

ASSOCIATION FOR INFORMAL LOGIC AND CRITICAL THINKING (AILACT) *NEWSLETTER*

December 2019

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From the Editor

Greetings, readers!

Lilian Bermejo-Luque's term as President is wrapping up, and her final statement in that capacity for this Newsletter is included below.

The Department of Philosophy at the University of Windsor is establishing a Memorial Lecture fund in honour of Bob Pinto, and a statement regarding the fund is included below. (A "Lives Lived" article in the Globe and Mail in honour of Bob can be found here:

<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/life/article-a-philosopher-and-logician-of-note-robert-c-pinto-was-also-a-natural/>.)

You will also find details about the AILACT @ APA sessions for 2020, and a note about the winner of the 2019 AILACT Essay Prize, below.

As always, there is a Membership Form at the end of this document. Dues, which continue to be \$10.00, may be paid by check or credit card or PayPal; the form should be completed and sent (with a check if payment is by check) to our treasurer, Don Hatcher. Please note that new members are now required to register on AILACT's online Member Area.

If you have any news, events, or calls for papers that would be of interest to the AILACT readership, please send me details by April 1st for potential inclusion in the next newsletter.

Best,
Pat Bondy
patrick.bondy@wichita.edu

From the President

Dear fellow members of AILACT,

This is my last statement as president of our association. It has been a great honour for me to be in charge of this task for the last two years, and I wish to thank you and the past nominating committee—Scott Aikin, Tom Fischer, and Dona Warren—for giving me the opportunity to lead this period of AILACT.

An association such as AILACT could not work without the selfless service and collaboration of its members. During my term, I have had the immense luck of counting with the help of many wonderful fellows. So, let me also thank the board of directors—Steven Patterson, Donald Hatcher, James Freeman, Dona Warren, Mark Weinstein, John Casey, Gabrijela Kišicek, Michael Scriven, Dima Mohammed, and Maurice Finocchiaro—the Appointments Committee—Maurice Finocchiaro, Dima Mohammed and Dan Boone—, our Webmaster—Steve Oswald—the editor of the AILACT Newsletter—Pat Bondy—the chairpeople of the sessions of AILACT at the different divisions of the American Philosophical Association—Jeff Buechner, Frank Fair, Peter Tan and Ben Hamby—the members of the AILACT Essay Prize—Marianne Doury, Hans Hansen, David Sherry and Christopher Tindale—, our AILACT Essay Prize Publicist—Gilbert Plumer—and our Recruitment Committee—Dale Turner and Harvey Siegel—for their good job during these years.

I also wish to express my deepest gratitude to Derek Allen, administrator of both the Essay Prize and of the Members Area of our Website, for his continuous support to all my tasks during this term.

AILACT needs to adapt itself to new times and challenges and provide better and new services to its members. In order to achieve this aim, the next president and her/his team will need the active support of all of us. I encourage you to take part. AILACT is worthy of our effort.

With warm regards,

Lilian Bermejo-Luque
President, AILACT

The Launch of the Robert C. Pinto Lecture Fund

In memory of the late Robert C. Pinto (1935 - 2019), the Philosophy Department in the University of Windsor is creating a fund to support an annual lecture to be called the “Robert C. Pinto Memorial Lecture.” Professor Pinto was an exceptionally gifted and devoted teacher whose interests spanned continental philosophy, analytical philosophy, informal logic and argumentation theory. The proposed annual lecture will provide an occasion for faculty, students, alumni and members of the community, to come together to engage with a wide range of philosophical literature, issues and concerns. The vision of the Robert C. Pinto Lecture Fund is to provide the resources annually for an invited speaker (chosen by the Philosophy Department), and ensure that the “Pinto Lecture Series” will continue in perpetuity.

To support the Robert C. Pinto Lecture Fund, one may contact Melissa East Aspila at 519-253-3000 ext. 2093 or measpila@uwindsor.ca. One may also make a donation online at: <https://my.uwindsor.ca/web/uw/donations#> . Please specify that your donation is for the Robert C. Pinto Lecture Fund.

AILACT Essay Prize

Jacob Justice’s essay, “Fantastic Visual Argument and the Food and Drug Administration’s The Real Cost Campaign,” was the winner of the 2019 AILACT Essay Prize. A longer version of Jacob’s paper was accepted for publication in *Argumentation & Advocacy* on April 1, 2019 and published (online) on May 3, 2019. There were 14 submissions this year (2019). This year was the first where the prize is US\$700 (up from the previous 500). Congratulations, Jacob!

AILACT @ APA

Eastern Division

AILACT group meeting 2020 Eastern APA
Philadelphia 201 Hotel Philadelphia, PA
Friday, January 10th, 2020 1:30-4:30 PM

G12E Argument diagrams: what are they and how should they be taught?

