

# Canadian Philosophical Reviews

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**Louis Althusser**

*Ecrits philosophiques et politiques*, tome I

Paris: Stock/IMEC 1994.

Pp. 588.

Cdn \$60.95. ISBN 2-234-04378-6.

Ce premier tome regroupe onze textes de longueur et de valeur inégales, colligés et présentés par François Matheron.

L'ouvrage composé d'écrits inédits ou difficilement accessibles est divisé en trois parties. Dans la première section, nous retrouvons les écrits de jeunesse et surtout le texte le plus important du volume, à savoir, son mémoire de diplôme d'études supérieures, intitulé: 'Du contenu dans la pensée de G.W.F. Hegel' (59-238). Ce texte de 1947 démontre une habileté et une aisance intellectuelles pour l'analyse conceptuelle et surtout une compréhension du philosophe allemand. Il s'agit d'un texte typiquement hégélien dans sa pensée et son langage.

La seconde partie de l'ouvrage est constituée de deux textes. Elle s'ouvre avec l'inintelligible question qu'a posée Althusser sur la dialectique en 1972. Mais heureusement l'on retrouve dans cette section le second texte en importance dans le volume, soit: 'Marx dans ses limites' (357-524) Il s'agit d'un texte inachevé, d'une dimension plus politique, écrit en 1978 sur la crise du marxisme en Europe.

Le troisième écrit qui vient légitimer ce recueil constitue l'essentiel de la troisième partie et s'intitule: 'Le courant souterrain du matérialisme de la rencontre' (539-579). Voilà une contribution inachevée et tardive d'Althusser, écrite en 1982, portant sur les dimensions aléatoire et contingente d'une certaine forme de matérialisme. Il relance le débat sur la liberté versus la nécessité.

De façon globale, ce premier tome des *Ecrits* réunit des pièces essentielles à la reconstitution de la réflexion philosophique d'Althusser autant pour nous dévoiler sa complexité que sa diversité, mais surtout pour nous offrir la singularité de son regard et de sa voix.

**Claude Gratton**

Centre d'Education Armand-Racicot

**Babette E. Babich**

*Nietzsche's Philosophy of Science: Reflecting  
Science on the Ground of Art and Life.*

Albany, NY: State University of New York  
Press, 1994.

US \$59.50 (cloth: ISBN 0-7914-1865-0);

US \$19.95 (paper: ISBN 0-7914-1866-9).

'This is a book on Nietzsche's philosophy seen through the lens of his interpretation of science' (1). This may strike many as an odd approach. In Anglo-American circles, those who would identify themselves as philosophers of science usually do not consider Nietzsche a 'real' philosopher, let alone one whose views on science and truth ought to be heeded. Yet even outside this much-warded domain, scholarly readers 'routinely' dismiss Nietzsche's philosophy altogether on 'formal-dialectical' grounds, claiming that "what appears as radical in [his] position on truth is actually mistaken, ... confused," or ... "highly contradictory" (39, 79); or else they accept this overall judgment, yet take from Nietzsche what they can use, choosing to regard his 'writings on truth and [his] comments on science ... as irrelevant to the substance of [his] philosophy' (39, 15). Against such responses, Babich is guided by the conviction that the problem of science is a crucial sub-case for Nietzsche of the truth question *tout court*, that his writings on truth and science are integral to his whole philosophical project, and that in their own right they constitute a *radical* challenge to the very meaning and value of philosophy and science in all their established configurations.

Though B. 'by no means ... represent[s] Nietzsche as offering a complete philosophy of science in the contemporary sense' (1), this is not meant to impugn Nietzsche. Instead, it 'entails a strong claim about what is wrong with the way the philosophy of science is currently done within the largely analytic confines of its traditional reception.' The general problem, so B. claims, is that 'traditional and contemporary philosophy of science lacks a *critically* reflective orientation to science,' and thereby 'an *authentic identity* as philosophy.' What then is minimally required, and what according to B. Nietzsche articulates, is a prolegomena to any future 'philosophy of science able to come forth (and able to remain) as philosophy' (2). Thus her exposition turns on the question of 'what would count as critically reflexive philosophy of science' and thus a *fortiori* on what would count as authentic philosophy.

The 'larger assumption' of these 'epedeictic reflections' is that genuine 'critique' goes beyond the Kantian-inaugurated project of securing the objectivity of objects within precisely defined domains, 'to conceive critique or philosophical analysis *aesthetically*' (2-3). In this radical sense, 'critique' has to do not with discovering the 'rational' conditions of 'truth itself' but with researching the 'genealogy' and assessing the relative consequences of the dynamic, interpretive, 'world-making' activities (i.e., 'aesthetic' as fundamental *poiesis*) in virtue of which we originally 'create truths,' which we then take as fixed, deem canonical, and value as such. The 'critical' issue concerns

the very 'intelligible possibility' of knowledge as truth-seeking (78), and hence the question, 'what is truth good for?' (32). In this regard, Nietzsche traces a fundamental chiasmus — between the unquestioned 'illusion of truth' (i.e., truth as ungainsayable 'fact' and knowledge-ideal) and the 'truth of illusion' (i.e., truth as 'error/lie,' which we create with ulterior motives and take for 'true' [140]). Ultimately, 'for Nietzsche ..., there is no truth, there are no facts, only interpretations' (15), including even this view of 'truth' itself (40). Yet to recognize the inescapable ubiquity of interpretation, neither belies that ubiquity nor absolves us from interpretation. Nietzsche's positive position is thus thoroughly and 'archically perspectival.' Yet it is neither 'perspectivism' nor 'relativism.' For in their knowledge-denials, these '-isms' still presuppose the absolute value of truth in itself and the absoluteness of the objectivism/relativism dichotomy, presuppositions which Nietzsche exposes among the greatest illusions of truth. Yet that 'there is only interpretation' does not then mean that all interpretations are indifferently equal, or that one cannot 'enter into a delusionary vision' (230). What it does mean is that there is no 'outside' to interpretation, and hence no securing the 'right' interpretation or interpretation-theory in terms of the 'objective' world. There must be a measure of interpretation, though for Nietzsche it is neither epistemic nor crassly utilitarian. Rather, the measure is, in B.'s words, 'ecophysiological' (Chap. 3). She coins this term to signify the 'continuous,' undecidable interplay in Nietzsche's philosophy between 'hyperrealism' (i.e., the 'empiricist's physiological or sensual perspective' [120, n. 11], ever appreciative of the irreducible difference between the 'Real' and our concepts and percepts) and 'ecological valuation' (i.e., that the 'Real' is only 'the unfolding of the will-to-power as world interpretive expression'). Against all ideals of epistemic closure and scientific approximation, this 'ecophysiological' perspective remains ineluctably yet 'joyously' open-ended and multi-dimensional, generating a logic of its own in terms of which it must be judged, a 'cunning logic' (44) of polysemous and non-exclusive voices.

To Nietzsche then the whole spectrum of positions in contemporary philosophy of science, from Popperian fallibilism to Feyerabend's anarchistic empiricism, would be largely beside the point. 'The problem of science,' he claims, 'cannot be recognized on the ground of science' (36). His real 'interest is not science as such, but the larger moral phenomenon of Western culture' and hence the manner in which we both create and 'e-value' the particular, relative 'illusions/truths' we choose to will, such creation, valuation and willing being ineluctable (208). Likewise, Nietzsche's concern is not to denounce contemporary science (146), nor to deny the empirical efficacy of its interpretive project. Rather his task is to challenge science's 'image of itself' insofar as 'it takes its project ... to offer an account of the objective world by means of its approximate truths' (236), and assumes 'uncritically' that this project and its empowerment are the highest value. On this reading, contemporary science and its philosophy suffer not so much from epistemological imprecision as from 'bad modes of interpretation' and 'bad philology' (BGE, §22).

Although generally accessible to philosophers, this book will find its most congenial readers among those who are already interpreters of Nietzsche, who are familiar with the recent secondary literature it discusses, and who already appreciate the importance of Nietzsche's radical critique of the traditional 'value' of truth. B. offers a well-organized and intelligent discussion of Nietzsche's views on science, truth and philosophy, rescuing him from the facile charge of logical circularity, and offering a persuasive alternative to both the Heideggerian consignment of Nietzsche to the end of metaphysics, and the Derridean silence on the issue of Nietzsche and science.

**Robert Burch**

University of Alberta

**Steven Best and Douglas Kellner**

*Postmodern Theory: Critical Interrogations.*

New York: Guilford Press 1991. Pp. 324.

US \$16.95. ISBN 0-89862-418-5.

In *Postmodern Theory: Critical Interrogations*, Steven Best and Douglas Kellner provide both a clear introduction for students seeking an initial grounding in postmodern theory and fruit for the critical appetite of more seasoned scholars. *Postmodern Theory* provides a history of the concept of postmodernity, offers an economical and incisive exposition and critique of major French theorists associated with postmodern theory, traces the development of a radical politics of identity and difference, contrasts central claims of critical postmodern theory with the critical theory of the Frankfurt School, and concludes with an attempt to synthesise the best of postmodern work with the enduring values of modern radical theory.

Unlike a good deal of debate between partisans of modern and postmodern theory, Best and Kellner are driven by the spirit of reconciliation. Their aim is to create a critical theory appropriate to contemporary reality and not to defend pet theses or uncritically embrace novel arguments. They proceed from the premise that 'emerging postmodern discourses ... raise issues that resist easy dismissal or facile incorporation into ... established paradigms' (3). In particular, postmodern theory has pointed towards changes in information and entertainment media which blur the distinction between image and reality, illuminated the exclusionary nature of modernist universal values, and uncovered links between the theoretical desire to conceptually master the real and political totalitarianism. The problem, however, is that

these insights are undertheorized and not related to any account of underlying social structures of power and interest.

The authors begin with an 'archaeology' of the concept 'postmodern'. The concept was first employed by the art critic John Watkins Chapman in 1870 to describe painting more avant-garde than French modernism. The subsequent history of the concept is fragmented and disconnected. The term popped up throughout the early to mid-twentieth century in the works of historians such as Toynbee, sociologists such as C. Wright Mills and Daniel Bell, and cultural theorists including Susan Sontag and Ihab Hassan. The concept was generally employed to denote either an historical rupture or changes in cultural practices in the West. This division was in turn divided between those who viewed the changes hopefully, and those who viewed them pessimistically.

Best and Kellner observe that changes in methods of production were generally ignored while hopeful cultural theory received more and more attention. The excitement generated by the breaking down of artistic disciplines, 'helped prepare the way for the reception of the discourse of the postmodern' (15). That which is today associated with this discourse is the radical political, philosophical and cultural critique which developed in France in the mid to late 1960s.

The French thought of this period was influenced first of all by structuralism's assault on the self-determining, rational subject central to modern theory, and radicalized politically by (of all people, the elitist and anti-democratic) Nietzsche. French philosophy began to predict a coming age where old historical unities, social totalities, and political strategies would be dispersed. Kellner and Best devote four lucid chapters to explicating and criticizing the work of five central figures: Foucault, Deleuze and Guattari, Baudrillard, and Lyotard.

Readers familiar with this scene will note the absence of Derrida. This is perhaps the major flaw in the text. The authors chose to exclude Derrida because they judge that his work is primarily a critique of philosophy. I would insist, however, that Derrida should have been included. Derrida's deconstruction of philosophy is an explicit critique of the conception of historical progress central to modern critical theory and his notions of *différance*, play, and dissemination have been crucial supports for the politics of identity and difference which Kellner and Best analyze.

That said, the chapters which they devote to expounding the key arguments of the five thinker's listed above are excellent. The authors are particularly adept at converting diverse, oft-times convoluted arguments into concise, tellingly critical yet fair expositions.

Best and Kellner concentrate upon both prominent and less well-known primary sources, avoiding for the most part secondary literature. In this way the reader is not misled by too many distinct secondary agendas while independent judgement of the primary texts is facilitated. While Best and Kellner laud the French thinkers' new perspectives on power, desire, the contemporary media, and political struggle, they conclude that there are

theoretical deficits vitiating the importance of their insights. In particular, not one provides a coherent alternative to the problems which they highlight, and all reject any normative basis upon which to criticize contemporary society. Thus, unifying these four chapters is the argument that it is the very radicality of extreme postmodernism which undermines its efficacy as radical critique. By rejecting all universal values as exclusionary and oppressive, the thinkers in question leave their own critique groundless, arbitrary, and unable to pose a *better* alternative without self-contradiction.

Following the first four chapters is a sketch of the 'reconstructive' approach to postmodern theory. This approach holds in abeyance the prophetic invocation of a new era and instead seeks to incorporate postmodern themes into established paradigms. Thus, Jameson has sought to combine postmodern cultural analysis with Marxist political economy, Laclau and Mouffe have sought to revivify democratic theory with Foucauldian and Derridean themes, and feminists have sought in the postmodern critique of humanism radical grounds for their attack on patriarchal culture. All of these theorists 'adopt postmodern positions while stressing continuities between the present age and modernity' (181).

The major strength of this wing of the movement is that it avoids the dogmatism and reductionism of the extreme postmodernist discourse. The authors are more favourably disposed to the reconstructive effort which, taken as a whole, bears a similarity with their own project. However, the theorists which they survey here are not without problems of their own. They conclude that Jameson 'allows himself to be seduced by the siren song of the extreme postmodernism' and this causes him to 'exaggerate certain cultural tendencies' (192). Laclau and Mouffe's strengths are vitiated by their egregious misreading of the Marxist tradition, and their 'radical democracy' risks backsliding into an uncritical affirmation of liberal democracy. In general, Kellner and Best warn that a politics of identity and difference can '[obscure] common interests ... in favour of heterogeneity, difference, and fragmentation that ultimately buttresses white male capitalist oppression' (213). This is an unfashionable point, but one which it seems necessary to emphasize given the powerless dispersion into which groups struggling for a more egalitarian society have recently fallen into.

The text next shifts to a critical comparison between the salient features of postmodern theory and the Frankfurt School of critical theory. They are not the first to have done so (see Peter Dews's *Logics of Disintegration*). Nevertheless, Kellner and Best proceed independently of Dews's text and provide original contributions to this vital topic. This is especially the case as regards one of the more heated 'continental' debates of recent years, between supporters of Habermas and of Lyotard which erupted in the train of Habermas's critique of postmodern theory in *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*. This text provoked the predictably florid postmodern response that Habermas was a dinosaur oriented by a notion of consensus which was oppressive. The most valuable aspect of Kellner's and Best's approach is that they highlight some common ground between these apparently incompatible

theories. In so far as both 'criticize the dominant legitimating principles of contemporary capitalist society' (247), problematize subject-based foundations of knowledge, and attack the dominance of instrumental reason, the authors argue that these perspectives can potentially be unified.

Their final chapter is devoted to outlining the basic principles for their own 'multiperspectival and multidimensional critical theory.' While I found that they spent rather too much space rehashing critiques of postmodern theory which had already received sufficient treatment, they do provide the starting points for a needed renewal of social criticism.

The goal towards which Best and Kellner are working is a critical theory of the present which will articulate the pell-mell insights of postmodern theory into a coherent critique based upon a sound, universal normative foundation. They argue that, 'a multi-dimensional critical theory will provide an analysis of the relative autonomy of the various levels or domains of social reality,' which 'refuses to reduce social phenomena to any one dimension' (263).

The most appealing facet of their argument lies in their insistence upon the need for empirical substantiation of theoretical propositions, something which is generally lacking from postmodern accounts. Because one central contention of postmodern theory is that unified accounts of history are no longer possible, postmodern theory is unable to coherently explain what constitutes the postmodern era. Because the authors insist on continuities between the dominant economic and political forces of the nineteenth century and our own day, they are better positioned to discriminate important differences.

