannot go to infinity in the passing on of Christmas tree ornaments, there must be a first Untrimmed Trimmer, and this everyone understands to be Santa Claus. *The Second Way* is from the notion of Christmas presents. In this world we find the giving of Christmas presents. Now, he who gives Christmas presents either got them from someone else or made them in his workshop. And since if no one makes Christmas presents, in his workshops, there won't be any giving of Christmas presents it is necessary to admit a cause for all presents, to which everyone gives the name of Santa Claus. *The Fourth Way* is taken from degrees of Christmas spirit.

### Philosophical Humor

Descartes is sitting in a bar, having a drink. The bartender asks him if he would like another. "I think not," he says and vanishes in a puff of logic.

What is mind? No matter.  
What is body? No mind.

**God is dead. Nietzsche  
Nietzsche is dead. God**

### **One more final exam:**

Q: Is this a question?  
A: If this is an answer!



We see that people in this world have more and less Christmas spirit. But "more" or "less" can be said only in reference to a "most". So there must be someone who has the most Christmas spirit and this person we call Santa Claus. *The Fifth Way* is from the conduct of children. As Christmas approaches we see children who lack intelligence, acting for an end, which is shown by their always being good, or almost always. But children would not be good for Christmas unless someone were going to reward them for being good. This someone is known by everyone to be Santa Claus. REPLY OBJECTION 1: Since the good elves got the presents they give from someone else, they must be at most Santa's helpers. REPLY OBJECTION 2: It is not impossible that Santa Claus uses the door like everyone else. (Taken from the internet)