Many textbooks in critical thinking feature the topic of argument diagrams and counsel students in their use. There is evidence that those who diagram arguments achieve a better understanding of arguments, *ceteris paribus*, than those who do not. Argument diagrams are said to capture the inferential structure of arguments—revealing that structure and bypassing details of the argument that may have nothing to do with it. This raises a question—just what is the inferential structure of an argument, and can it be diagrammed? There are many inferential relations between the sentences in an argument, but not all of them should be represented in a diagram, since some of those inferential relations may have nothing to do with the argument. Should each sentence in an

argument be represented in an argument diagram? Or should the argument diagram capture inferential relations between generalizations of the sentential content of sets of sentences? Must a student understand the intentions of the arguer in order to satisfactorily diagram their argument? Should teaching argument diagrams—if it can be satisfactorily taught—be limited to critical thinking courses?

Chair

Lloyd Carr, Rivier University

Speakers

- (1) Nuhu Osman Attah, University of Pittsburgh
- (2) Nathan Otey, ThinkerAnalytix
- (3) Jonathan Haber, Degree of Freedom
- (4) Anne L’Hommedieu Sanderson, Harvard University
- (5) Jeff Buechner, Rutgers University-Newark and The Saul Kripke Center, CUNY, The Graduate Center

Central Division

Date: Friday, February 28th, 2020

Time: 7:30pm - 10:30pm

Affiliated Group: Association for Informal Logic and Critical Thinking (AILACT)

Critical Thinking: Perspectives from Philosophy, Psychology, and Education

The goal of this session is to explore: (a) the diversity of conceptualizations of what critical thinking importantly involves, (b) what recent psychological research can tell us about it, for example, what do we have good evidence to believe about how so-called "relational reasoning" works, and (c) what educational settings, materials, and techniques can foster critical thinking and how can the relative success of this enterprise of "ameliorative epistemology" be assessed?

Moderator:

Tom Brommage, Psychology and Philosophy, Sam Houston State University,
brommage@shsu.edu

Presenters:

- (1) Jonathan Haber, Inaugural Visiting Fellow, Harvard X, and Chief Learner Degree of Freedom Project, author of *Critical Thinking Essentials* (MIT Press),
jonathan@degreeoffreedom.org
Title: "Critical Thinking – A Genealogy"
- (2) Thomas Herrnstein, Northwest Arkansas Community College, Instructor of Philosophy,
therrnstein@nwacc.edu
Title: "A laborious, yet helpful philosophical investigation on the Burden of Proof."

- (3) Amanda Hiner, Associate Professor of English, Coordinator, Critical Reading, Thinking, and Writing, Co-Director of HMXP: The Human Experience at Winthrop University, hinera@winthrop.edu
Title: "Meeting the Challenges of the Twenty-first Century Classroom: How Critical Thinking Instruction Equips College Students for Success"

Pacific Division

Saturday, April 11th, 6:00 - 8:00pm

G10A Association for Informal Logic and Critical Thinking (AILACT)

Topic: Informal Logic and Critical Thinking

Speakers:

- (1) Jacqueline Alvarez (Fresno City College), "The Strengths of Induction in Everyday Life"
(2) Vadim Keyser (California State University, Fresno), "Uncertainty: Tradeoffs Between Accuracy and Generalization"
(3) Carolyn Cusick (California State University, Fresno), "When Stereotypes are Good Generalizations"

THE ASSOCIATION FOR INFORMAL LOGIC & CRITICAL THINKING

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION OR RENEWAL FOR 2020

AILACT was formed in 1983 to promote research on, and teaching and testing of, informal logic and critical thinking at all levels; to increase the extent and quality of such research, teaching, and testing; and to facilitate discussion among its members. AILACT sponsors sessions at each APA divisional meeting and other meetings; has a Web site, <http://ailact.wordpress.com/> that provides a wide variety of information about AILACT, informal logic, and critical thinking, and posts papers and other members' materials; has an e-mail discussion list for discussion of topics of interest to members; and holds an annual essay prize competition.

I would like to become a member of AILACT (US\$10 or equivalent)

I would like to renew my membership (US\$10 or equivalent)

I am a student and would like to become a member of AILACT (Fees waived)

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Institutional affiliation (if any): _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Payment Options: **Check:** Make checks (US or Canadian only) payable to AILACT

Credit Card Payment: Please deduct US \$10 from

Credit Card: Visa MasterCard

Account Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____

PayPal: log in to your account and send the payment to Don Hatcher's email address (dhatcher@bakeru.edu). PayPal will indicate that your payment is to AILACT.

New members: To complete the process of becoming a member of AILACT, you will need to register on AILACT's password-protected Member Area website: <https://forum.ailact.org>. Click on "Register" and complete the listed fields. (These include "User name" and "Password." Make up a user name and a password.) Click on "Register." When your registration has been validated, you will receive an email saying that this has been done and explaining how to enter a profile for yourself on the site.

Mail to: Donald Hatcher, AILACT Treasurer, Department of Philosophy, Baker University, Baldwin City, KS 66006 USA. Email: <dhatcher@bakeru.edu>