The groundwork which is laid in this final chapter appears to be promising. By rooting their politics in an analysis of the ways in which the economy structures but does not absolutely determine multiple forms of oppression the authors uncover concrete grounds for solidarity amongst empirically dispersed groups. This final chapter would have benefitted from a somewhat more detailed discussion of the philosophical issue here, which concerns the extent to which political identities forged primarily on cultural identities can be universalized. However, their intent is only to lay the groundwork, and this they do in a manner which makes one anticipate further offerings.

**Jeff Noonan**

McMaster University

## George Boolos

*The Logic of Provability.*

New York: Cambridge University Press 1993.

Pp. xxxvi + 275.

US \$59.95. ISBN 0-521-43342-8.

George Boolos's book is a study of modal logic applied to the provability of formal system, in particular, arithmetic. Boolos shows how the box,  $\Box$ , of modal logic can be interpreted as 'It is provable that ...' and a translation can be set up between the sentence letters of a modal system and sentences of the language of arithmetic. Then the modal system is used to shed light on the notions of provability and consistency as introduced by Gödel in his seminal 1931 paper 'On Formally Undecidable Propositions of *Principia Mathematica* and Related Systems I' (*Collected Works*, Vol. I, ed. S. Feferman, Oxford 1986). These ideas make use of certain so-called self-referential sentences within arithmetic, that is, sentences that express their own provability or unprovability.

The modal logic system that is used in the book is GL (named for Gödel and Löb). It is a normal modal logic system with the usual syntax. It has as axioms all tautologies, all distribution axioms (sentences of the form  $\Box(A \rightarrow B) \rightarrow (\Box A \rightarrow \Box B)$ ) and all sentences of the form  $\Box(\Box A \rightarrow A) \rightarrow \Box A$ . Its rules of inference are modus ponens and necessitation. Arithmetic is formalised in the system PA (Peano Arithmetic). Using the method of Gödel numbering (assigning natural numbers to all symbols of PA and then showing how to find the number of terms and formulae in which they occur), PA can express facts about its own syntax within its own language. In particular, the formula  $\text{Bew}(x)$  which expresses the assertion that the sentence with Gödel number  $x$  can be proved in PA, can be formulated within the language of PA.

A realization  $*$  is a function that assigns to each sentence letter of GL a sentence of PA. Then a translation  $A^*$  of modal sentence  $A$  under realization  $*$  is defined inductively as follows:

- i)  $\perp^* = \perp$ ,
- ii)  $p^* = *(p)$ ,
- iii)  $(A \rightarrow B)^* = A^* \rightarrow B^*$ ,
- iv)  $\Box(A)^* = \text{Bew}(\ulcorner A^* \urcorner)$ .

Then a modal sentence such as  $\neg\Box\perp$  can be seen as being translated as  $\neg\text{Bew}(\ulcorner \perp \urcorner)$ , which expresses the assertion that an inconsistency is not provable in PA. In other words, it expresses the consistency of PA. As an example, it is easy to prove the second incompleteness theorem for PA. Since  $\text{GL} \vdash \Box(\Box\perp \rightarrow \perp) \rightarrow \Box\perp$ ,  $\text{GL} \vdash \neg\Box\perp \rightarrow \neg\Box\neg\Box\perp$ , hence  $\text{PA} \vdash (\neg\Box\perp \rightarrow \neg\Box\neg\Box\perp)^*$ , that is,  $\text{PA} \vdash \neg\text{Bew}(\ulcorner \perp \urcorner) \rightarrow \neg\text{Bew}(\ulcorner \neg\text{Bew}(\ulcorner \perp \urcorner) \urcorner)$ , which expresses the second incompleteness theorem for PA.

The two most important results of the book are the fixed point theorem and the arithmetical completeness theorem for GL. The fixed point theorem

states that for every sentence modalised in  $p$  (every occurrence of  $p$  occurs within the scope of an occurrence of  $\Box$ ), there is a sentence  $H$  containing only sentence letters contained in  $A$ , not containing  $p$ , such that  $\text{GL} \vdash \Box(p \leftrightarrow A) \leftrightarrow \Box(p \leftrightarrow H)$  (where  $\Box A$  is just  $(\Box A \wedge A)$ ). Sentences such as  $H$  are called fixed points of  $A$ . For example,  $\Box \perp$  is a fixed point of  $\Box \neg p$ . Hence by the fixed point theorem  $\text{GL} \vdash \Box(p \leftrightarrow \Box \neg p) \leftrightarrow \Box(p \leftrightarrow \Box \perp)$ , so  $\text{PA} \vdash (S \leftrightarrow \text{Bew}(\ulcorner S \urcorner)) \leftrightarrow (S \leftrightarrow \text{Bew}(\ulcorner \perp \urcorner))$  (with  $S = *p$ ), i.e.,  $S$  is a sentence equivalent to its own disprovability if and only if it is equivalent to the assertion that PA is inconsistent.

Also,  $\neg \Box \perp$  is a fixed point of  $\neg \Box p$ , so sentences in PA that are equivalent to their own unprovability are equivalent to the assertion that PA is consistent.

The second of the two most important theorems in *The Logic of Provability* is the arithmetical completeness theorem for GL. This states that a modal sentence is a theorem of GL if all of its translations are theorems of PA. So if  $A$  is not a theorem of GL, then there is a realization  $*$  such that  $A^*$  is not a theorem of PA. This leads to some surprising results about PA. For example,  $\Box(\Box p \vee \Box \neg p) \rightarrow (\Box p \vee \Box \neg p)$  is not a theorem of GL, hence  $\text{Bew}(\ulcorner \text{Bew}(\ulcorner S \urcorner) \vee \text{Bew}(\ulcorner \neg S \urcorner) \urcorner) \rightarrow (\text{Bew}(\ulcorner S \urcorner) \vee \text{Bew}(\ulcorner \neg S \urcorner))$  is not a theorem of PA for some sentence  $S$ . So there is a sentence  $S$  that is consistent with PA which is both undecidable and it is provable that  $S$  is decidable.

Most of the book is taken up with presenting the systems GL and PA and with proving these fundamental results. In the rest of the book Boolos considers the connection between modal logic and consistency and provability in set theory and analysis (second-order arithmetic). He also looks at the relationship between modal logic and  $\omega$ -consistency (a system is  $\omega$ -inconsistent if for some formula  $A(x)$ ,  $\exists x \neg A(x)$  and all of  $A(0)$ ,  $A(1)$ ,  $A(2)$ , ... are provable). The results concerning  $\omega$ -consistency and  $\omega$ -provability are presentable in the system GLB (B for 'bimodal'), which has the addition operators representing  $\omega$ -consistency and  $\omega$ -provability (chapter 16 is concerned with the fixed point theorem and arithmetical completeness theorem for GLB).

*The Logic of Provability* is designed to be a self-contained text. The only knowledge that is assumed for the majority of the book is that of ordinary propositional and predicate logic and basic arithmetic. However, chapters 13 and 14 concerning set theory and analysis require some idea of basic set theory and notions of proofs of independence in the style of Gödel and Cohen.

A quick flick through the book can be somewhat daunting, as there appears to be an awful lot of technical results presented within the body of the book. However, when one actually reads the text one finds that it is very clearly written with every consideration to the reader (definitions are repeated if they have not been used for a while and there is a useful list of notation at the back). The surprising connection between modal logic and provability in PA and the elegant results proved about so called 'self-referential' sentences shed welcome light for the non-specialist on the notions

of provability and consistency introduced by Gödel. One comes away from the book, not only with an understanding of how the systems GL and PA are related, but also with much deeper understanding of Gödel's second incompleteness theorem and other results of metamathematics.

**Helen Billinge**

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**Susan B. Brill**

*Wittgenstein and Critical Theory: Beyond Post-modernism and Towards Descriptive Investigations.*

Athens: Ohio University Press 1995. Pp. 168.

US \$40.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-8214-1092-X);

US \$14.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8214-1093-8).

'The sphere of intellectual life in which I gained most through Wittgenstein's influence is that of literature,' said Paul Engelmann, a friend of Wittgenstein. The veteran English literary critic F.R. Leavis, told by Wittgenstein to give up literary criticism, had a different view: 'Wittgenstein's unmistakable genius is hardly more relevant to my own intellectual concerns than a genius for chess. I did not interfere in philosophy, so why should Wittgenstein interfere in literary criticism?'

These biographical vignettes are absent from Susan Brill's book. Yet her project may be seen as an answer to Leavis's question why Wittgenstein might usefully interfere in literary criticism and what he might have meant by 'give up literary criticism'. Brill gives up literary criticism in the sense that she rejects 'the absolutist discourses of present critical practices.' Yet she aims at a 'satisfactory means of evaluating and selecting among the variety of critical stances current today'. The rationale behind her rejections is that, since theories are 'preconceived networks', there is no *one* theory which opens up *every* text. Hence 'if we desire a meaningful and effective entry into texts, it is crucial that we shift our method from a preconceived textual entry — all too often a forced entry — and instead move beyond the dialectical pull of our contemporary modern/postmodern aporia toward a new critical method informed by Wittgenstein's philosophy that will aid scholars, students, readers in the conjoined activities of reading, interpreting and evaluating texts. Such a method is descriptive criticism.' Almost in the same breath, the author is anxious to stress the crucial point of *fit*: choose the critical theory most useful to opening up a particular text.

Brill goes on to identify and discuss the salient features of her Wittgensteinian framework: the rejection of theory, the idea of the language game, and a

methodology for descriptive investigations. She sees these as effective tools not only for opening texts, but also for deciding which theory is the key to which text. Through this Wittgensteinian lens Brill looks critically at current psychoanalytic, semiotic, feminist, deconstructionist and new historicist schools of criticism. Then she discusses the issue of inclusivity and exclusivity in the production and preservation of literary canons. This is followed by examinations of the nascent canon of Native American Literature, and of contemporary language poets influenced by Wittgenstein's work.

I offer a few comments:

1. *Concerning the rejection of theory:* Brill uses theories the way a carpenter uses tools: *you need the right tool for the job*. If you need to hammer in a nail, don't choose a needle to do it. But this is more like Brecht's attitude to theory than Wittgenstein's. Brecht thought, 'theories are useful things. Every person should have half a dozen or so in their pocket to choose from for an occasion.' Wittgenstein's attitude was different. For him, theories in philosophy are sources of conceptual confusion, myopic vision, bits of language gone on holiday preventing us from a proper appreciation of the rich diversity of life in language. Wittgenstein's idea is not to pick and choose but to *abolish*.
2. *Concerning Brill's view of her work as metacriticism:* The author wants to bring back literary theories from the sphere of abstractions to the rough but lively ground of close readings of texts. This is where the action should be for a critic: 'Generate a clear view of texts by *descriptive* rather than explanatory criticism'. If this is the critic's job, it is not clear how it is to be accomplished by *criticism of criticism*.
3. *Concerning the politics of greater inclusion in the canon:* How does Brill's politics of empowerment, of women and native Americans, *fit* the descriptive method and Wittgenstein's minimalist politics? If, as Wittgenstein says, philosophy leaves everything as it is because it is a descriptive enterprise, why should a descriptive literary criticism be *reformist* rather than *quietist*? 'Now that the women have left, we can really do philosophy,' Wittgenstein said strangely to Miss Anscombe. This doesn't sound like the voice of a philosopher who can be invoked *without further explanation* in the feminist projects of greater empowerment of women and of the eradication of patriarchal social structures.

Finally, if 'le style, c'est la femme (ou l'homme) même', then Brill bears little family resemblance to Wittgenstein, and a striking resemblance to literary theorists influenced by the dense jargon of recent continental thought. Yet her efforts to bring Wittgenstein's philosophy to bear upon contemporary literature and its critical practices potentially enriches readers in both disciplines, *pace* Leavis, may he rest in peace.

**Béla Szabados**

University of Regina

**Gennaro Chierchia**

*Dynamics of Meaning: Anaphora,  
Presupposition, and the Theory of Grammar.*

Chicago: The University of Chicago Press

1995. Pp. xv + 270.

US \$75.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-226-10434-6);

US \$27.95 (paper: ISBN 0-226-10435-4).

This is a terrific book. It will be of tremendous interest to philosophers of language, especially those concerned with the semantics-pragmatics boundary.

The book begins by introducing, in an admirably lucid way, the foundations of Discourse Representation Theory (DRT), an approach to formal semantics first developed by Hans Kamp and Irene Heim, building on work by David Lewis and Robert Stalnaker. The central thrust of classical DRT is this: to account for cases of non-*c*-command anaphora, indefinite NPs should be treated not as quantifiers (à la Russell) but as free variables. The sentences in (1) are examples: Note that the first branching node dominating the indefinite does *not* dominate the anaphoric pronoun; hence the indefinite does not *c*-command the anaphor.

(1)

(a) [<sub>NP</sub> Every man who owns [<sub>NP</sub> a donkey]<sub>1</sub>] beats it<sub>1</sub>

(b) [<sub>S</sub> John introduced [<sub>NP</sub> a new international student]<sub>1</sub>] [<sub>S</sub> He<sub>1</sub> is French]

In classical DRT, the quantificational force of indefinites is determined by unselective binders (including adverbs of quantification). These bind *both* the indefinite *and* the anaphoric pronoun. (Where no unselective binder is explicitly present — as in (1b) — a rule of Existential Closure introduces an existential quantifier.)

As Chierchia explains, there are two ways of implementing DRT: syntactically and semantically. He first explores the syntactic option. He augments Principles and Parameters syntax with (a) some syntactic rules from Heim's doctoral thesis and (b) a variant of Kamp's logical language, for which a standard Tarskian semantics can be given. He then shows how the enriched syntax maps surface structures on to Kamp's logical structures, thus effectively giving a semantics for them. Next, Chierchia lays out the semantic option: Instead of adding to the syntax, one can make meanings 'richer', and 'more dynamic' by treating them not merely as satisfaction conditions, but as *context change potentials*. In this new 'dynamic semantics' an indefinite is (*very* roughly) an element that introduces a new individual into a context.

As Chierchia shows, both implementations of DRT account equally well for donkey sentences, and other cases of non-*c*-command anaphora. But, he says, these implementations of the classical theory each have three weaknesses. Weakness one: They both leave out the existential readings of donkey sentences — illustrated by sentence (2a) below, in which the meter-feeder

needn't deposit *all* her dimes. Weakness two: They both wrongly treat all determiners as unselective, thus incorrectly predicting that sentence (2b) quantifies over owner-donkey *pairs*. (If it had this reading, (2b) would be true where one farmer owns 100 donkeys, five others have one donkey each, and the first beats all of his, though the latter five never beat theirs.)

(2)

(a) [NP Every person who has [NP a dime]<sub>1</sub>] will put it<sub>1</sub> in the meter

(b) [NP Most farmers who have [NP a donkey]<sub>1</sub>] beat it<sub>1</sub>

Finally, Chierchia contends that classical DRT must be revised because, in either form, it cannot be readily combined with the theory of generalized quantifiers. (Classical DRT is strictly first order.) And now the crux: Chierchia favours the 'semantic soul' of DRT over the 'syntactic soul' (as he calls them) because, he argues, the syntactic implementation of DRT does not lend itself to these necessary emendations.

His arguments are not perfectly convincing here. He does raise some important concerns about the syntactic version of DRT. For example, the notion of movement apparently required is anathema in current Principles and Parameters syntax. And it isn't easy to see how co-ordinated quantificational NPs would be accommodated by the 'syntactic soul'. But, given the overall power of the syntactic approach, these *don't* amount to grounds for throwing it out.

Chierchia's dismissal of the syntactic approach on these grounds looks especially peculiar when one reflects that the 'semantic soul' leaves open questions of its own. For instance: Context change potentials were originally introduced, by Stalnaker, to give an account of *assertion*. Given this, what will be the context change potential of non-declaratives like 'Where is Susan?' and 'Bring more wine!?' And how will the revised semantics capture the intuitive meaning difference between the unembedded word 'red' and the sentence 'That is red'? After all, when used on its own, 'red' changes the context in *prima facie* the same ways as 'That is red' does.

