James B. Sauer  
Professor of Philosophy  
St. Mary’s University  
June 10, 2003 (last revised)

Famous Philosophy Majors – Graduates.

1) Wes Anderson, director and filmmaker *Rushmore, The Royal Tenenbaums*

2) Kristin M. Baker, first female brigade commander, West Point.

3) William John Bennett, formerly Secretary of Education, head of the War on Drugs.

4) Cardinal Bernardin. Late Cardinal of Chicago

5) Justice Stephen Breyer, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court

6) Patrick Joseph Buchanan, politician.

7) Pearl Buck, writer, winner Pulitzer Prize (1932) and Nobel Prize for Literature (1937), activist for Amer-asian children

8) Stokely Carmichael/Kwame Ture, Civil Rights leader

9) Mary Higgins Clark, author.

10) Ethan Coen, filmmaker.

11) Angela Davis, Social activist and political philosopher


13) Jules Debray, Writer and Government Official, France

14) Umberto Eco, novelist, semiologist.

15) Mircea Eliade, Religious Studies

16) Carly Fiorina, CEO, Hewlett Packard.

17) Ken Follett, author.

18) Michael Frayn, Playwright (*Copenhagen*) & Novelist

19) Northrup Frye, English scholar and Literary Critic

20) Martin Gardner, author, essayist.

21) Philip Glass, composer.
22) Rudi Giuliani, former mayor of New York, Urban Security Consultant
23) Rebecca Goldstein, Novelist and MacArthur Prize winner
24) Carol Heckman, first female U.S Magistrate in the Western District.
25) Christy Haubegger, Editor of LATINA, Entrepreneur
26) Gertrude Himmelfarb, Historian
27) Carl C. Icahn, corporate raider and owner of TWA.
28) Phil Jackson, NBA coach, formerly of the Chicago Bulls, now of the LA Lakers.
29) Thomas Jefferson, U.S. President
31) Aung San Suu Kyi, Human Rights Activist, Nobel Peace Prize Winner
32) Bruce Lee, Martial arts specialist and actor
33) Claude Lanzmann, Film Maker
34) Michael Lerner, Rabbi, Editor/Publisher Tikkun Magazine
35) Ira Levin, author.
36) Terence Malick, filmmaker.
37) Robert Motherwell, Painter
38) Iris Murdoch, Novelist
39) Lachlan Murdoch, Son of Rupert Murdoch, media magnate. New media manager
40) Robert Musil, Austrian novelist
41) Robert McNamara, Former Secretary of Defense and Head of the World Bank
42) Deepa Mehta, Indo-Canadian filmmaker.
43) Bob Moses, Civil rights activist, Founder of The Algebra Project
44) Michael Murphy, co-founder of the Esalen Institute.
45) Barnett Newman, artist (painter).
46) Marsha Norman, Playwright and Pulitzer Prize Winner

47) Madelyn Murray O’Hair, Famous Atheist

48) Freeman Patterson, Photographer, author of *The Art of Seeing*

49) Pope John Paul II

50) Stone Phillips, broadcaster.

51) Chaim Potok, Novelist

52) Steve Reich, composer.

53) Richard Riordan, politician - Ex Republican Mayor of Los Angeles.

54) Patricia Rozema, Writer, director, and film-maker (*I've Heard the Mermaids Singing* and *Mansfield Park*)

55) Meyer Schapiro, art critic.

56) Albert Shanker, former head of New York’s Teachers’ Union.

57) Fiona Shaw, actress.

58) Wallace Shawn, playwright and actor.

59) John Silver, Former President Boston University & Candidate for Governor of Mass.

60) Gene Siskel, Movie Critic

61) Jeff Smith, T.V. Host, the *Frugal Gourmet*.

62) Susan Sontag, writer.

63) George Soros, Financier & money manager

64) David Souter, Supreme Court Justice.

65) P. Michael Spence, Economist and Nobel Prize Economics 2001

66) Steve Thomas, Host for TV Show, *This Old House*.

67) Alex Trebek, Host for TV Show, *Jeopardy*.

68) David Foster Wallace, writer.

69) Juan Williams, NPR host “Talk of the Nation,” wrier, journalist (Washington Post)
70) C. Vann Woodward, Historian

71) Rodney Yee, yoga teacher.

72) Dr. Stephen Younger, Director of U.S. Department of Defense's Threat Reduction Agency, which was created in response to 9/11.

73) Moses Znaimer, Canadian Media Producer, Executive, Owner of CITY-TV and MUCH-MUSIC (Toronto, Canada)

74) Patricia Aburdene, business journalist, international speaker and best-selling author. With John Naisbitt, she co-authored the number one best-seller *Megatrends 2000* on NYT best sellers list for two years.

