
AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL ASSOCIATION

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC PHILOSOPHY

PRESS RELEASE

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BOOK SIGNING EVENT

At the Eastern Division Meeting of the American Philosophical Association, the APA's Committee on Public Philosophy is sponsoring a book signing event on December 29, 2012, from 2-4 PM in Imperial Ballroom B at the Marriott Marquis in Atlanta, GA.

Five philosophers are participating and have written books that show the impact of philosophy on public life. They include John Lachs, *Stoic Pragmatism*; Jeremy Wisniewski (with R.D. Emerick), *The Ethics of Torture*; John Shook, *The God Debates*; Carlin Romano, *America the Philosophical*; and Robert Talisse, *Democracy and Moral Conflict*.

Each author will say a few words about writing for the public about pressing philosophical matters and will then meet visitors and sign books available for purchase (cash or check). Come meet the authors and enjoy some philosophical discussions.

The Committee on Public Philosophy is made up of 10 members of the American Philosophical Association who serve to achieve the committee's goals, which include finding and creating opportunities to demonstrate the personal value and social usefulness of philosophy. More information about the Committee can be found here: <http://www.publicphilosophy.org/>

Brief summaries of the books are included here:

John Lachs, *Stoic Pragmatism*

John Lachs, one of American philosophy's most distinguished interpreters, turns to William James, Josiah Royce, Charles S. Peirce, John Dewey, and George Santayana to elaborate stoic pragmatism, or a way to live life within reasonable limits. Stoic pragmatism makes sense of our moral obligations in a world driven by perfectionist human ambition and unreachable standards of achievement. Lachs proposes a corrective to pragmatist amelioration and stoic acquiescence by being satisfied with what is good enough. This personal, yet modest, philosophy offers penetrating insights into the American way of life and our human character.

Jeremy Wisnewski (with R.D. Emerick), *The Ethics of Torture*

Torture has recently been the subject of some sensational headlines. As a result, there has been a huge surge in interest in the ethical implications of this contentious issue. *The Ethics of Torture* offers the first complete introduction to the philosophical debates surrounding torture. The book asks key questions in light of recent events such as the abuse of detainees at Abu Ghraib. What makes torture morally reprehensible? Are there any conditions under which torture is acceptable? What is it like to be tortured, and why do people engage in torture? The authors argue that the force of the most common arguments for torture (like the ticking-bomb argument) are significantly overestimated, while the wrongness of torture has been significantly underestimated—even by those who argue against it.

John Shook, *The God Debates*

The God Debates presents a comprehensive, non-technical survey of the quest for knowledge of God, allowing readers to participate in a debate about the existence of God and gain understanding and appreciation of religion's conceptual foundations. It explains key arguments for and against God's existence in clear ways for readers at all levels. The book brings theological debates up to the present with current ideas from modernism, postmodernism, fideism, evidentialism, presuppositionalism, and mysticism. It updates criticism of theology by dealing with the latest terms of the God debates instead of outdated caricatures of religion. The book helps nonbelievers to learn important theological standpoints while noting their shortcomings. It encourages believers and nonbelievers to enjoy informed dialogue with each other. The book concludes with an overview of religious and nonreligious worldviews and predictions about the future of faith and reason.

Carlin Romano, *America the Philosophical*

America the Philosophical introduces readers to a nation whose existence most still doubt: a dynamic, deeply stimulating network of people and places drawn together by shared excitement about ideas. From the annual conference of the American Philosophical Association, where scholars tack wise-guy notes addressed to Spinoza on a public bulletin board, to the eruption of philosophy blogs where participants discuss everything from pedagogy to the philosophy of science to the nature of agency and free will, Romano reveals a world where public debate and intellectual engagement never stop. And readers meet the men and women whose ideas have helped shape American life over the previous few centuries, from well-known historical figures like William James and Ralph Waldo Emerson, to modern cultural critics who deserve to be seen as thinkers (Kenneth Burke, Edward Said), to the iconoclastic African American, women, Native American, and gay mavericks (Cornel West, Susan Sontag, Anne Waters, Richard Mohr) who have broadened the boundaries of American philosophy.

Robert Talisse, *Democracy and Moral Conflict*

Why democracy? Most often this question is met with an appeal to some decidedly moral value, such as equality, liberty, dignity or even peace. But in contemporary democratic societies, there is deep disagreement and conflict about the precise nature and relative worth of these values. And when democracy votes, some of those who lose will see the prevailing outcome as not merely disappointing, but morally intolerable. How should citizens react when confronted with a democratic result that they regard as intolerable? Should they revolt, or instead pursue democratic means of social change? In this book, Robert Talisse argues that each of us has reasons to uphold democracy - even when it makes serious moral errors - and that these reasons are rooted in our most fundamental epistemic commitments.

For more information, visit PublicPhilosophy.org or email or call the Chair of the Committee on Public Philosophy, Dr. Eric Thomas Weber, etweber@olemiss.edu, 662.202.6301.