Whether or not, at the end of the day, the approach which Chierchia presents is the *only* viable alternative, it is without doubt very impressive. As he makes clear, his version of the semantic implementation of DRT — which he labels 'dynamic binding' — has all the benefits of classical DRT, plus many more. It applies naturally to backward dependencies like (3).

(3) If it<sub>1</sub> is overcooked, [NP a hamburger]<sub>1</sub> usually doesn't taste good

And it provides an insightful account of presupposition projection, definites, certain reconstruction effects, crossover, and other phenomena.

All in all, then, this book has a great deal to offer. It introduces very important work in semantics, usefully develops it, and then applies the results in novel and fruitful ways. A warning, however: For philosophers not working in linguistics and/or logic, the book would likely be hard-going in places — the latter half especially. (Chierchia suggests at least a graduate

level introduction to syntax and formal semantics as preparation.) On the other hand, Chierchia works very hard to introduce background material, and he largely succeeds. He even goes so far as to include exceedingly useful exercises. Thus, given the appropriate effort, the book can be fully appreciated by non-linguists. Struggle and learn!

**Robert J. Stainton**

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**Jerry S. Clegg**

*On Genius: Affirmation and Denial from Schopenhauer to Wittgenstein.*

New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1994.

Pp. ix + 211.

US \$37.95. ISBN 0-8204-2370-X.

As the subtitle suggests, Clegg's analysis of *genius* is securely fastened to the speculations of various renowned, 'canonized' thinkers of history working both within and without so-called recognized philosophical borders. It is a drama of 'inspiration' in the sense which traces certain variations of a theme, in all their multiform reactions (restrained and negative), back to the subjective, post-Kantian brand of Arthur Schopenhauer's Neo-Platonism, alias 'pessimist'. Clegg shows, at the very least, an intuitive familiarity with the hermeneutic principle that one does not escape the thought-world of another simply by denying or disregarding it. This holds together the entire work, a fortiori in Clegg's treatment of Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*, where 'Schopenhauer goes unmentioned' (172).

The notion of *genius* has roughly six meanings in the book, excluding that of Schopenhauer's which serves as the meta-concept within which or against which the others function. Each meaning pivots on a critical acceptance and/or rejection of Schopenhauer's translation into post-Kantian terms the Neoplatonic (Plotinus's) *reditus*-reading of Plato's allegories of the divided line, the cave, and the sun. *Reditus*, in its earliest stages, refers to the crypto-religious 'journey' of enlightenment whereby one escapes, through ecstatic contemplation, the shadowy realm of existence (appearance) to the sunlit world of Being (reality). *Exitus*, counterlinguistically, refers to the state of imprisonment, much like the plight of Plato's poor prisoners in the cave, out of which the elect, the 'pure subject of knowledge' (19), seek deliverance. In Schopenhauer's *The World as Will and Repre-*

sentation the *exitus* comes to mean the spontaneous Will to live, which is 'responsible for a world that is false' (16), owing to its perspectival viewpoint. The denial of this Will to live, which includes the disavowal of suicide as a legitimate alternative, is the *reditus* of unlimited Being, the difficult attainment of which is due to the 'intermittent triumph of the Genius' who beholds the Platonic Forms immediately (19). Thus, simplifying to the extreme, the illusions of individuality, individuality itself, the 'I' or empirical ego, are extinguished by the collective, perspectiveless knowledge of 'the world's limiting Subject' (11), the finally true *Ding-an-sich* ('thing-in-itself').

Enter the philosopher, tragedian, and saint! It is to this *reditus*-affirming end, Schopenhauer argues in the first part of the book ('Reditus Affirmed'), that the salvific labor of philosophers, tragic artists, and saints point. Clegg tests this claim by invoking the figures of Friedrich Nietzsche, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Carl Jung, and Sigmund Freud, dividing the book into the two remaining parts. Part two ('Reditus Restrained') is an analysis of the early pro- but restrained Schopenhauerian works of Nietzsche (*The Birth of Tragedy*) and Wittgenstein (*Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*), along with that of Jung's definingly late autobiographical work, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, which leaves the psychoanalytic 'saint' up until the end of his life in the mode of restrained affirmation. Part three ('Reditus Denied') looks at the late anti-Schopenhauerian works of Nietzsche (e.g., *Beyond Good and Evil*) and Wittgenstein (*Philosophical Investigations*), introducing the anti-Jungian stance of Freud as an alternative to the qualified *reditus*-affirming complex.

The early Nietzsche, claims Clegg, accepts Schopenhauer's metaphysical idealism and the *reditus* role he attributes to the tragic arts, but he has strong reservations about the imagined effects of the tragic artists. 'The tragedian ... has a comic function. He reconciles his audience to life' (41). In this life-affirming, Dionysian Subject (within us) is to be found the Genius agent of Schopenhauerian vision, against which Nietzsche pivots the Socratic, theoretical worldview which cramps the style of the Apollonian-Artist. Wittgenstein turns his attention to the 'consolations of logic'. To the *exitus* of Neoplatonic metaphysics the Wittgenstein of the *Tractatus* reserves 'picture thinking', the ephemeral realm where Plato's prisoners erroneously name they know not what (i.e., the Forms). The *reditus* begins not by a Schopenhauerian 'stoic regimen that leads to a denial of the will' (79), but by a reversal of picture thinking that leads to the thinking Subject, 'the Neo-Platonic mystic who lives "beyond thinking"' (81). Jung, on the other hand, contests Schopenhauer's denial of life and the reality of the empirical ego, but leaves his idealism relatively intact. By denouncing apotheosized dichotomies, he can only affirm a partial *reditus*, one which serves the *exitus*, since both consciousness and the collective unconscious are 'manufactured by us' (103). Emphasis thus falls on the healing art of the Genius-psychiatrist.

In abandoning the teleology of his earlier work, Nietzsche quite candidly repudiates Schopenhauer's doctrine of the will to live: 'there is no "will to

existence” (107), hence no escape, no *reditus*. There is only ‘eternal return’ in space and time driven by the will to power, which is lead by Nietzsche’s anti-Genius, the Darwinian-inspired scientist-saint, *der Übermensch*. Treating the neurosis of the *reditus*, the saintly and tragedian illusion, and concurrently coming to grips with the *exitus*, our human lot in life, are the aims of Freud’s psychoanalytic-scientist hero: ‘... the *reditus* was only preparation for a mature commitment to the *exitus*’ (166). The Freudian anti-priest is ruled by *eros* to adolescence and maturity, not by *thanatos* which belongs to infancy. Wittgenstein’s later work joins in this effort to naturalize, as it were, Schopenhauer’s idealist divide founded on groundless Kantian metaphysical principles. Logic, as in the *Tractatus*, can no longer be recruited to the service of the *reditus*, for the latter is built on ‘houses of cards’. ‘The logic of the proposition now acts, implacably, as the opponent of “Fate” and “Nature’s deepest intent” in the service of ordinary life’ (197).

Clegg’s book is a fascinating philosophical *tour de force*. It is well organized structurally, allowing the reader to follow the general shifts of attention, and tightly argued as well. There are points, though, when Clegg tends to get bogged down by details incidental to his argument — most notably in part two, chapter two on Wittgenstein, and part three, chapter one on Nietzsche. Additionally, Clegg’s Schopenhauerian reading of Wittgenstein, particularly the later Wittgenstein, seems rather forced, especially when we take into consideration that ‘Schopenhauer goes unmentioned in the *Investigations*’ (172). In such instances, when it is all too tempting to make clear-cut connections, it is helpful to keep in mind deterrent statements like Jacques Derrida’s: *il n’y a pas de hors-texte* (‘there is no outside-text’). Nevertheless, Clegg makes good on his claim that the works of these significant historical figures are ‘all illuminated by considering them in the light of Schopenhauer’s subjective brand of Neo-Platonism and the philosophical hero who exemplifies its tenets: the Genius’ (1).

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**Johanna Drucker**

*The Visible Word.*

Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1994.

Pp. viii+298.

US \$35.00. ISBN 0-226-16501-9.

If you were to think of 'modern art' it is unlikely that typographic experiment (TE) would be the first thing to come to mind, especially since the setting into type of pamphlets, posters, poems, books and plays is largely overlooked where modern art is considered. Johanna Drucker's book, however, examines the how and why of this oversight and aims to remedy the central conceptual difficulty responsible for modernist critics' dismissal of TE as it was practiced by avant-garde artists between the years 1909-23. According to Drucker, who is herself both a poet and experimental typographer, her hybrid synthetic concept of *materiality* — 'the self-conscious attention to the formal means of production in literature and the visual arts' (10) — provides the conceptual ground needed for a proper appreciation of TE as 'one of the distinctive features of early twentieth-century modernism' (47).

TE influenced artists and philosophers as well as being influenced itself by philosophical thought. 'It is hardly incidental,' Drucker states on p. 10, 'that the semiotic analysis of language which formed the basis of structural linguistics in the work of Ferdinand de Saussure and initial texts in the work of phenomenologist Edmund Husserl were both contemporary with the experimental typographic work produced in the context of modern art.' Throughout her project Drucker shows an acute awareness of relevant fields of investigation such as meaning production in written language (especially semiotics and structural linguistics), critical theory of literature and aesthetics, phenomenology, and hermeneutics. She also places 'the investigation of typography within a metaphysics of writing' (11) and identifies philosophical issues, such as 'the problem of history,' which are relevant to her investigation. One could perhaps fault Drucker for not fully explicating the effects that such diverse ideas have on her project, but she herself does not hold up *The Visible Word* as a philosophical explication; instead it is an investigation into TE which considers the form's role in the avant-garde of modern art and its subsequent interpretation by modernist critics who argued against its importance. (On p. 6 Drucker notes that she uses the term 'modern' to apply to 'work produced ... up through the 1920s' and applies the term 'modernist' to 'the critical and historical work produced at mid-century to theorize and comment upon the work of early modern artists and their mid-century modernist successors.')

Insofar as Drucker recognizes the importance of philosophical methods to her investigative project and considers the historical context of TE she should be commended for the scope and inter-disciplinary nature of her project even if the philosophers may thirst for more detail.

Drucker's own model of materiality is derivative and synthetic, which leaves it open to criticisms not only of itself as a coherent concept but also of its original conceptual sources. Her entire investigation draws upon a sizable

variety of perspectives, relating, for example, both Husserl and Derrida to her project, and borrowing Julia Kristeva's notion of *positionality*, finding that '[Kristeva's] distinction allows, as no other theory of semiotics, for elements which are extralinguistic and not coded within the structure of language as the symbolic to be included for consideration within analysis' (42). If synthetic concepts and methods of investigation offend your beliefs about the integrity of your favourite philosopher's system or that of your preferred philosophical methodology then you will find much to take issue with in this book. However, Drucker is clearly aware of this point and she asserts that her model of materiality can do the job that it sets out to do: 'The challenge is to take into account the physical, substantial aspects of production as well as the abstract and system-defined elements. By proposing that materiality combine the two, a dialectic relation is assumed in which neither presence as substance nor absence as difference can ever be left fully alone' (43). In her reconceptualization of materiality she admits that her 'hybrid theoretical model contains certain internal and irresolvable contradictions' which must be able to persist 'without destroying the conceptual framework which unites them' (*ibid*), but the dialectic Drucker brings to bear does seem justified given the nature of TE as an art form which cannot be merely read nor simply seen, and which manipulates both the linguistic and visual realms.

In the third chapter of her book Drucker applies her model in a survey of the work of four 'poet practitioners': Filippo Marinetti, Guillaume Apollinaire, Ilia Zdanevich, and Tristan Tzara. Her survey demonstrates the expressive range and force produced by deliberate attention to typographic signification, and it cannot be said that Drucker attempts to uphold her model by means of limited application to uniform artistic examples. Zdanevich's work is especially vivid and ambitious, being intended as 'an attack on the normative principles of signification' (192) in order to overthrow the supposed repressive nature of the structure of language. Not only does the work of each artist differ from that of the others in the survey but the variety of ideas and theories at play also ensures that Drucker's model cannot be successful merely on the basis of sharing a common theoretical heritage with a particular form of TE.

Ultimately Drucker's model of materiality does cohere and provide for a useful and insightful examination of TE. But perhaps more interesting than the model itself is the thoroughgoing manner with which Drucker scans the period before and after her primary focus, picking out interesting influences and connections between philosophy, linguistics, and art. She ends her project by espousing the resistance of typographic experiment to 'easy closure on signification' (245) and by accurately and modestly describing the avant-garde experiments with typography as 'momentarily subversive' (247) — two points which demonstrate her interwoven concerns of artistic theory and social practice.

*The Visible Word* is an intricate investigation into the role of typography within art and to a lesser degree into the 'metaphysics of writing.' Readers who are interested in semiotics, structuralism, phenomenology, or aesthetics

and who are not overly shy of Drucker's synthetic approach will find the book to be of interest. Any reader, regardless of philosophical orientation, will encounter a unique historical perspective on philosophical activity as it relates to the typographical art of the avant-garde.

**Brian Hendrix**

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**Newton Garver**

*This Complicated Form of Life:*

*Essays on Wittgenstein.*

Peru, IL: Open Court Publishing Company 1994.

Pp. xxii + 316.

US \$44.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-8126-9252-7);

US \$19.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8126-9253-5).

English-speaking philosophers, led by Russell trying to make sense of Wittgenstein, assumed that the latter's general philosophical outlook was empiricist. That interpretative phase was followed by one in which Wittgenstein, especially in his later work, was taken to be *sui generis*, without any interesting philosophical antecedents or affiliations. Later still, chiefly in light of Engelmann's memoir and Janik and Toulmin's *Wittgenstein's Vienna*, (see Garver, p. 9, note 2 for others) it became clear that Wittgenstein had a substantial philosophical background, but one unfamiliar to most English-speaking philosophers. The relevant tradition against which to understand and assess Wittgenstein is German with, of course, Kant as the great central figure.

Garver's new book takes it that that latest interpretative trend is *surely* correct and that Wittgenstein is to be located within the Kantian tradition. The central aim of the book is to exhibit how, in a variety of ways, Wittgenstein is to be understood as a Kantian, or at least as a/the major contemporary representative of the Kantian tradition.

In one respect, the timing of Garver's book was unfortunate. John Cook's *Wittgenstein's Metaphysics* was also published in 1994. In that book, Cook argues vigorously that, in effect, the first interpretation was correct, that Wittgenstein was from start to finish a radical empiricist. Cook, oddly perhaps, does not even notice the latest, the Kantian, understanding of Wittgenstein (there is no reference to Kant or to Janik and Toulmin or to Engelmann in Cook's index of names) and so cannot criticize it. He finds his opponents in the interpretive group which treats Wittgenstein as coming from nowhere.

Garver, writing without knowledge of Cook's argument, cannot respond to it, though it is not clear whether he would have responded had he known since he holds that no empiricist reading of Wittgenstein could be plausible.

Hence, these very recent attempts to make sense of Wittgenstein's place on the philosophical map do not make connections with each other, and with the interpretive traditions which they represent. Quite clearly neither the Garver nor the Cook book is comprehensive enough to help us approach something of a consensus.

Although I think Cook is wildly wrong and Garver much more nearly correct, Garver's book suffers by comparison in an important respect. Cook's book is passionate, a single-minded attempt to prove his claim that Wittgenstein was an empiricist and a neutral monist. Garver's has none of that passion and little of the detail. Garver, on these matters of large-scale interpretation, does not see the Kantian reading as having any significant opposition today and so has no one to rouse his ire. Moreover, the book attempts to bind together previously written essays touching on a variety of standard topics concerning Wittgenstein's philosophy (see the sub-title 'Essays on Wittgenstein'). Those reasons taken jointly means that the book fails to sustain any clear focus on establishing that and how Wittgenstein falls within the Kantian tradition.

