

News

Guilford hosts philosophy conference

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STAFF WRITER

On Feb. 23 and 24, Guilford College hosted the North Carolina Philosophical Society's annual meeting. The conference featured over 30 presentations by philosophers from across the state.

Guilford was represented at the conference by philosophy professors Nancy Daukas and Jonathan Malino, who spoke on "Contextualism and Skepticism" and "Religious Pluralism and the Intellectual Golden Mean" (in that order).

"I was impressed by both presentations," said philosophy professor Vance Ricks. "Jonathan's was more a criticism, mainly focused on a particular problem in someone's work. Nancy's was more her own views."

The presentations explored a wide range of philosophical territory, with topics ranging from applied ethics to metaphysics to political philosophy. The titles of the presentations themselves provide a clue to the immense variation of their subjects: "Do Us All A Favor and Die;" Democracy and the Use of Technology;" "On the Causal Basis of Dispositions;" and "Granting the Suffrage to Felons in Prison" are merely a few examples.

Theodore Cooke's "Germ-Line Intervention and the Rights of Future Generations," an ap-

plied ethics presentation, discussed the idea of ethical obligations to future generations. "This is the one about which I'm still thinking the most," said Ricks.

Germ-line intervention, a way of genetically manipulating hereditary traits, "seems like a great thing at first," commented philosophy professor Lisa McLeod. "But on the other hand, there are these really horrible, science-fiction examples of negative ones. The issue is whether or not we have the obligation to future generations, whether or not it's ethical."

Though the conference drew participants from as far as Georgia, South Carolina, and Virginia, very few Guilford students attended the presentations. Though a number of

professors informed their students of the event, it was publicized on-campus only in the Guilford Announcements e-mail.

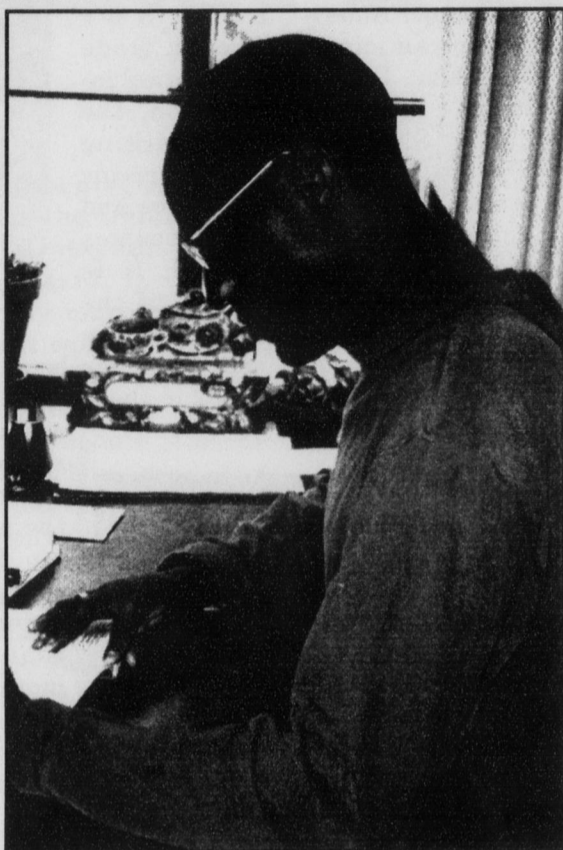
This lack of publicity was due to two reasons, said Lisa McLeod. "One: we were busy. And two: philosophy conferences are usually philosophers talking to philosophers. No, there weren't many students,

out, several Guilford students expressed interest in the conference. Robbie Hiltonsmith, a sophomore, said, "One reason for the low turnout was that it was not aimed at students. I actually knew way ahead of time about the conference. It was a pretty exciting event as far as philosophy stuff goes."

The NC Philosophical Society rotates its yearly meetings from campus to campus; Wake Forest and Duke University recently hosted the conference. When asked why it was held at Guilford this year, McLeod jokingly answered, "Well, we volunteered. Our department's fairly healthy right now. We thought it would be fun to have it."

Many Guilford people contributed invaluable to the conference. In addition to Malino's and Daukas' presentations, both Ricks and McLeod chaired sessions in the course of the two-day event. McLeod and Ricks also expressed their thanks to Noah McIntee, a senior at Guilford, and Janet Wright, an administrative assistant, for their help with the conference. "They really went out of their way to help with the logistics, the refreshments, smiling at people, everything."

Despite the work that went into it, McLeod commented, the conference was a lot of fun and very successful. "We liked it," she said, smiling. "I think we'd love to have it here again."



Philosophy professor Vance Ricks chaired sessions during the event.

LEAH KEFALOS

and that's typical, I think."

Ricks agreed, saying that "for a conference like this, if we had three, maybe five, students show up, it would be acceptable — maybe even exceptional. The turnout was pretty good overall."

Despite the low student turn-

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community groups in the area, but the Greensboro Chamber of Commerce has unflinchingly supported it. For the first time, the two sides will meet to debate the issue.

Local businessman and Summerfield resident Mark Warren, who is also the executive director of the Alliance for Legal Action, will give a presentation against construction of the hub. He will be joined by Gil Happel, a captain with a major airline, who has lived in Greensboro and flown out of the PTIA for 30 years.

"We just want to present the reasons as to why a nighttime air cargo hub is not suitable for Guilford County, and why it is not a good idea economically and environmentally," said Warren.

Proponents of the issue



The Guilfordian will host a community-wide FedEx forum on Mar. 17.

DAVE SCOTT

will be represented by members of the Chamber of Commerce to be named later.

Dr. Harrison Turner, the chair of the task force Get the Facts — Bring the FedEx Hub to Guilford County, said, "I am concerned about the job losses in the textile, tobacco, and apparel industries. Last year, 7,000 such jobs were lost. I am impressed by the economic im-

pact a FedEx hub could have on our area."

Staff members of *The Guilfordian* will moderate the forum. The format will allow each side up to 20 minutes to present their arguments, followed by 10 minutes each for rebuttal. Audience members will then have the opportunity to ask the presenters questions, a major segment of the

forum that will run for at least half an hour.

Alison Goss, editor-in-chief of *The Guilfordian*, emphasized that the forum will be moderated without bias. She said, "I am very excited about the opportunity for *The Guilfordian* to provide a medium for exchange of information and views on the hub's effects on Guilford College and the greater Greensboro community."

The forum is open free of charge to any interested persons, but capacity is limited to approximately 300, so if you are interested in attending, *The Guilfordian* suggests you arrive early to secure a seat. Doors will open at 7 p.m. The New Garden Friends Meeting is located across the street from Guilford College on New Garden Road.