



Kenneth L. Manders
University of Pittsburgh

FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
Department of Philosophy

Pittsburgh, December 27, 1991

Dear Madam/Sir:

It is a pleasure to recommend **Thaddeus Pope** for graduate study in Philosophy at Cornell University. Mr. Pope is among the three or four most outstanding undergraduates I have taught here at Pittsburgh since 1978. (This includes one current Rhodes Scholar, and another University Rhodes nominee.)

Mr. Pope took an upper-level honors course in Philosophy of Mathematics with me last Spring. It draws a strong group of students, with very varied backgrounds. Since, Mr. Pope has been to speak with me several times about a research project, to follow up on an interest in Carnap which he acquired from the class.

Pope's was clearly the best written work in the course, and in the philosophical dimension indeed the best in the four times I have taught the course. Mr. Pope generates and defends his own philosophical theses. He has the tenacity to stick to his claims, and to build on them in later papers even when they have been criticized. He cares a great deal about the philosophical issues, and came to my office repeatedly to discuss his papers after they were handed back. He works material, picked up in one course, through in another. (For example, I found he re-thought Carnap on linguistic frameworks, read for me, in work for Philosophy of Art the next term.)

Mr. Pope's independence and discipline are shown also in his career decisions so far. He left a fellowship at Carnegie-Mellon University because he felt that his program (computational linguistics) there did not offer him the right intellectual opportunities. Instead, he chose to study at the University of Pittsburgh at his own expense, maintaining an outstanding academic record while working to support himself. I did not know this when Pope was in my class; his outside work never interfered with his academic performance.

Mr. Pope is well-qualified to pursue an academic career in Philosophy, or, as he proposes, in Philosophy and Law. I recommend him warmly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kenneth L. Manders".

Kenneth Manders
Associate Professor of Philosophy

January 4, 1992

THADDEUS POPE took my course on Metaphysics during the fall term of 1991, for which he received the grade of A+. Based on his performance in this class I must place him within the top 2% of undergraduates I have taught since 1961. He is a rare combination of a superior intelligence and an unbridled passion for things intellectual. These qualities were very evident in two lengthy papers he wrote. The first was an attempt to screw his own theory of time out of a critical exposition of Parmenides, Aristotle, Augustine, Bergson, McTaggart, and D. Williams. One could easily drown in a topic of such immensity and difficulty. Thad not only managed to survive but to prevail. His clear and perceptive expositions of these authors succeeded in bringing out the underlying points of agreement and disagreement among them concerning the temporal width of the present, the status of temporal passage, and the reality of the future. He then used these writings as a springboard for developing his own solutions to these different problems of time. The quality of his writing compares favorably with that of second and third year graduate students at the top departments of philosophy. The only flaw was some strained and misleading comparisons that he made between these assigned authors and certain philosophers he had studied in previous courses. He was being a bit too overly ambitious. The second paper developed his own theory of personal identity over time through a critical exposition of the writings of Plato, Locke, Reid, Hume, Chisholm, B. Williams, and Parfit. He combined a mastery of the details of this mind-boggling topic with an ability to boldly go beyond these authors and run his own line. I think that Thad is an especially strong candidate for a joint program in law and philosophy. He will eat up, Pac Man style, the legal materials and will filter it through his lively philosophical imagination. Thad could easily spook people with the mad dog intensity with which he pursues his work were it not for his very modest and affable personality.

Richard M. Gale

Richard M. Gale
Professor



University of Pittsburgh

FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
Department of Philosophy

12/5/1991

Letter of Recommendation for Thaddeus M. Pope

from: Mitchell S. Green
Department of Philosophy
University of Pittsburgh

To whom it may concern:

I am a graduate student in the Philosophy Department at Pitt. My undergraduate degree is from U.C. Berkeley (1985), and I have a B.Phil. from Oxford University (1987). I am completing a dissertation in the philosophy of language under the supervision of Nuel Belnap and Joseph Camp. My teaching at Pitt has spanned the last four years, and includes assisting (Ethics, Introduction to Philosophy, Introduction to Logic, Computers and Culture, Philosophy of Religion) and teaching independently (Philosophy of Law, Introduction to Logic, Intermediate Logic, Philosophy of Art). In addition to this broad pedagogical background I typically have more contact with my students than do my peers, for my classroom method is highly Socratic.

Thaddeus Pope was in my Philosophy of Law course in the fall of 1989, and was again my student in Philosophy of Art last summer. Because of my method of teaching and the fact that writing requirements for my courses are heavy, I have observed Pope on his feet, on paper, in an area in which he wishes to specialize, and in another in which he was just rounding out his liberal education. I shall however only comment on Pope's philosophical ability, since I am not qualified to assess his promise as a lawyer.

Pope is one of the best two or three pupils I have had. He has an ideal combination of tenacity and depth. Tenacity: on the occasions on which I have been able to vitiate his position he begins again from scratch, and has something better for me if not by the end of the lecture or meeting, then by next time. Further, Pope takes action when puzzled about material, and is ready to pounce on me with questions in order to get clear. I have never seen Pope inadequately prepared to discuss material in class, and his papers are thorough, polished and careful.

Depth: Pope could make it in any of this country's major analytic philosophy departments. I have seen him grapple with subtle views, from H.L.A. Hart and R. Dworkin to Croce. His papers show an admirable mastery of complex lines of argument and a sensitivity to dialectic. He knows how not to let his moral and political convictions overpower his line of reasoning. And he is creative. For instance, in our attempt to resist Goodman's argument that artistic representation never holds by virtue of a similarity between representer and represented, Pope found cases of representation that are quite difficult to explain in conventionalist terms. Again, with no prodding from either me or his readings Pope found a utilitarian justification for retributivism that rests on the idea of society finding satisfaction in punishment for its own sake.

I have little doubt that Pope will excel in a challenging graduate program, and that he will contribute to the field into which that program leads him.

Yours sincerely,

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