Of those particular features of Wittgenstein's thought which Garver examines, the most significant discussion is that of the notion of a form of life. Against the standard reading of that, in which we humans are participants in ever so many forms of life (see most liberally Peter Winch for whom the Eucharist and Darwin's theory of evolution are forms of life), Garver argues that Wittgenstein meant that we humans share a single form of life (note the title: 'This Complicated Form of Life'). While Garver does admit that his argument is fragmentary, nonetheless it is a solid introductory fragment to a correction of the orthodox explanation of *Lebensform*.

Probably the final two chapters — Ch 15 'Form of Life' and Ch 16 'Naturalism and the Transcendental' — are the most original of the book and shall turn out to make the largest contributions to our understanding of Wittgenstein.

**Merrill Ring**

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**Newton Garver and Seung-Chong Lee**  
*Derrida and Wittgenstein.*  
Philadelphia: Temple University Press 1994.  
Pp. xiv + 242.  
US \$37.95. ISBN 1-56639-172-5.

The comparison of Derrida and Wittgenstein's analyses of language which this book undertakes is in the form of a critical exposition of Derrida from a Wittgensteinian standpoint. While the structure of the book is largely determined by Derridean themes, Wittgenstein emerges as the superior philosopher (although Garver and Lee clearly respect Derrida as a philosophical critic). Garver and Lee first consider whether structuralism — the thesis that 'structures (closed systems of contrasts, analogous to systems of phonemes) bestow meaning on acts or utterances' (27) — to deal with what they call 'the challenge of metaphor'. They argue that Derrida, insofar as he is a structuralist, cannot successfully take up this challenge, since metaphor essentially refers to the intentions of a speaker in a particular context, an extra-systematic reality which they claim Derrida denies. Next, they compare Derrida's critique of Husserl's and Wittgenstein's critique of the *Tractatus* as two versions of the same opposition to conceiving language as grounded in logic, the relations of timeless ideas grasped by a private understanding. They suggest that Derrida and Wittgenstein both develop accounts of language that ground it in rhetoric, in the know-how one must possess in order to use language.

Chapters Four and Five, the heart of the book, consider these two accounts. 'Rousseau and Logocentrism' presents a synopsis of Derrida's critique of the logocentrism of traditional Western accounts of language, and of his text-centered alternative, in which the notions of *différance* and writing play an important role. Garver and Lee do an excellent job of explaining what Derrida means by these terms, and they employ Wittgenstein effectively as a means of drawing out the implications of Derrida's critique. But they object that, to the extent that the notion of *différance* relies on the tradition against which it is brought to bear, it either remains metaphysical or is entirely unintelligible. 'Grammar and Metaphysics' approaches Wittgenstein's alternative through the question of the language of metaphysics. Garver and Lee argue that grammar, the description of the various kinds of language-games, can ground not only metaphysics but also logic in the narrow sense (as opposed to the Tractarian sense). They claim that Derrida argues that such a descriptive grammar is insufficient as a ground for metaphysics, since it would ground the necessary in the empirical. They note that this supposes that linguistic categories can only be *linguistic* categories and so not independent of any *particular* language, which one would expect metaphysical categories to be. They reply that Wittgensteinian grammar can provide such categories: '[T]he basic ways of thinking, simple language-games, ... are the ultimate linguistic universal, to which other universals can be reduced' (168). The various forms of life in which language-games are grounded provide

linguistic categories that are independent of any particular language. Metaphysics has its own language-game, whose form involves describing ways of being by describing ways of speaking. Derrida, Garver and Lee claim, fails to take into account the communicative function of language. They claim to find this failing in Heidegger and Benveniste (upon whom Derrida depends), a failure which they did not expect from the author of *Speech and Phenomena*, in which Husserl is criticized for precisely this failure!

'Grammar and Metaphysics' illustrates the strengths and weaknesses of this book. Garver and Lee succeed admirably in presenting Derrida and Wittgenstein in a thought-provoking way in the context of issues in the philosophy of language. Their exposition of the arguments of Derrida and Wittgenstein is clear, precise, and (on the whole) sympathetic, a combination not often found in discussions of Derrida or Wittgenstein. However, their discussion of Derrida is handicapped by an unfamiliarity with the German philosophers — Nietzsche, Husserl, and Heidegger — upon whom Derrida's approach depends (is parasitic, they would say). They acknowledge that these three are central to present-day French philosophy and marginal to Anglo-American philosophy. But with the exception of Husserl, they seem not to have come to grips with them as well as they could have. For example, to the extent that Derrida understands metaphysics in a Heideggerian sense as ontotheology, it is unclear whether Derrida and Wittgenstein mean the same thing by 'metaphysics.' And while they quote from *An Introduction to Metaphysics* to show how Heidegger fails to understand the situatedness of 'being' in forms of life, they fail to note that in that work Heidegger criticizes metaphysics as a discourse concerning Being for precisely this reason.

Moreover, while 'sharply critical of Derrida' (5), they are uncritical of the later Wittgenstein. They make much of his claim that grammar examines the natural history of human beings, but they seem to understand 'natural history' in a distinctly pre-Darwinian way. Language-games change, but they do not evolve in any important sense, since the forms of life in which they are grounded are simply given once for all. Philosophy as the study of grammar is the taxonomy of the unchanging forms of life, an activity without effect on what it categorizes. A critique of this position is implicit in Derrida's 'Il n'y a pas d'hors-texte,' properly translated not as 'There is nothing outside the text' but as 'There is no outside-the-text.' Derrida denies, not the existence of an extratextual reality to which language refers, but its unchanging fixity independent of language. If (as seems more likely) forms of life do change over time in an evolutionary manner, then it is unclear whether grammar can provide the universals with which metaphysics is concerned. But if one takes the remark about natural history seriously, then there is a common ground upon which Derrida and Wittgenstein can be compared fruitfully, the idea that language is essentially historical and grounded in a temporal process that leaves it open to change. This idea is explicit in the notion of *différance* as temporalizing and implicit in the conception of grammar as natural history.

*Derrida and Wittgenstein* is by no means the final word on Derrida, Wittgenstein, or the two together. But it is an excellent first word, a starting-point for thinking about Derrida, Wittgenstein, and the nature of language.

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**Simon Goldhill**

*Foucault's Virginité: Ancient Erotic Fiction  
and the History of Sexuality.*

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1995.  
Pp. xiii + 194.

US \$49.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-521-47372-1);

US \$10.95 (paper: ISBN 0-521-47934-7).

If a book is to be judged by its title, Goldhill's *Foucault's Virginité* would fare poorly. The book may position itself as a response to Foucault, and share some of Foucault's vocabulary, but it is only marginally about Foucault's work. Only two of Foucault's works are referenced, and, from those, a total of 12 pages are directly footnoted. Foucault's work serves as a foil that pops up sporadically throughout, but Goldhill offers neither an extended commentary nor criticism. In the end, the reader is left to wonder why Foucault is featured in the title.

Placing that criticism to one side, however, Goldhill's discussion of the male desiring subject in Hellenistic erotic novels is a well-written commentary. It is designed for non-specialists, with most of the Greek sources given in the footnotes. The collection of three lectures given at Trinity College in Dublin, weaves together different novels, important concepts and arguments from the period. The first chapter, which focuses on *Daphnis and Chloe*, contains discussions of *sophrosune* and the nature and value of virginity (both male and female). The second chapter, which focuses on *Leucippe and Cleitophon*, considers the way that nature is used to justify male homosexuality. The third chapter, which covers many texts and focuses on Plutarch's *Amatorius*, takes up the debates over female virginity and the problem of female desire.

The highlights of *Foucault's Virginité* include Goldhill's frequent close readings of the erotic novels. The narratives and his commentaries are often insightful. In addition, his nuanced reading of the Greek originals often point to the complex word-plays in the novels. For instance, at one point Chloe remarks after seeing Daphnis: 'Would that I had been born his pipe that he

might blow me!' (Goldhill's translation). Goldhill asks 'how smutty a remark do you think Chloe is making?' (14). Goldhill also considers how the reader relates to the novel. In this case, the double entendre plays on the contrast between the reader's experience and Chloe's innocence. Passages such as this make the book worth reading.

The greatest disappointment in the discussion is the sporadic attempts to criticize Foucault's work. At the conclusion of the second chapter, for instance, Goldhill claims, that due to Foucault's teleological history (a characterization that Goldhill never justifies), the novels are forced into the historical shift from Plato to Jerome. Foucault's account leaves 'a fundamentally distorting gap in his writing of the history of sexuality' (45). Goldhill challenges Foucault's 'panoptic vision of ancient sexuality' and criticizes his blindness to the 'fun that is had with the knowledge and teaching of sexuality' (44). Goldhill does not justify these criticisms, and periodically overstates or misrepresents Foucault's position. For instance, when Foucault claims that the Hellenistic novels contain 'some of the themes that will subsequently characterize erotics' (*Care of the Self*, 228), he is suggesting an historical connection between the narratives and later erotics, but he comes nowhere near to adopting the repressive teleology that Goldhill attacks.

Thus, while *Foucault's Virginité* offers many examples of the complexities, humour and play of Hellenistic discourses on desire, Goldhill does not establish that his criticisms of Foucault are sound, and his work would have read better without the critique.

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**François Guery, ed.**

*Philosophie Politique: Revue Internationale de Philosophie Politique*. 6 *La nature*.

Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1995.

Pp. 192. Np.

This volume of *Philosophie Politique* deals with the political implications of humankind's presumed relationships with nature. Though little discussed in political contexts in the first part of this century, the concept of nature — of environment — has now become a central concern. Rather than attempt to arrive at a premature consensus concerning man, environment, and politics, the editor asserts, the contributions to this study represent the 'conflictual texture' of the current debate.

In spite of the editor's disclaimer, the basic import of this collection is anti-green. The tone is set at the beginning by the volcanologist Haroun Tazieff, whose basic assumption (besides the fact that environmentalists are not to be trusted) is that our environmental problems are not very serious. Pollution alone, he states, provides a challenge. Those cases of pollution which have been taken to be most global and most serious, however, do not exist. Fear of global warming has been created by a N.A.S.A. plot; unleaded gas has ended the threat of acid rain; the holes in the ozone layer are mere natural phenomena. Man thus can and should continue to use and profit from nature without despair.

Though the majority of the contributors do not accept all of Tazieff's conclusions, they do begin from similar assumptions. Chantal Delsol attempts to psychoanalyze environmentalism, arguing that its claim that nature should be preserved indefinitely amounts to little more than the refusal to admit that the human race can perish. Still, worse, in thus concentrating on nature, she urges, greens betray their refusal to consider what mankind might yet become. (Delsol also tells us that current efforts to institutionalize homosexuality merely evidence a death wish in contemporary society). Arguing similarly, Dominique Lecourt explores the nature-mystical roots of German National Socialism, concluding that Western political thought must stop looking for Absolutes either in science or in nature.

Janine Chanteur arrives at a similar conclusion. How can we possibly be urged, at the end of the twentieth century, to 'live according to nature'? It is not possible to return to Greek concepts of a natural order capable of edifying us or directing our behavior. As science now describes it, nature provides no basis for norms. Our business, Chanteur preaches, is to edify man, the only creature which can *resist* nature. François Guery makes virtually the same criticism. Nature can contain no basis for 'rights', which derive not from material or mechanical causes but from final causes: that is, from the human capacity to frame goals, possibilities. Beyond this, the most we can say is that nature creates our problematic (but not absurd) existence.

Essays by Alain Renaud and Jocelyn Benoist complete the attack. Because of his efforts to 'reintegrate man into nature' (and because of his presumed concomitant failure to do justice to human subjectivity) Claude Lévi-Strauss is subjected to a highly negative critique by Renaud, who manages to convict the structuralist anthropologist not only of failing to defend the Rights of Man but of tending (along with Martin Heidegger) towards both antihumanism and totalitarianism. Benoist's conclusions, if similar to those of the authors cited so far, manage a better balance. The Old Testament proclaims two great alliances, she states: the Noachian, which binds man to nature and to its creatures, and the Mosaic, which frees man from nature. With Noah (the non-just) we get neither justice nor transcendence; with Moses we get both.

Franck Tinland and Odile Marcel take a decidedly different tack. Our present impasse, Tinland states, stems from our discovery that the world on which we depend is fragile, that our technology may provoke negative and unacceptable effects. In the light of this realization, he states, we must begin

to replace our present politics of the management of resources to exploit with a politics which can manage our relations with planet Earth.

Though conceding the dangers of reactionary nature romanticism, Marcel notes that humankind's will to value nature is strong (as witnessed by its persistent reemergence in the history of the West). Perhaps the present trend towards 'neutralized' traditionalisms and regionalisms can lead to a new respect for cultural differences coupled with a new planetary universality. The ecological myth might become the vector for a new systems thinking and a matrix for a humanity finally conscious of its unity.

I would like to conclude this brief survey with three points. The first concerns the radically different positioning of environmentalism in North America (and probably also Great Britain) and on the European continent. West of the Atlantic (and perhaps also of Calais) environmentalists tend towards the political left, not the right, and are bitterly hated by right-wingers, from Rush Limbaugh to Anna Von Bramwell. Readers like myself, from *outré mer*, will thus find it very hard to take the political protests of most of the contributors to this volume at face value.

The second point concerns the conceptual infelicity of most of the contributors, who make no distinctions whatever between different sorts of environmentalism, (of which, one recalls, there must be dozens, from passive-conservative to activist-radical along one axis and from land-ethicist to indiscriminate-pantheist along another). In this volume all greens are lumped together: Earth First with the Audubon Society with the Hitler Jugend.

Finally, there is the matter of the philosophy of nature, a neglected field nowhere more neglected than in this volume, whose contributors seem unable to imagine any intermediate position between Democritean nature red in tooth and claw and nature blindly and worshipfully idealized. Such intermediate views exist, for example, in the process-relational philosophies of Henri Bergson, Alfred North Whitehead, and others. The point is not moot. Whitehead's *Process and Reality* has just been published in French translation.

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**Michael O. Hardimon**

*Hegel's Social Philosophy: The Project of Reconciliation.*

New York: Cambridge University Press 1994.

Pp. xiv + 265 (indexed).

US \$54.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-521-41852-6);

US \$17.95 (paper: ISBN 0-521-42914-5).

Michael O. Hardimon's *Hegel's Social Philosophy: The Project of Reconciliation* is divided into two parts. The first part, 'An Approach to Hegel's Project', provides an orientation and context to the project. In Chapter 1, 'The Problems of Hegel's Project', Hardimon discusses the initial difficulties in understanding Hegel's project of reconciliation. '*Geist* and the *Doppelsatz*', Chapter 2, presents Hegel's philosophical perspective by discussing his concept of *Geist* as well as his double claim that what is actual is rational and that what is rational is actual. Chapter 3, 'The Concept of Reconciliation', reconstructs Hegel's understanding of reconciliation (*Versöhnung*), distinguishes that concept from resignation and consolation, and discusses the relation between reconciliation and happiness.

The second part, 'The Project of Reconciliation', discusses Hegel's project. In 'The Anatomy of the Project', Chapter 4, Hardimon presents the essential elements of Hegel's project. Chapter 5, 'Individuality and Social Membership', finds Hardimon reconstructing Hegel's concepts of individuality and social membership. In 'The Family, Civil Society, and the States', Chapter 6, Hardimon discusses Hegel's account of those central social institutions and shows why Hegel believes that they merit reconciliation. Chapter 7, 'Divorce, War, and Poverty', consists of Hardimon's discussion of the problems such problems pose for Hegel's project and explains why Hegel nevertheless thinks that the modern social world can be a home. In his 'Conclusion', Hardimon urges that the primary significance of Hegel's social philosophy lies in its discussion of the relation of persons to their social world.