Citations:


11. Earned MA degree in philosophy in 1968 at University of California at San Diego. *Current Biography Yearbook*, (1972)

12. Davis, Arthur P. and Jill Nelson. "When I came to Howard in 1944, Howard had the finest, most impressive


22. Philosophy and political science Manhattan College (from interview) http://www.askmen.com/men/business_politics/44c_rudy_giuliani.html

23. Received her PhD. in philosophy from Princeton in 1977, Catching up with Rebecca Goldstein *77, At the imp of metaphysics@ by Heller McAlpin '77. http://www.princeton.edu/~paw/web_exclusives/features/features_07.html; World Authors 1990-1995. pg. 257=


29. Attended College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Va., where he studied law. . [Law in the 18th century was one of the moral sciences, i.e., a philosophy discipline. The McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of World Biography, (vol 5): 546


33. Studied philosophy at Tübingen University in Germany and in Paris where he graduated with a Diplomé d'Etudes Supérieures de Philosophie http://www.egs.edu/faculty/claudelanzmann.html


40. From 1898 to 1901 he studied at the university where his father taught, and passed his second engineering examination. He studied later philosophy, mathematics and psychology, earning a Ph.D. from the University of Berlin in 1908. His doctoral dissertation dealt with the epistemology of the Viennese philosopher Ernest Mach, who claimed that the reality we know is constituted only in our sensations. http://www.kirjasto.sci.fi/rmusil.htm


46. Phil major Agnes Scott College http://www.bedfordstmartins.com/litlinks/drama/norman.htm


51. Yeshiva University (summa cum laude in English literature in 1950 the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, where he was ordained a Conservative rabbi. Completed his doctoral dissertation on philosophy from the University of Pennsylvania in 1965 http://www.gradesaver.com/ClassicNotes/Authors/about_chaim_potok.html


54. B.A. in philosophy and English literature at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, MI (where she also won a number of awards for theatrical writing and directing) http://www.blockbuster.com/bb/person/details/0,7621,BIO-P109161,00.html. http://www.patriciarozema.com/biography.htm


63. London School of Economics, (tripo economics, philosophy and history) *Current Biography Yearbook*, (1997): 530


69. Phil major Haverford College (1976) [http://www-stu.calvin.edu/chimes/2001.05.04/interviews/story_01.shtml](http://www-stu.calvin.edu/chimes/2001.05.04/interviews/story_01.shtml)

70. Graduated from Emory University in Atlanta with Bachelor of philosophy degree in 1930, master's degree in political science from Columbia University in 1932. *Current Biography Yearbook* (1986): 609.


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**Nobel Prize Laureates with Philosophy Degrees**

**Rudolf Eucken** (Literature 1908) [http://www.nobel.se/literature/laureates/1908/eucken-bio.html](http://www.nobel.se/literature/laureates/1908/eucken-bio.html)

**Henri Bergson** (Literature 1927) [http://www.nobel.se/literature/laureates/1927/bergson-bio.html](http://www.nobel.se/literature/laureates/1927/bergson-bio.html)

**Pearl Buck** (Literature 1937) [citation, see above]
Notable People who studied philosophy

No degree

People who studied philosophy


**Philip K. Dick**, Science fiction writer. UC Berkeley, US (German and philosophy; dropped out) http://books.guardian.co.uk/authors/author/0,5917,-57,00.html


Steve Martin, actor, playwright. Majored but did not graduate. Majored but did not graduate.

http://web.lexis-nexis.com/universe/

Matthew McConaughey, actor. Majored in philosophy/psychology for a year.

Fuller, Graham. "Matthew=s Interview." Interview, v26 n8 (August 1996) 84.
InfoTrac OneFile 6 January 2003
http://web4.infotrac.galegroup.com/itw/infomark/0/1/1/purl=rc6_ITOF?sw_aep=a24nh

Susan Sarandon, actor. Studied philosophy. Did graduate with another major.


Elie Wiesel. Did study philosophy, never finished his thesis.

People on internet & other lists with philosophy degree or studies in philosophy who did not have either.

Woody Allen, Director and Comedian
Never graduated from college, was expelled from NYU and College of New York.

Max Baer Jr. Actor: Jethro on "The Beverly Hillbillies."
B.A. Business (Santa Clara University) http://www.fansite.com/Facts/People/Bio/0,128,1020,00.html

David Duchovny (actor on X-FILES)
Princeton University, New Jersey; B.A., English Literature, 1982
Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut; M.A., English Literature, 1987
Worked toward Ph.D.; did not complete thesis
http://www.eonline.com/Facts/People/Bio/0,128,86,00.html

John Elway, -- Quarterback, National Football League (Sanford, Economics 1983)

Vaclav Havel, former President of Czechoslovakia
Studied economics at the Czechoslovakia University of Technology

Martin Luther King, Jr, Minister & Civil Rights Leader (sociology & theology)

Gerald Levin, CEO, Time-Warner, Inc. Theology, Haverford College


James Michener, Writer (English and History Swarthmore)


Herbert Simon, Economist, and Nobel Laureate Received BA and PhD in political science. *Current Biography Yearbook*, (1979): 359.


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James B. Sauer, Professor of Philosophy, St. Mary’s University (San Antonio, Texas, U.S.A.).

This list is an ongoing project and updated regularly. If you have a verified entry, please send to James B. Sauer jsauer@stmarytx.edu.