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Issue Introduction

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The papers included here were all presented in April 2014 at the 18th annual Pacific University Undergraduate Conference. (For the full conference program, see <http://www.pacificu.edu/as/philosophy/conference/schedule.cfm>). Over the years the conference has hosted more than 1200 students, coming from over 300 different schools, representing all fifty U.S. states and several other countries. Of the more than ninety presentations at the 2014 conference, the papers below, because of their impressive quality, were selected for publication in this issue. They demonstrate the remarkably fine scholarship of the best of those students whose papers were accepted for presentation.

This conference is a general one every year, meaning that papers in all areas of philosophy are presented. The papers in this issue span ethics, philosophy of mind, epistemology, philosophy of science, social/political philosophy, aesthetics, metaphysics, history of philosophy, and more. They represent and exemplify the substantive and sophisticated work of the undergraduate students who participated in the conference. Given the strengths of these papers (as well as others that were presented at the conference), it was truly a difficult task to identify a “Best Paper.” Nonetheless, such a paper was identified: Theresa Siver’s paper, “Looking Past the Web to See the Garden: An Exploration of Epistemological Metaphors,” along with three others that were selected as Honorable Mention Papers, Keith Wynroe’s “Problems for Informatism,” Joshua Jarrott’s “Currently Persisting Paradoxes: Getting Clear about Endurantism,” and Ysabel Johnston’s “Mimesis and Ritual: Girardian Critique of the Social Contract.”