

1987

Twelfth Annual Midwest Philosophy Colloquium, 1987-1988

University of Minnesota - Morris. Philosophy Department

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**The Twelfth Annual
Midwest Philosophy Colloquium
1987-88**

At the University of Minnesota, Morris

“Philosophy and Scientific Ideals”

Schedule:

- February 9-10, 1988: Stewart Shapiro, Ohio State University of Newark
April 12-13, 1988: Virginia Klenk, West Virginia University
May 17-18, 1988: Howard Wettstein, University of Notre Dame

Each philosopher will present an evening lecture on a topic of general interest, in addition to a seminar in the philosopher's area of specialization. These sessions are made possible through the support of the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Dean, as well as the Division of the Humanities.



The evening lectures are made possible by a grant from the Minnesota Humanities Commission in cooperation with the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Minnesota State Legislature.

Topics, locations and other information concerning all events will be distributed periodically.

For further information write: Philosophy Program
Division of the Humanities
University of Minnesota, Morris
Morris, Minnesota 56267

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“Philosophy and Scientific Ideals”

February 9-10, 1988

Stewart Shapiro

Ohio State University at Newark

Public Lecture:

“Mathematics and the World”

February 9, 8:00 p.m., HFA Recital Hall

Seminars in Philosophy:

“Logic and Ontology”

February 9, 2:30 p.m., Behmler Conference Room

Discussion of Both Presentations

February 10, 10:00 a.m., Behmler Conference Room

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PROGRAM NOTES

The natural and the social sciences, such as Physics, Biology, Psychology and History, make extensive use of mathematics in studying and describing the physical and the social world as well as in formulating hypotheses concerning physical and social phenomena.

Thus, the question arises: "What is the relationship between mathematics and the world?" On the face of it, mathematical formulas are not about either physical or social phenomena. They do not seem to be about any specific concrete objects. We often say that mathematics is "abstract" exactly because it is not about some particular object of the world in the way in which Entomology is about insects, for instance.

The traditional philosophies of mathematics have proposed different explanations of the relationship between mathematics and the world.

To discuss with us some of these explanations we are pleased to have as tonight's speaker:

*STEWART SHAPIRO
Professor of Philosophy
Ohio State University at Newark*

Professor Shapiro will show that the major philosophies of mathematics either preclude the relationship between mathematics and the world or leave it mysterious. In the end, Professor Shapiro will propose his own account of this relationship.



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April 12-13, 1988

Virginia Klenk

West Virginia University

Public Lecture:

“Women, Science, and Rationality”

April 12, 8:00 p.m., HFA 6

Seminars in Philosophy:

“A New Look at Conventionalism”

April 12, 2:30 p.m., Behmler Conference Room

Discussion of Both Presentations

April 13, 10:00 a.m., Behmler Conference Room

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PROGRAM NOTES

From its early battles over the right to vote to the contemporary controversies over affirmative action programs, feminist thought has come a long way in the United States as well as in Europe.

The pursuit of equality between different social groups is always marked by tension between those who want to eliminate all differences between the groups and those who wish to claim that such groups are equal but inevitably separate. Some feminists holding this latter view have claimed that women's way of thinking, experiences, and emotions are wholly distinct from men's but just as rational, valuable, and enriching. One consequence of this view is that equality can be achieved only by recasting science in a particularly feminist model.

But is it true that women have a different way of thinking in science and mathematics? Should they or shouldn't they participate in "male-dominated" sciences?

To discuss with us some of these questions, we are pleased to have with us as tonight's speaker:

VIRGINIA KLENK
Professor of Philosophy
West Virginia University

Professor Klenk will give a survey of current views on the above questions and then sketch her own view. In so doing, she will answer some of the objections which feminist writers have raised against traditional science.



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“Philosophy and Scientific Ideals”

May 17-May 18, 1988

Howard Wettstein

Notre Dame University

Public Lecture:

**“How Scientific Is Philosophy?”
May 17, 8:00 p.m., HFA 6**

Seminars in Philosophy:

**“Turning the Tables on Frege, or How is it that
'Hesperus is Hesperus' is Trivial?”
May 17, 2:30 p.m., Behmler Conference Room
Discussion of Both Presentations
May 18, 10:00 a.m., Behmler Conference Room**

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PROGRAM NOTES

Imagine the following scenario: Jill and John are having lunch and gossiping about their new officemate, Jane, whom they mistakenly call Jenny. They have a lot to say about "Jenny" and thoroughly agree on every detail of her -despicable- personality. When they will find out "Jenny's" real name, they will not doubt, and neither would we, that yes, they were talking about the same person, although under the wrong name.

Consider this other scenario: my friend, Andy, knows little ancient philosophy, and he often gets the names of those ancient philosophers mixed up. He comes up to me one day and says: "Last week, I saw an interesting show on TV about Aristotle; you know, the teacher of Plato, the one who is in all of Plato's early dialogues and who is sentenced to death for corrupting the Athenian youth...." "You did it again, Andy", I say. "You got those names mixed up. You are talking about Socrates and calling him Aristotle. Socrates was Plato's teacher. He is in Plato's early dialogues, etc."

How do names refer to people? How do words refer to objects? Is it what is in the mind of the speaker, i.e. what the speaker is thinking about, which makes a word pick out the right person or the right object? Gottlob Frege, a German philosopher of the beginning of this century, thought so and so did many after him. However, recently some have claimed that an important intellectual revolution is taking place which is comparable to a scientific revolution like those described by Thomas Kuhn. This revolution is radically changing the way philosophers think about language.

To discuss with us this new way of looking at language, we are pleased to have with us as tonight's speaker:

HOWARD WETTSTEIN
Professor of Philosophy
Notre Dame University

Professor Wettstein will outline the traditional Fregean view of language and then present his own view. In so doing, he will make clear the nature of the intellectual revolution now taking place in philosophy.



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