

2009 Baylor University
Department of Philosophy
Homecoming Lecture

Presented by Dr. Robert Baird:
Professor and Master Teacher of
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REASONED COMMITMENT IN THE FACE OF UNCERTAINTY

*Is there a claim more intimately associated with philosophy than the Socratic maxim: the unexamined life is not worth living? But this critical life of the mind inevitably plants, nourishes, and harvests uncertainty, doubt, and ambiguity. How should one respond to this experience of uncertainty, the anguish of doubt, the encounter with ambiguity? Fyodor Dostoevsky's *Underground Man* suggests two possibilities: rejecting the critical life of the mind for dogmatic certitude or succumbing to doubt and ambiguity by refusing to be a decision-maker. This paper is an attempt to articulate philosophy's middle way: reasoned commitment in the face of uncertainty.*



Friday, October 23, 3:30pm in Morrison Hall 105. Reception immediately following lecture.