Hardimon argues that the project of Hegel's social philosophy is reconciliation (*Versöhnung*) — 'the process of overcoming alienation' (2). According to Hardimon, Hegel's project deserves attention for three reasons. First, Hardimon mentions cultural concerns: 'Our social world — the present-day social world of Europe and North America — is a world of alienation (*Entfremdung*)' (1). Second, scholarly issues: understanding that reconciliation is the 'main goal and central organizing category' (3) of Hegel's entire philosophy 'brings the opposing tendencies of his social thought — progressive *and* conservative, liberal *and* communitarian — into clearer view.' Hegel's project seeks to 'reconcile the conflicting political tendencies (toward criticism and quietism, revolution and accommodation) that, taken by themselves, lead in the directions of left and right Hegelianism'; Hegel engages in his project 'not as a left or right Hegelian, but instead as a *Hegelian*' (4). Third, philosophical interests: Hegel's project shows that reconciliation is an important philosophical topic. Believing that 'the most important philosophical lesson we can draw

from Hegel's social philosophy is that "Can I be reconciled to the social world?" is an important philosophical question,' Hardimon is 'far more concerned with showing that his question is philosophically interesting and important than in establishing the correctness or incorrectness of his answer' (7).

Hardimon believes that understanding Hegel's answer requires a philosophical reconstruction. Finding that 'Hegel's technical vocabulary is too obscure to be used without clarification and too foreign for those of us trained within the analytical tradition to ever take it over as our own,' Hardimon writes that his 'guiding principle has been to avoid using Hegel's technical vocabulary, to minimize reliance on his metaphysics, and to present his view in terms that we can understand' (8). By focusing only on Hegel's project of reconciling persons to the modern social world, but not the larger projects of reconciling persons and *Geist* to the world as a whole, Hardimon also reconstructs the structure of Hegel's discussion. Nevertheless, Hardimon emphasizes that he neither transforms Hegel into a contemporary, nor presents Hegel as providing answers to what now are regarded as philosophical questions. This reconstructed Hegel 'remains someone whose philosophical views and approach to philosophy are strikingly different from our own' (9). Hardimon's concern is to 'learn from Hegel what *he* took the philosophical questions to be and to reconstruct the answers that he gives in a form we can understand' (9).

At several points in the book, Hardimon fails to engage Hegel's critics. Hardimon claims that such postmodern critics as Lyotard, Foucault, and Derrida fail to comprehend that Hegel advocates a unity that 'preserves and embraces division, conflict, and otherness' (40). However, Hegel's postmodern critics do understand Hegel's concept of unity. Their objection is that, in Hegel's philosophy, one component of the society — the professional class of civil servants which Hegel refers to as 'the universal class' — speaks for and represents all of society. This objection complements Hardimon's own worry that Hegel's social philosophy is fundamentally hierarchical and so antirepublican (255). Again, responding to the worry that Hegel surreptitiously introduces parochial European values into his formulation of the human spirit, Hardimon writes that 'to show this one would have to establish that the specific values he stresses, such as the realization of individuality and social membership (not to mention freedom) are merely parochial European values' (132). This illegitimately shifts the burden of proof. Hegel's claim that certain values constitute *the* human spirit must be supported. Persons suspicious of that claim ought to explain why the arguments supporting it are not persuasive, but they should not be required to establish that Hegel's claim is false.

Despite the problems mentioned above, there is much to recommend this book. Hardimon's thesis that Hegel's social philosophy is one of reconciliation is argued convincingly, and he provides a clear introduction to Hegel's social philosophy. Hardimon also does a fine job presenting Hegel's concept of *Geist*, explicating the claim that what is rational is actual and that what is actual

is rational, as well as the explaining relation of the family, civil society, and the state. In addition, there is an insightful discussion of Hegel's ultimately unsuccessful attempts to resolve the problem of poverty. Hardimon's book is an important contribution to establishing the contemporary relevance of Hegel's social philosophy.

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**Dieter Henrich**

*The Unity of Reason: Essays on Kant's Philosophy*, trans. Jeffrey Edwards, Louis Hunt, Manfred Kuehn and Guenter Zoeller. Ed. with Introduction by Richard L. Velkley. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1994. Pp. iv + 249. US \$45.00. ISBN 0-674-92905-5.

This is an excellent book in which we are provided new insights into Henrich's extensive scholarly work. The essays translated here were originally published between 1955 and 1976, but are still very helpful in the areas they cover. Unfortunately, the insights attained can only be briefly mentioned, but not appropriately discussed.

The first essay, 'On the Unity of Subjectivity' (1955), reminds us of the importance for Kant scholarship of Heidegger's error in trying to find within the human subject both the ground of perceived data and the ground of synthetic intelligence. In doing this, Henrich shows us precisely how this error occurred, and provides the necessary historical background to permit a clear recognition of the nature of the error. He also helps us to recognize that Heidegger's interpretation of Kant is 'secretly a counterproposal to Hegel's Kant-interpretation and that of speculative Idealism in general' (18). These are still important insights for the current scholar to keep in mind.

The second essay ('The Concept of Moral Insight and Kant's Doctrine of the Fact of Reason' [1960]) deals with the evolution of Kant's moral theory. Henrich points out that there is evidence of Kant's discovery of the formula of the categorical imperative as early as 1765, and also reason to believe that he was attempting to deduce moral insight from theoretical reason in the early 1770s. A thorough discussion of this attempted deduction is provided, showing that it is in the failure of this attempt that Kant actually found the essential principle of his moral doctrine: that morality is the sole fact of reason. 'In it we experience rational universality as a demand on the self that possesses [such] insight' (83). Respect for the moral law is found to be a very

late development in Kant's thought (84). Interesting parallels are drawn between Kant and Plato, for whom it is not enough that the individual should seek rational understanding; it must also be moral understanding (86).

'Ethics of Autonomy' (1963) is the third essay, in which Henrich provides an interesting survey of various Idealist perspectives on autonomy, together with the consequent critiques of Kantian ethics. There are important insights here, as well, such as the analysis provided of the possible relations between inclination and duty within the framework of autonomy (115ff.). But the survey is actually too brief to convey the intended significance of the criticism offered. The result is to raise difficulties without resolving them.

The final essay is the most interesting from the epistemological standpoint: 'Identity and Objectivity: An Inquiry into Kant's Transcendental Deduction' (1976). This is the longest of the essays (123-208), and it offers Henrich's appreciation for the English-language contributions to the interpretation of Kant's work; but this is combined with an explicit recognition that most ordinary language critiques would necessarily be lacking in certain essential requirements for the task. This is true because Kant was grappling with a complex set of problems which confronted him, but of which we know almost nothing: 'the conceptual configurations of an epoch of philosophy that has been assigned to oblivion by his work' (128). Moreover, for the most part, English-speaking authors 'do not have Kant's language at their command, and they are able to survey only a small portion of the thousands of pages of Kant's publications, manuscripts and notes' (*ibid.*). Therefore, Henrich provides a survey of the early series of false leads which were gradually discarded by Kant, and which ultimately brought him to his mature view. The results are very helpful, but at times are also somewhat misleading.

Henrich is obviously much taken with the analytic method, and descriptive metaphysics in particular. He provides an excellent detailed account of the role of underlying logical assumptions (especially in the subject-predicate judgment form) in structuring experience in conformity with the requirements of Kant's transcendental deduction. His intention is to show that, while Kant is essentially correct in the conclusions which he draws, the premises which would justify those conclusions are often either assumed or inadequately displayed as the argument progresses. Once again the insights provided are both helpful and important, but the reader familiar with this material will be troubled by two significant omissions. While the analytic framework of contemporary philosophy provides an excellent means by which to examine these issues, it seems very strange to ignore Kant's own framework, e.g., the analysis of the subject-predicate relation which had been offered by Leibniz (at the linguistic, the logical, and the metaphysical levels) as a basis for displaying the essential nature of the individual object as well as the individual subject of consciousness (the apperceptive monad). Leibniz is mentioned in several contexts, of course. But it is important to recognize the difference — and the difference in significance — between the dogmatic approach of Leibniz and the transcendental account provided by Kant. Thus the real interest in Kant's focus on the 'object' as the subject of a judgmental synthesis is the transition

away from Leibniz and Wolff, who emphasized substance (i.e., the object as a metaphysical subject), or statement (i.e., the object as logical subject). For Kant, the object is rather the referent of a concept, which is a product of the synthetic unity of consciousness achieved precisely through such judgment. A proper appreciation of this point would require a more detailed analysis of the work of his predecessors.

Secondly, it is curious to note the lack of emphasis on necessity as the essential ingredient in the structure of Kant's argument. Reference is made constantly to necessity throughout the discussion; but not in the required sense. The emphasis is always on the necessity of synthesis in its various forms, rather than on the achievement of a necessary synthesis. This is essential as the argument progresses, beginning with the organization of appearances into the necessary configuration of properties which *is* an object, and ending with the necessary synthetic unity which *is* experience in Kant's technical sense. Only this characterization of Kant's project will preserve the unique blend of empirical and logical elements that together display the significance of 'transcendental' logic.

Nonetheless Henrich provides a rich and fruitful consideration of important aspects of Kant's work, and this volume will be extremely useful to students and commentators alike. For readers not already aware of the important contribution of Henrich, both to philosophic discussion within Germany and then to North American thought, Velkely has provided a brief but informative summary of its general design and intentions. His work is clearly to be admired and appreciated; the reader will look forward to more of it.

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**Joshua Hoffman and Gary S. Rosenkrantz**

*Substance Among Other Categories.*

New York: Cambridge University Press 1994.

Pp. 198.

US \$54.95. ISBN 0-521-46101-4.

Contrary to what its title might suggest, this is a far ranging work in which Hoffman and Rosenkrantz ('HR' hereafter) address a great many metaphysical issues. At the outset, HR present a hierarchy of ontological categories and develop an intuitive notion of substance. The authors then consider and reject a number of prominent historical attempts to analyze substancehood. There is an extended treatment of 'collectionist' and 'sequential' theories of substance, none of which wins HR approval. Genuine collections can only have

concrete entities as parts. Since properties are not concrete entities, there cannot be a collection of properties; accordingly a substantial thing cannot be identified with any such collection. HR next present a 'new version' of the traditional proposal that substancehood is properly understood as a matter of independence. In the concluding sections of the book, attention is focused upon standard arguments for dismissing the possibility of immaterial substances (spirits or souls), the distinction between abstract and concrete things, and an Aristotelean account of space and time.

It is argued that the (level A) category 'Entity' is much more inclusive than 'Substance' and that things (entities) falling under the latter category possess a type of independence which no other type of entity possesses (96). Entities are either (level B categories) Abstract or Concrete, and instantiators of the (level C) category Substance fall into the latter category (18). Intuitively this disqualifies the number 3 from being a substance. But is 3 really (as HR would judge) not a concrete entity? It is presumably true that 3 lacks a spatial location. However if that is sufficient for nonconcreteness (and so nonsubstancehood), it seems that souls fail to be concrete. The category Concrete subsumes the category Substance, which means that it is necessary that any substance is concrete (17). So souls are not substances on the assumption that lacking a spatial location disqualifies things from concreteness.

HR remain officially neutral as to whether souls actually exist, maintaining only that such things are possible. It is argued that bodies are 'no better off' than souls with respect to principles of individuation and persistence, that the concept of a soul is no less intelligible than that of a body, and that standard arguments opposing the possibility of dualistic interaction fail. Whatever we think of this, we may wonder whether existing souls would be instantiators of Concrete. If souls are (in worlds where such things exist) *concreta*, why shouldn't positive integers be *concreta* as well? Indeed, what can be said against the view that integers are substances? Briefly stated, the HR reply would appear to go as follows: 3 is a substance only on the condition that it is possible for 3 to be the sole instantiator of Substance. However this is not possible, since (i) it is impossible for 3 to be the only position integer, and (ii) integers other than 3 have no less claim to being instantiators of Substance than does 3 (see especially 94-9). Since 3 is not a substantial thing, arguments from the substantiality of 3 to the concreteness of 3 fail.

Let's return to immaterial spirits. Suppose that there were a divine spirit (God) who is a necessary being. Assuming that HR are right in judging that spirits are substances, there is at least one necessary spiritual substance. Spirits other than God then do not qualify as substances, since it is not possible that they exist as the sole instantiators of Substance. This is (to my mind) counter intuitive, as is the proposal that tables and trees do not qualify as substances in the event that God (a certain spiritual substance) necessarily exists. The tree outside my study window is a substantial thing whether or not God is a necessary being (and so a necessary instantiator of Substance). Thus we should reject the HR analysis of substance (96).

There are other potential worries. HR profess to be intent upon elucidating the ordinary (or folk, if you will) concept of substance. But we may doubt that non-philosophers generally have even a remote grasp of the highly refined and subtle HR analysis of substance. Indeed, a case can be made for judging that the folk conception of tables and trees is radically different from the HR conception of such things. For one thing, HR material substances turn out to be much smaller than folk objects (108-9, note 28). The size of an HR tree (say) is the sum of the sizes of its discrete proper parts; since the sum of the particles that make up a tree is 'smaller by many orders of magnitude' than the size of the corresponding folk tree, the latter is arguably a fiction (there being, on the HR assessment of the matter, no substantial thing having the attributes the folk tree is said to have). But if material folk objects do not really exist, the folk conception of (material) substance appears to be quite distinct from the HR conception of substance. We are, in short, left with a 'revisionist' and not (as advertised) a 'descriptive' metaphysic. Perhaps we shouldn't make too much of this. HR's closely reasoned work deserves and rewards close study.

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**Robert Kane**

*Through the Moral Maze: Searching for  
Absolute Values in a Pluralistic World.*

New York: Paragon House 1994. Pp. x + 249.

US \$27.95. ISBN 1-55778-601-1.

In a pluralistic society of competing views of what is right and good there exists a pervasive temptation to embrace ethical relativism. How, in the midst of cultural diversity and competing conceptual frameworks, is it possible to transcend our limited viewpoints to arrive at objective moral judgements? Indeed, does it make any sense to think there could be such a thing as an objectively true moral judgement?

Robert Kane attempts not only to defend the concept of objective value, but to provide a method whereby we can reach agreement on what is objectively valuable. His strategy is to embrace pluralism and an initial uncertainty concerning moral views, but to deny that this embrace will give birth to relativism. Utilizing what he calls the Ends Principle, "Treat every person in every situation as an end and never as a means to your or someone else's ends", he suggests that we initially be open to any and all ethical views.

When, however, we do this we find that this initial openness cannot be maintained, since some ethical views will not be consistent with the Ends Principle.

The Ends Principle is essentially a version of Kant's Categorical Imperative and, like the Categorical Imperative, grounds ethics in the dignity and worth of the human person. Employing this Principle allows us to be open to a diversity of tradition and practice, but we are not led into relativism, inasmuch as the Principle forbids accepting any tradition or practice which prevents human flourishing or impedes our quest to live objectively worthy lives.

Although the Ends Principle forbids accepting ethical relativism, it is consistent with there existing diverse views as to what constitutes human flourishing or living an objectively worthy life. This raises the question of what one owes to those with whom one disagrees on central issues of human conduct and leads Kane to explore the distinction between public and private morality. He argues that, problematic though it may sometimes prove, such a distinction is necessary in a pluralistic society in which we acknowledge a diversity of views, yet respect the worth and dignity of the individual. In the sphere of public morality the Ends Principle forbids us to interfere with the freedom of others to order their lives as they please, except insofar as their doing so illegitimately constrains the ability of other members of society to order their lives as they please.

Pluralism also raises problems for democracy. The loss of shared values, the increasing power of special interest groups, the temptation of democratic leaders to focus on short-term goals at the expense of the long-term needs of society, and the tendency to focus on superficial as opposed to substantive issues are acute problems. Kane's strategy is to admit with Churchill that democracy is the worst form of government except for all the others, and then go on to suggest ways in which these problems can be addressed. He is especially sympathetic to the idea of citizen juries who can take the time to be informed on complex issues and have enough power to hold elected officials accountable.

Traditionally, ethics has had a close association with religious belief and the concept of a spiritual centre. Kane, while respectful of this association, argues that it faces two major challenges in the forms of the growing secularization of society and an increasing number of religious traditions within society. He does not see these challenges as insurmountable, suggesting that we may choose to believe in ultimate worth without sacrificing scientific integrity and that, although no religion can claim to be the only true fulfilment of the religious quest, it may prove possible to reconcile the apparently contradictory claims of competing religions without lapsing into relativism.

He goes on to discuss the hotly debated issues of environment, gender and culture, albeit very briefly. Regarding the environment, he suggests that we must acknowledge our obligations to the ecosystem of the earth, not simply to other humans, and that ecological awareness cannot fail to affect ethics,

inasmuch as it forces us to admit that our private actions typically have far more harmful effects than we previously believed. Regarding recent feminist critiques of moral theory and moral epistemology, he suggests that we need to integrate an ethics of justice and an ethics of care. Regarding culture, he suggests that multiculturalism necessitates not the abandonment of Western academic tradition, but a greater openness to diversity in the human quest of determining what has objective worth.

In his final chapter, Kane addresses the issue of moral education. He suggests that, although children have natural tendencies toward moral behaviour, their ethical development can easily be thwarted. Institutions such as churches and schools have an important role to play, but the central role is that of the family. It provides, in his view, not only early moral training, but, when it is functioning properly, the deep experiences of caring and being cared for upon which later moral reflection and training must build.

It is difficult in a short review to be responsible in either praise or criticism. *Through the Moral Maze* has many strengths, not least of which is Kane's clear and graceful writing. His erudition is impressive; his arguments carefully structured and easy to follow. There are, however, weaknesses. Perhaps chief of these is an undue optimism. An example of this occurs in his discussion of the plurality of religious traditions. It is one thing to suggest that we take seriously St. Paul's claim that we see through a glass darkly; it is quite another to suggest that basic, apparently contradictory, doctrines of competing religions will in the future be reconciled.

Another weakness is Kane's failure to apply his strategy in ethics to metaphysical and epistemological questions. If a plurality of views does not imply scepticism or relativism in ethics, why think that it does in metaphysics or epistemology. Yet, in his discussion of abortion, after admitting that if personhood begins at conception public morality would rule out abortion, he recommends that on questions where consensus cannot be reached decisions should be left to individual conscience. This ignores the fact that there may exist many non-rational reasons why consensus cannot be reached. Prior to the American Civil War it was impossible to reach a consensus on whether keeping slaves was morally permissible, yet it would have been a mistake to argue on that basis that the matter of keeping slaves should be left to individual conscience or that both advocates and opponents of slavery were equally rational in their arguments. I suspect that in the long run Kane's defence of objectivity in ethics will involve a defense of objectivity in metaphysics and epistemology. The question becomes, I suspect, what view of reality and human knowledge is presupposed by the view of the person implicit in the Ends Principle.

**Robert Larmer**

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**Richard R. La Croix**

*What is God? Selected essays.*

Ed. Kenneth G. Lucey.

Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books 1993. Pp. 200.

US \$35.95. ISBN 0-87975-739-6.

Aside from a book-length study of Anselm's ontological argument, Richard La Croix has made his contribution to analytic philosophy of religion in the form of short articles, frequently containing trenchant criticisms of the work of other philosophers, or of traditional doctrines concerning the nature of God. Eighteen such pieces — virtually his entire published output — are brought together in this anthology, together with three hitherto unpublished essays written in 1989-90 or shortly before. All exhibit the philosophical style for which La Croix has become known: wide-ranging, highly critical, unfailingly clear, and painstaking to the point of being sometimes needlessly repetitious.

The first of the three new essays, 'Divine Omniprescience: Can an Effect Precede Its Cause?', revives the vivid and amusing example La Croix had used previously to illustrate the consequences of supposing that God has complete foreknowledge of the future. La Croix pictured the Deity assembling a cast of angels to stage a heavenly sneak preview of *Hamlet* prior to 1600, or *Pygmalion* prior to 1912, the date of its composition by George Bernard Shaw. In an earlier article, published in 1979 and searchingly criticized by Donald Gregory (*Religious Studies* 18 [1982] 77-80), La Croix had drawn the conclusion that authors are not truly creative, i.e., do not actually bring literary works into existence. The new essay contains the more plausible and interesting claim that the pre-existence of *Pygmalion* in the mind of God simply entails that some effects precede their causes — a natural conclusion for anyone who takes seriously the idea of precognition, whether human or divine.

The new essay entitled 'Metatheism' is described in the editor's introduction as the expression of La Croix's attempt 'to characterize his own unique position to stand alongside the traditional positions of the theist, the atheist, and the agnostic' (13). After such an advance billing, the essay is a disappointment. Metatheism is discovered to be the detached pursuit of the meaning of the sentence 'God exists,' as uttered by theists and presumed to be meaningful. The central question for metatheists is the one which gives the book its title: What is God? The metatheistic enterprise, however, is neither as radical as the anti-theistic critique of the logical positivists, nor as novel and distinctive as the editor's blurb would lead us to expect. La Croix, in his search for clearer understanding of the intension of the term 'God' — i.e., of the divine attributes — is carrying on an intellectual tradition which was an established feature of Christian apologetics by the third century AD.

The third of the new essays offers a critique of the theodicy found in St. Augustine's treatise *On Rebuke and Grace*. La Croix has two objections to Augustine's theodicy. The first echoes the familiar claim that the very idea of

free will ensnares us in an infinite regress, entailing that an agent must perform an infinite number of acts of will, and willing to will, etc., in order to get anything done. According to La Croix, Augustine somehow gets trapped in the vicious regress as a result of his supposition that Adam would have needed God's help in order to make the choice to remain in God's grace. The second objection is that, because of his account of divine grace, Augustine's theodicy is vulnerable to the objection, typically advanced by soft determinists, that God could have created finite free agents who would never will to do evil. The first of these objections is surprising, implausible, and not supported by any cogent arguments: the second is plausible, well argued, and unsurprising.

Space will not permit me to comment on each of the eighteen previously published articles. Most have received critical notice in the journals, and the anthology contains a helpful bibliography which will direct the reader to the relevant sources. But the bibliography alone cannot compensate for the inherent weakness in a volume made up of a single person's work, particularly when the author is one who engaged in as many scholarly controversies as La Croix. Reading *What is God?* is like overhearing one side of a telephone conversation: one regrets not having the opportunity to turn, without further ado, to the remarks and rejoinders of the other participants in the debate.

The debate, of which we get just La Croix's side, touches on issues old and new concerning the divine attributes and the problem of evil. Seven of the essays contain interpretation and criticism of 'classic' works by Anselm, Augustine, Aquinas and Descartes. The four devoted to the problem of how to define omnipotence represent the largest group on a single topic. There is a peculiar oddity about reading this particular group of articles in the mid-1990s, because it seems that La Croix and his interlocutors, writing in the late 1970s, were exercising themselves over a problem which had in fact been solved by James Cargile in a 1967 article (*Nous* 1, 201-5) which La Croix and the rest were citing in their footnotes. The crux of Cargile's solution is to take account of the multiple describability of actions, and to define an omnipotent agent as one who is able to perform any logically compossible set of actions, without requiring that the agent be able to perform any given action under any logically consistent description. Had La Croix and his contemporaries appreciated Cargile's accomplishment, it is unlikely that the four articles reprinted here, and some half-dozen others by other authors, would ever have been written.

There is a more general reason why a reader will gain few new philosophical insights from this book: it is the work of a philosopher who excels at the negative. The most common conclusion of a La Croix article is that some other philosopher's position, or some widely shared set of beliefs, is untenable. One is reminded of the frustration one felt reading some of the early dialogues of Plato, in which Socrates shoots down other people's cherished beliefs and plausible hypotheses, but no positive results are established. It is a relief to arrive at the article entitled 'Descartes on God's Ability to Do the Logically Impossible', in which it is Frankfurt's interpretation of Descartes that is shot down, and Descartes himself is vindicated.

In some of the scholarly exchanges represented in these pages, La Croix eventually had the last word, and apparently succeeded in refuting the position he had been attacking. In other cases this is not so. But when one reads only La Croix's own articles, one cannot tell which cases are which. The result is a volume which will be of great value to those who wish to survey the career of Richard La Croix as such, but much less useful to readers whose chief interest is in the philosophical issues that La Croix himself cared about.

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**Cynthia Macdonald and  
Graham Macdonald, eds.**

*Philosophy of Psychology:  
Debates on Psychological Explanation.*

Boston: Basil Blackwell Ltd 1995.

Pp. xv + 495.

US \$74.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-631-18541-0);

US \$24.95 (paper: ISBN 0-631-18542-9).

This is an excellent reader. A lot of fine upper-level undergraduate and a good few graduate-level classes will be built around a close study of the papers in this collection. The collection includes well-known recent standards that any student in the area should master plus newly commissioned pieces. The book is divided into three parts and each part into two sections. Each section of the book comprises an introduction by one or both of the Macdonalds followed by reprints of two major recent papers, one paper 'for', the second 'anti' the position at issue. The section closes with a reply by the first author specially written for the collection. This makes the collection valuable not only for a fine selection of important recent work, but also for containing the latest thoughts of a number of key players in the field.

Part I of the book deals with the autonomy of the intentional, the two sections covering the autonomy of intentional causation and the autonomy of intentional explanation. The first has Block's 'Can The Mind Change The World?', a piece by the Macdonalds and a reply by Block. The second section has Dretske's 'Does Meaning Matter?' followed by Kim's 'Explanatory Exclusion and the Problem of Mental Causation' — Dretske gets the reply. Part II deals with the taxonomy of intentional states. The first section covers the individualist versus anti-individualist debate: Burge's 'Individualism and Psychology' plus Fodor's 'A Modal Argument for Narrow Content' with a reply

by Burge. The second section covers biopsychology with a composite piece by Millikan based primarily on her 'Biosemantics', a piece by Peacocke selected from *A Study of Concepts* and a reply by Millikan. In Part III the focus turns to psychological states that are not accessible to consciousness. The first section deals with tacit knowledge — Davies, 'Tacit Knowledge and Subdoxastic States'; Searle, 'Consciousness, Explanatory Inversion and Cognitive Science' and reply by Davies. The final section covers psychoanalytic explanation with papers by Hopkins, 'Introduction to *Philosophical Essays on Freud*' and Johnston, 'Self-Deception and the Nature of Mind'.

Throughout the collection, the introductions by the Macdonalds are well-written with substantial bibliographies. The Macdonalds pull no punches, however, and the introductions provide not only accurate summaries of the area surveyed but a close engagement with the issues. Cynthia Macdonald's introduction to the section on individualism is a case in point. It is plainly written and sets up the twin earth thought-experiments clearly and concisely. However, it rapidly piles on layers of qualifications that have accumulated in the debate. The speed with which she gets to discussing Fodor's counterfactual 'cross-context' test for sameness and differences of causal powers will leave some students bemused if they are expecting no more than a long-distance sketch map of the territory. Students should approach the introductions with almost as much care as they approach the papers. Macdonald uses the introduction to give her account of how the debate should resolve. She concludes (167) that the Burge/Fodor debate 'appears to be a complete stalemate, with each side begging the question ... against the other.' There is a danger that the astute student who has followed her introduction in detail will, on reading this, decide to skip the Burge/Fodor debate and research something more susceptible of resolution. Although I sympathise with Macdonald's view that the debate appears stalemated, I do think that as long as the participants agree on a taxonomy of intentional states by causal powers, the onus of proof will always lie on those who oppose Fodor's individualism.

The way Macdonald sets up the debate in her introduction leads nicely into the next section on biopsychology, for she observes, rightly, that a stronger case for anti-individualism will be supported if the taxonomy shifts from causal powers to biological function. As long as a distinction can be maintained between these approaches to psychological taxonomy, the anti-individualist biological function approach may supply the leverage required to press the debate forward.

But the slickness of the architectonic of Macdonald's introduction means that the student is led too swiftly from one debate to the other. This misses another angle on the individualist/anti-individualist debate. This is provided by the more radical kinds of externalism and anti-individualism that are becoming available in recent neo-Fregean theory of content. There is a brief reference (169) to the Pettit & McDowell (1986) collection that touches on such forms of externalism, but nothing more. This is a pity, for the more radical forms of anti-individualism may yet come to dominate developments

in this area. Furthermore, they provide forms of externalism which, as Pettit has suggested, sit better with a teleological model of psychological explanation than a causal model of explanation.

The section on biopsychology provides the only forum in which the neo-Fregean approach to the philosophy of psychology gets an airing, but one cannot grumble with the choice of Peacocke to represent the position. This is an important section of the collection, for it addresses head on an issue that runs throughout most of the collection — the issue of how to square the pre-theoretical notions of content individuation and psychological explanation embedded in our ordinary rationalising explanations of behaviour and our best scientific models of explanation. Anyone who has spent some time in Oxford during the past couple of decades will be familiar with the, to some minds, almost blasé disregard for reductionist aspirations that typifies neo-Fregean efforts to log the structure of our intentionality. Whilst most workers in the field work bottom-up from a favoured model of scientific explanation — Fodor and causal powers, Millikan and biological function — philosophers like Peacocke work top-down. For Peacocke, the first task is to plot the rationally constrained geography of intentionality and the modes of explanation it supports. For Peacocke, content individuation is constituted by the canonical commitments of a concept and, as he argues, it must be questionable whether any naturalistic account, even from a biological perspective, will capture the correct canonical commitments. In particular, what he calls the problem of reduced content is: 'how is the teleological theorist to block an incorrect assignment of content to beliefs, namely one that requires for its truth merely the truth of all the logical consequences of *p* that have a causal impact on the thinker, rather than the stronger condition of the truth of *p* itself?' (281). Millikan's response deserves detailed consideration. Two brief points here: (i) Her claim (289) that Peacocke's objection is directed at too narrow a target, an account of how particular representations function, is fair. Millikan's concern is with mechanisms that systematically underlie the production of large numbers of beliefs. The causal impact between environment and thinker is an impact on such a mechanism, it is not an impact describable belief by belief. (ii) Does Millikan's notion of normal function already presuppose the normative notion of content individuation Peacocke and others start with? If not, it must still be an issue whether a selectionist history of the development of a belief producing mechanism will underdetermine the pre-theoretic notion of content Peacocke wants to preserve. The point is a general one that any teleological account must answer. The notion of 'normal function' characterises a response of an organism to the environment that has been selected in virtue of its survival value in causal impacts with the environment. If a normal function is susceptible to reduction by an account of the causal micro structure that underpins its operation, then it is unclear that the concept of normal function adds anything to the more familiar causal powers taxonomy of intentional states. If the normal function is not reducible in terms of the causal micro structure, the taxonomy of intentional states that it produces will be autonomous with

respect to causal powers. Having accepted that degree of autonomy, the worry for the teleologist will be that the 'normal' of 'normal function' only gets content right when it appeals to the very pre-theoretical rationalising taxonomy that the neo-Fregean employs.

Collections in this field are more susceptible than most to built-in obsolescence. Buy this collection now and run invigorating classes with it before it goes out of date. But watch out for some sloppy copy-editing. There are far too many typographical errors and Millikan's page references to Peacocke's piece are all to page 000!

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**Nicolas Malebranche**

*Treatise on Ethics* (1684). Translation with introduction by Craig Walton.

Norwell, MA: Kluwer Academic Publishers  
1993.

US \$106.50. ISBN 0-7923-1763-7.

In the past three decades, there has been an explosion of Malebranche scholarship in the English-speaking world that shows no sign of abatement. In 1980 Lennon and Olscamp led the charge with their translation of his *Search After Truth* (1674-75) [Malebranche, Nicolas, *The Search After Truth, with Elucidations*, translation of 1712 edition by T.M. Lennon and P.J. Olscamp, with philosophical commentary by T.M. Lennon, (Columbus: Ohio State University Press 1980)], and Doney published a translation of his *Dialogues on Metaphysics* (1688) [*Dialogues on Metaphysics*, translated by W. Doney, (New York: Abaris Books 1980)] which appears alongside the French text. Nadler followed with *Philosophical Selections* which organizes thematically a range of selected Malebranche texts [*Philosophical Selections*, edited by S. Nadler (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co. 1992)], and Riley published a translation and commentary of *Treatise on Nature and Grace* (1680) [*Treatise on Nature and Grace*, translated with an introduction and notes by P. Riley (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1992)]. English-speaking philosophers are, in effect, rediscovering what philosophers in the seventeenth century knew: that the French Oratorian and Cartesian philosopher, Nicolas Malebranche, was and is an intellectual force to be reckoned with.

Now, with the long overdue appearance of a translation of Malebranche's *Treatise on Ethics* (1683), Walton has provided English-speaking scholars

with access to an important work in the Malebranche corpus. This new addition makes available in English the last link — Malebranche's ethical thought — in one of the most systematic and rich philosophical systems to have emerged from France.

Walton has produced a very readable and generally good translation. Unfortunately, the text is marred by editing errors, where obvious repetitions or omissions of words and sometimes sentences break the otherwise good flow of the work. The first of such errors occurs on the second page of the translation in section VI where a phrase from the first sentence is imported nonsensically into the next sentence. Yet, these errors can be forgiven since in addition to an otherwise good translation, Walton offers his readers an informative introduction to Malebranche's ethical thought. Walton makes a convincing case for the importance of studying Malebranche's ethics after some two hundred years of virtual neglect.

The reader will find many interesting discussions in the *Treatise on Ethics*. Malebranche's ethics is an unusual blend of elements from the study of virtue in the Aristotelian tradition (see Part One of *Treatise*) and elements from the study of duty in the Christian tradition (see Part Two of *Treatise*). He conceived ethics as a science such that the attainment of happiness requires that we study and live in accordance with the laws of two orders: nature and grace. The order of nature governs the movements of the body and the order of grace governs the thoughts and volitions of the mind; since man is a union of mind and body, we must understand both orders so that we can obey them to achieve moral excellence and hence happiness.

In Part One, Malebranche argues that given that man is a union of mind and body, there are two sources for human action: the natural light (Reason) and feeling [*le sentiment*]. (Walton translates the term *sentiment* as *feeling*, and *sentimen intérieur* as *inner feeling*. In the context of the *Treatise on Ethics*, this choice of translation generally works well. However, the reader should beware that Malebranche often uses *sentimens* synonymously with *feelings* or *sensations*, and sometimes not, and hence it is sometimes best to use the transliteration *sentiment* until the context is established.) 'Habits' are formed over time from the repeated union of particular thoughts or volitions with particular feelings. The first and primary practical habit we ought to develop is 'strength of mind', a feat which is achieved by focusing the mind to attend to one thing (say, respect for another) rather than another thing (say, the pleasure of the moment).

In Part Two of the *Treatise*, Malebranche offers his account of the role of social duties in our lives which he thinks are decidable only through a thorough analysis of the particular action under question in relation to the principles of respect, esteem, and friendliness. His account here is notable for his attempt to generate principles of ethics which operate contextually, not by means of general rules.

Walton doesn't say much about the Cartesian context of Malebranche's ethics, which on first blush seems right given Descartes's own meagre treatment of ethics. However, it was Descartes's *Treatise on Man* (1664) that

inspired Malebranche to a study of philosophy that lasted more than fifty years. It is likely that it was the French edition that Malebranche read, and Clerselier had appended Descartes's unfinished *Description of the Human Body*, which begins, 'There is no more fruitful exercise than attempting to know ourselves. The benefits we may expect from such knowledge not only relate to ethics, as many would initially suppose, but also have a special importance for medicine.' (Descartes, René, *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, translated by J. Cottingham, R. Stoothoff, & D. Murdoch [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985], volume I, 314). In this light, Malebranche can be seen as undertaking the very project that Descartes had only begun in these works and in the *Passions of the Soul* (1649), namely a science of ethics.

An even stronger philosophical connection between Malebranche's ethical system and Descartes's philosophy can be found in Malebranche's theory of habits. In *Treatise of Man*, Descartes describes the Man-machine and the mechanics of the external senses and the internal sentiments [*les sentiments intérieurs*] (such as hunger, thirst, joy, and sadness). In Malebranche's *Treatise on Ethics* (1684) he not only refers to man as a machine with respect to the workings of the body and its relation to the soul, but also he develops a theory of moral sentiments based on the concept of *les sentiments intérieurs*, a term which is to be found in Descartes's *Treatise on Man* (see *Oeuvres de Descartes*, edited by Ch. Adam and P. Tanner [revised edition, Paris: Vrin/C.N.R.S. 1964-76], Volume 11, 163-7). According to Malebranche, internal sentiments are essential components (along with the motions of the bodily spirits and the thoughts and volitions of the mind) in the formation of moral 'habits'. Malebranche's development of a theory of moral sentiments and habits invites a re-reading of Descartes's texts concerning the passions and internal sentiments as much as it invites a forward look to Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, Hume, and Adam Smith.

In *Treatise on Ethics*, Malebranche offers us a full-blown ethical system in which he portrays ethics as a science built on first principles (not general rules) and in which he argues for an experimentally-based approach to deciding which actions are the morally right ones to take. Anyone serious about ethics, the history of ethics, and/or Malebranche's philosophy generally, should read this book. Walton has provided the English-speaking world with an important translation of a masterpiece in ethical thought.

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**Mary Midgley**

*Beast and Man: the Roots of Human Nature.*

Revised Edition.

New York: Routledge 1995. Pp. 400.

US \$17.95. ISBN 0-415-10445-9.

Mary Midgley published the original version of *Beast and Man* sixteen years ago. In the Introduction which is the only real distinguishing feature of the revised edition, she supports issuing it because her salutary advice to biology, psychology and the social sciences has gone unheard, with desperate consequences for political life in the West. While she is surely right to claim that 'biological Thatcherism' — the neo-conservative descendant of social Darwinism — continues to hold sway, it is difficult to agree that the major causes of corporate hegemony include the popularity of sociobiology (her prime antagonist in this book), and therefore that the book had any chance of counteracting them. It is, nevertheless, in the quieter terms of academic inquiry, a success.

*Beast and Man* is a punchy, insightful, essentially Wittgensteinian examination of the notion of human nature and its role in ethics and psychology. According to Midgley, humans are rather more like other animals than we have hitherto allowed ourselves to believe. The evidence involves a series of reminders of how primitive we are and of how sophisticated animals are. Central to the understanding of both terms in this assimilation are the notions of nature, instinct and purpose. To accommodate it, science must prefer the methods of ethology and comparative psychology to those of neurobiology, physiology, behavioural zoology and sociobiology. Eschew quantification, restrict mechanism to its proper limits, embrace functionalism and one will understand the behavioural and psychological characteristics we share with other animals. Furthermore, since it makes crucial reference to language, rationality and culture, wrongly thought to be exclusively distinctive of humans, it is this ethological understanding which alone can inform ethics.

Midgley's digressive style is annoying when her otherwise methodologically sound tracing of the conceptual map gives way to unjustified asides: thus Aristotle is called an Egoist without any hint that his altruistically-loaded concept of *eudaimonia* makes this at least controversial; Wittgenstein is upbraided as animalically incorrect for using an example in which someone says 'You're behaving like a beast ...' without any admission that an author is distinct from his or her characters. It sometimes appears that Midgley has not learned her own lessons: despite a sophisticated dispositional account of motivation, a robin is said to twitter territorially on account of its current *feeling*; morality is described as a brake upon instinct, despite an account of instincts which is broad enough to include moral sentiments; although Midgley argues that explanations at different levels may be compatible, she repeatedly dismisses evolutionary explanations of behaviour because they cannot be applied literally at the level of individual motivation.

However, these flaws do not obliterate the overall strengths of the book. The case is fundamentally compelling, the refutation of the worst pretensions of sociobiology is, interestingly, both charitable and devastating, and the redrawing of our outdated pictures of the conceptual landscape is insightful and thorough. It won't precipitate the great social revolution; it will contribute to a better way of understanding animals of all kinds.

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**Sergio Moravia**

*The Enigma of the Mind: The Mind-Body  
Problem in Contemporary Thought.*

Trans. Scott Staton.

New York: Cambridge University Press 1995.

Pp. xii + 319.

US \$54.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-521-40550-5);

US \$18.95 (paper: ISBN 0-521-40557-2).

This is an English translation of a work appearing in Italian in 1986. It is a survey of issues and views in the philosophy of mind appearing as a result of the publication of the seminal works of Feigl, Smart, and Armstrong developing the identity theory. Moravia's principal intent is to expose the errors of both this theory and of the eliminativist and functionalist theories that followed as variants of contemporary materialism. The first six chapters are an outline of the original theory and its variants accompanied by a critical commentary. The criticism seems to be motivated by moral disapproval as well as theoretical reasons, for Moravia hints at sinister political implications of materialism as a tool of social manipulation. David Armstrong is singled out for 'making the boldest move possible in order to bring the whole human being within the sphere of what is predictable, controllable, and governable,' and thus trying 'to achieve what could be called the scientific suppression of human freedom *a parte subjecti*' (103). The last four chapters develop an alternative conception of the mental that regards what we call 'the mind' as a 'metaphoric construct bearing meanings produced by the subject who utters [the phrase "the mental"], and largely independent of the bodily vehicles used to transmit [it]' (xi). The phrase, he tells us, 'has to be decoded and interpreted with a certain *esprit de finesse*,' and when 'properly examined, may turn out to allude to experiences that are not *physical* but in some sense "*meta-physical*" (symbolic, cultural).' Opposition to contemporary materialism, Moravia thinks, should not be based on Cartesian substance dualism. What the

adversaries of materialism with whom he finds himself in agreement are talking about, he says, 'is not "something that is non-physical."' Instead, 'the point is that there exists not only "things" but also "ways", "rules", "values", "ideologies"' (82). These latter are to be uncovered primarily by investigating our use of mental language rather than through the investigations of the natural sciences. Materialism is itself implicitly the linguistic thesis that the sole legitimate use of language is to describe facts. The alternative is to recognize that language has a plurality of uses, that among them is the use to express and ascribe mental states, and that such a use cannot be subsumed to the fact-stating use by any of the various reductions proposed by the materialists.

This general outlook — one to be found in Wittgenstein's later writings and advanced by Malcom and by Putnam and Rorty in their recent works — is one many of us find congenial, though Moravia's moral disapproval unnecessarily distracts from theoretical issues that are of interest in their own right. But the devil is in the details, as the saying goes, and this work, despite its valuable survey of issues, often comes up short in this respect.

Some of this is due to formulations of positions that are often loose and misleading. One example is Moravia's exposition of Smart's use of topic-neutrality in his formulation of the identity theory and his replacement of the mental singular term 'my present yellowish after-image' with the neutral 'my having a yellowish after-image' as a means of stating mental/physical identities. This replacement occurs, according to Moravia, because 'topic-neutral language is a means of expression that is considered capable of translating assertions of quality and statements on given phenomenological events into an account that represents the "state of things" in its naked, objective essence, without assuming any further ontological commitment' (73). This is not exactly mistaken, but is also not accurate and helpful. To use the noun phrase 'my present yellowish after-image' is to presuppose the existence of an image as its referent, and this seems to require introducing an object with qualities such as yellowness. But such qualities cannot be predicated of brain processes, and by Leibniz's Law of the Identity of Indiscernibles this would rule out mental/physical identities. It was to avoid this conclusion that Smart introduced the topic-neutral replacement, not to represent states of things in their 'naked, objective essence'.

At certain stages in his book Moravia suggests that materialism commits the error of imposing the fact-stating form of language on mental language. We must recognize, he says, that there are 'two linguistic-conceptual universes which are neither homogeneous nor intertranslatable' (178). But this two-language solution overlooks the fact that our mental language is itself a complex combination of uses, one of which is descriptive. Consider, for example, belief ascriptions. We do use these ascriptions to describe psychological states. *X* may say to another *Y* about a subject *S*, '*S* believes that the gold is hidden in the Kentucky cave', and this might then enable *Y* to predict that *S* will travel to the cave or explain why he went there. *X* may know that

what *S* refers to by 'the gold' is really pyrite or fool's gold. But 'the fool's gold' cannot be substituted for 'the gold' in the belief ascription, as it would not enable prediction and explanation. With substitution forbidden, the ascription is about *S*.

In contrast, consider *S* saying to *X* 'Smith will retire soon' and *X* using this as a basis to ascribe a belief of *S*. If both *X* and *Y* know that Smith is *X*'s next door neighbor, but *S* is unaware of this, *X* might report to *Y* 'S believes that my next door neighbor will retire soon', thus substituting for 'Smith' the phrase 'my next door neighbor'. Here the ascription is not used to report some fact about *S*, but instead to interpret what he has said and to evaluate it. Belief ascriptions are in fact used both to predict/explain *and* to interpret/evaluate. It is this special combination of uses that generates at least some of the puzzles associated with the mind-body problem. No adequate solution to it can ignore this feature of our mental language by arguing for its autonomy.

This book is valuable as a survey of issues in the philosophy of mind. Moravia has a good sense of where the basic differences between contemporary materialists and their critics are located. But it is also lacking in the logical rigor characterizing much of the materialists' writings and explaining the distinctive contribution we recognize their having made to philosophy. In our subject a clearly stated, illuminating error is always preferable to a hazy, comforting truth.

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**José Raimundo Maia Neto**

*Machado De Assis, The Brazilian Pyrrhonian.*

West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press.

Pp. xiii + 231.

US \$35.95. ISBN 1-55753-051-3.

Montaigne was much influenced by Sextus Empiricus. In his essay, 'Of Cannibals', for example, he provides spectacular content to the last of the ten modes of Aenesidemus that Sextus relates. The Sceptics' idea is that because of the variation among the customs, laws and mythical beliefs among different peoples, we should suspend our own judgment in these areas. To argue essentially the same case, Montaigne describes the Brazilian tribe encountered by Villegagnon's expedition in 1557, one of whom he himself met in France early on. French social views fail as knowledge, he concludes, for these

naked barbarians are as happy and humanly perfect as any of Montaigne's clothed countrymen.

Material for Montaigne's case study was not to be the only Brazilian contribution to the history of scepticism. The present book makes a far more important one, and does so on two different levels. First, it should sow some doubt about our own ways of understanding scepticism and its significance. The historical and cultural context provided by the book offers far more compelling motivation for the study of scepticism than anything to be found in the desiccated 'S-knows-that-P' analyses of Anglo-American epistemology. Second, the topic itself of the book is scepticism, specifically as it is found in the fiction of J.M. Machado de Assis (1839-1908), a writer of gigantic stature in Brazilian letters. The principal aim of the work is to defend 'Machado's right to be included among the great modern [Pyrrhonian] sceptics' (xiii).

Pyrrhonism, by contrast to Academic scepticism, is not a body of doctrines, but an ability — the ability to achieve *epoche* or suspension of belief with respect to all propositions that go beyond appearances. *Epoche* is brought about by defending the antithesis of every such proposition. The result is supposed to be *ataraxia*, or tranquility. All this has its *locus classicus* in Sextus, of course, but Machado's sources are, not the ancients, but two of the most prominent proponents of Pyrrhonism in the early modern period, Montaigne and especially Pascal.

Scepticism, according to Pascal's Augustinian view of it, is the epistemological state of man after the corruption of human nature by Original Sin. As a result, there can be no tranquility, or even suspension of belief, which is constrained by the grace of faith. Pascal argued this case against seventeenth-century Stoicism, the contemporary version of the Pelagian heresy that man can save himself by his own lights. For Machado, the target is 'Humanism', a blend of the views of Darwin, Spencer and especially Comte that dominated late nineteenth-century Brazil, promising the perfectability of society. (The mix of providentialism, rationalism, determinism and optimism rather adumbrates Marxism.) As with Pascal, the argument is based in scepticism, but here a kind of secularized *ataraxia* is sought through various narrative relations to the world.

Scepticism is evinced in Machado's work by the stress in two pairs of oppositions, one social and the other personal. First is the *vida exterior* (the hurley-burley of social life) and the *paz doméstica* (home, hearth and a white picket fence). Then there is the contrast between the *tolo* (vulgar man), who strategizes his way to success in the social world, especially with women, and the *homem de espírito*, the moral man, who is innocent of such strategies, and who in response to the consequent failure with women adopts a sceptical stance.

For Machado, marriage itself can become part of the external life of the alleged 'real world', and thus really a deceitful appearance and a source of misery. Madness or suicide are initially the only practical alternatives to the illusory tranquility of marital domestic peace. The theoretical alterna-

tive is a first person narrative, with disengagement and a spectatorial stance. The moral man drops out and tells his story.

A spectacular example of this sceptical disengagement is the narrator of the novel, *Epitaph of a Small Winner*, who is 'a deceased writer, not in the sense of one who has written and is now deceased, but in the sense of one who has died and is now writing, a writer for whom the grave was really a new cradle' (quoted on p. 82). But ataraxia reached only in death is no solution, certainly not in secular terms.

Scepticism is therefore carried to another stage, where even subjectivity itself becomes 'opaque and uncertain'. The issue in *Dom Casmurro* is the faithfulness of the narrator's wife. He believes, utterly without epistemic justification (the evidence is equipollent) that she is unfaithful — in order, as Pascal's Christian does, to relieve the despair of doubt. Only in a third stage is the despair at all overcome, however. In *Esau and Jacob* and *Counselor Ayres' Memorial*, an aestheticism emerges that is an extension of the celebrated sceptical dictum, *ouden mallon* (not more this than that). Here the dictum is taken to mean, *both this and that*, the antecedent of which is the constructive scepticism of Mersenne and Gassendi in the seventeenth century. In more recent terms, it is the perspectivism whereby even so objective an event as whether a widow remarries or not is both this and that from different perspectives.

Maia Neto tells us that 'the analytic position here assumed and the critical vocabulary and method employed are those of a philosopher, not a literary critic' (xiii). The style and much of the substance of the argumentation will indeed be found very congenial by philosophers. Those not familiar with the work of Machado will at times have difficulty following the argument; but such is the argument that they will be motivated to go and read him. They will be rewarded. Moreover, they will look forward to the appearance, with Kluwer, of Maia Neto's *Christianization of Pyrrhonism: Scepticism and Faith in Pascal, Kierkegaard, and Shestov*, promised on the dust-jacket.

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**T.M. Robinson**

*Plato's Psychology* 2nd ed.

Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1995.

Pp. xxxii + 202.

Cdn \$60.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-8020-0635-3);

Cdn \$22.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8020-7590-8).

The second edition of Robinson's lively book differs from the first in its dedication, the reversal of the placement of the table of contents and foreword, and a new introduction. The introduction, in reality a postscript, focuses on Plato's cosmology and his account of cosmic soul in the *Timaeus*, *Phaedrus*, *Statesman* and *Laws*. The original bibliography and indexes have not been updated to accommodate the new material and, because the pagination of the foreword has changed, all page referenced in the indexes to it have unfortunately been rendered incorrect.

In the foreword to the first edition, Robinson explains that his aim is to provide a *comprehensive* account of what Plato says about psyche, whether personal or cosmic (ix). The heart of the book is its account of the *Timaeus*, but it also has chapters, although some are very brief, on the early dialogues, the *Phaedo*, the *Republic*, the *Phaedrus*, the *Statesman*, the *Philebus* and the *Laws*.

The most notable omission is the absence of any significant treatment of the *Theaetetus*, especially its careful discussion of the soul's role in sense-perception. Since Robinson rules out any particular developmental account of Plato's view of personal psyche — only of cosmic psyche — the neglect of a dialogue which calls this thesis into question is regrettable. It is, in any case, an odd thesis for Robinson to maintain because his account of issues such as the soul's relation to the body supports a different conclusion.

Robinson's title might suggest that he intends a comprehensive account of Plato's philosophical psychology. Not so. His scope is more limited. His major objective is to tease apart distinguishable and sometimes conflicting concepts or images of soul and to expose the tensions they produce for Plato's philosophy. He argues that soul is variously portrayed as life principle, the true-self with personal and moral properties, cognitive principle, an imprisoned counter-person, a ghostly ectoplasm, a property — although this last claim is not forcefully defended — and, in some late dialogues, a principle of motion.

The elaboration of this theme is the book's strength. For, while Robinson does not systematically seek to analyse or, still less, evaluate Plato's arguments for the soul's immortality, how the soul is conceived, argument by argument, bears immediately on what Plato can claim to establish as immortal, not always the same thing. The conception of soul as ectoplasm, indeed, appears not to have a role in those arguments.

On occasion, Robinson overstates the difficulties that this variety of imagery causes Plato. He wonders, for example, how soul, conceived as a principle of cognition in the *Phaedo*, can without argument be viewed as a

life-principle a few pages later. If, however, we approach matters from the other end by supposing that for Plato, as for Aristotle, a theory of soul must explain the difference between the dead and the living, whatever else it does, Plato's mode of proceeding, while not rendered free from difficulty, at least becomes intelligible. It is easier to see how the cognitive functions can be subsumed under a life-principle than the reverse. Descartes, indeed, identifies the soul cognitively, only to separate it sharply from his account of death. This, however, is not the standpoint of Greek philosophy where the role of soul as life-principle is not simply one among a list of competing images, but an essential starting-point for grasping the rest.

Robinson's central interest, however, is cosmic soul. Originally he sided, if tentatively, with G.E.L. Owen's dating of the *Timaeus* in 'The Place of the "Timaeus" in Plato's Dialogues' (1953). Owen argues that the *Timaeus* is the crowning jewel of Plato's middle period, not one of his final dialogues as was commonly supposed. Now Robinson accepts it as an early member of the late dialogues, which could either precede or follow the *Parmenides*. For Owen, the *Timaeus* must come first because the *Parmenides* savages its conception of forms as *paradeigmata*. Robinson does not directly address Owen's argument, noting that the *Parmenides*' arguments are not intended to rule out forms, a point Owen accepts.

Robinson uses the opportunity of the second edition to strengthen his account of the creationist view of soul in the *Timaeus*, where world soul (by contrast to the ensouled Demiurge) is conceived as immortal but not eternal. He sharpens the contrast between this picture and that of the *Phaedrus* where soul, as principle of motion, is regarded as eternal. Where Robinson had previously thought that the *Politicus* combines elements drawn from both the *Timaeus* and *Phaedrus*, he now places it *before* the latter. He emphasizes the originality and power of Plato's cosmological imagination, comparing the move from the *Timaeus* to the *Phaedrus* to a conversion from a big-bang to an oscillation theory of the universe. These clarifications strengthen the best parts of Robinson's book.

Given the book's original purpose and the void it was intended to fill, the value of the second edition would have been enhanced if Robinson had added a critical bibliography which briefly, selectively, but comprehensively surveyed the relevant literature since the book first appeared without addressing it in detail which, as he notes, would have required another book. The significance of the subject would certainly have warranted it.

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**David Schweickart**

*Against Capitalism.*

New York: Cambridge University Press; Paris:

Editions de la Manship des Sciences de

l'Homme 1993. Pp. xiii + 356.

US \$69.95. ISBN 0-521-41851-8.

Schweickart's stated goal is to show that there is a viable and superior socialist alternative to capitalism. His overall argument is impressive in scope, drawing as it does on economic theory, social philosophy, and empirical data. The argument involves three steps. First he examines the arguments offered to justify capitalism in its own right, and finds them wanting. Then he develops a particular model of socialism, called Economic Democracy, and argues that it compares favorably against *laissez faire* capitalism, Keynesian capitalism, and new liberal capitalism. The terms of comparison are efficiency, growth, liberty, equality, democracy, and meaningful work. Finally, he argues that Economic democracy is preferable to other forms of socialism, including command socialism, technocratic market socialism, and marketless participatory socialism. Along the way, Schweickart even manages to show how transitions to Economic Democracy might be effected in advanced capitalist societies, command socialist societies, and underdeveloped Third World societies.

The case for Economic Democracy's feasibility is based in part upon actual socio-economic experience. The model draws upon the experience of market socialism in Yugoslavia (61-2), the *keiretsu* of Japan (63-4), and the worker self-management of the Mondragon cooperatives in the Basque region of Spain (64-6). The model is composed of publicly owned productive property and publicly controlled investment, workers' self-managed firms, and a market in which firms interact with one another and consumers (68). Firms receive their capital from community banks; firms are taxed according to a formula based upon their capital assets. This tax revenue is the state's source of public spending and of financing other cooperative ventures. The distribution of funds from the state to community banks and from the banks to firms can be controlled according to politically (democratically) arrived upon criteria. Workers are free to elect managers and determine income differentials within their firms. Because productive wealth is owned publicly and the workers co-determine their affairs, there is neither a capitalist class, private income generated from investments, nor wage-labor.

The comparative argument appeals to values, both economic and non-economic, that generally have common currency among advocates of both socialism and capitalism. This strengthens his argument tremendously. For example, because Economic Democracy involves both workers' self-managed firms and a regulated market, Schweickart argues that it will have the efficiencies of the capitalist market and more. This claim is substantiated in part by drawing upon the empirical evidence of the efficiency of worker participation programs and worker self-managed firms in capitalist societies

(92-4, 98-103). Furthermore, the inefficiencies of the capitalist market owing to unemployment, for example, are less severe in Economic Democracy. Because workers have a say in firm management, they are less likely to get the sack. They may instead choose to lower their wages or open another cooperative producing more desired goods (109-10). Finally, the state will be obliged to be the employer of last resort for everyone wishing to work, but unable to in any other way (111).

Socialists have frequently argued for centralized control over the economy in order to overcome the alienation and inefficiencies produced by the anarchy of the capitalist market. The institutions of worker's self-management and political control over the criteria for public investment provide Economic Democracy with a degree of control over the market that capitalism lacks. Still this may not be enough control to satisfy those who hope for a state-wide free association of producers. Schweickart joins a long line of critics (on both the left and the right) of centralized planning. On his view such planning is necessarily inefficient both because it can't rationally transmit information about what to produce and because it can't provide an adequate incentive structure (316). For example, centrally planned targets about how much steel to produce might be in units of weight or area. Solely relying on either criteria results in corresponding irrationalities: really thick sheets being the most efficient way to achieve a weight target and thin sheets being the most efficient way to achieve an area target. In either case, production occurs without reference to what consumers may want. Furthermore, centrally planned firm targets don't encourage managers to behave efficiently. Quite the contrary, there is incentive to overestimate the materials needed and to underestimate productive abilities in order to ensure that the combination of materials and productive expectations is what the firm can achieve. The market, Schweickart argues, is better at both transmitting information about what consumers need and providing incentives to meet the need.

Furthermore, Schweickart rejects a model of participatory decentralized planning offered by Michael Albert and Robin Hahnel (cf. *Looking Forward* and *The Political Economy of Participatory Economics*) as being unfeasible in its requirements for personal planning (332) and undesirable in its requirements for participation in the planning process (333). Their model requires an individual to publicly justify her yearly consumption packet. While Albert and Hahnel might laud this as the development of a consciousness of social cooperation, Schweickart is right to point out the illiberal nature of making such participation an obligation rather than a right.

Unfortunately Schweickart does not address the model of centralized democratic planning, Negotiated Coordination, developed by Pat Devine in *Democracy and Economic Planning*. Devine's model makes an initial general allocation of resources through centralized democratic planning. Subsequent allocations are made via a process of negotiation in which affected parties sit on various governing boards. Final allocation to consumers occurs through the market. This model avoids the mentioned drawbacks of the Albert-

Hahnel model and offers a greater degree of centralized control than does Schweickart's. It is not, however, able to draw upon actual socio-economic experience in the way that Schweickart does with Yugoslavia, the *keiretsu*, and Mondragon. It therefore lacks one of the features that makes Schweickart's model so attractive, namely its high degree of seeming feasibility.

In an age when it is often heard that capitalism has triumphed, and when many even on the left are unable to see an alternative to austerity in the developed countries and neo-liberal structural adjustments in underdeveloped countries, Schweickart's book is of great value for it encourages us to imagine that things might be otherwise. And to those inclined to disagree, it presents the challenge of quite powerful arguments.

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**Maxine Sheets-Johnstone**

*The Roots of Power: Animate Form and Gendered Bodies.*

La Salle, IL: Open Court 1994. Pp. x + 438.

US \$44.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-8126-9257-8);

US \$19.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8126-9258-6).

An important corrective to purely speculative contemporary philosophical work, Maxine Sheets-Johnstone's *The Roots of Power* brings to the fore the petulance of philosophers who deal with common reality without even bothering to look into any empirical basis to their claims. A case in question is Heidegger's conjectures on the relations between distinctly human hands and mind without considering paleo-anthropological and primatological studies available in his time that contradict his statements. Another, the main case discussed, is Lacan's utter lack of any evidence in support of his psychoanalytics. No clinical cases, no observation of children except a single infant for a short range of time and some borrowed reports on the behavior of locusts and pigeons, all render Lacanian psychoanalytics as totally unverifiable, and thus wholly unscientific according to S-J. Philosophy cannot be sustained solely by specialized disciplinary readings of philosophers by philosophers. S-J proceeds by gathering all relevant information from various disciplines such as psychoanalysis, biology, feminism, sociology, anthropology, primatology, phenomenological, somatological and existential

philosophy, psychology, non verbal communication and sexology to support her claims with a good dose of common sense.

Sheets-Johnstone surely knows how to ask the most relevant questions on the subject she is examining. To begin with, she asks why the body became the source of power relations it socially is and how these relations operate. For the optics of power to take place, how does the power of optics function? The severing of reciprocity within the seeing/being seen relation contains part of the answer. Another previously unasked question is why the estrus of female sexual cycles has disappeared from the perspective of scientific acknowledgement and from Western view on female sexuality. Instead, women are seen as being 'year-round sexually receptive', a notion which, S-J claims, produces the counterpart of males' fantasy of 'year-round perpetual penile erection'. This is, for S-J, the origin of the abstract concept of power as a phallic symbol exemplified by Lacanian psychoanalytics that enshrine the Signifier of signifiers. To the heuristic richness of Foucault's concept of 'docile bodies' S-J adds hers of 'year-round female receptivity' by means of which sexuality immediately recovers its hominid and primate perspective.

Sheets-Johnstone merges Sartre's insightful, almost microscopic inquiry into the power of the gaze within ordinary, everyday interactions, with Foucault's Order of Visibility and panoptics of power. By simply considering both Sartre and Foucault as somehow complementary to each other, Sheets-Johnstone has enabled us to gain perspective into their work on power as a close-up approach to the individual experience of the former, and a long-shot approach to the social production of power in the latter. Sartre and Foucault's intuitive proposals on power acquire a structure and credibility of a different order when seen within the perspective of primatological, ethological and anthropological studies that Sheets-Johnstone sets before them.

Against the generalized understanding of power as a purely cultural phenomenon, and counter to the rationalist conception of the subject as a purely cogitating being, Sheets-Johnstone carries all along her analytic path the natural roots and weight of the body into this problem. She 'catapults' (in her own words) the body into language and incorporates intercorporeality in the place of inter-subjectivity by describing matters of fact of bodily behavior, rather than simply defining and speculating upon power. She makes a clear distinction of power as 'I can' and power as control. It is the former sense of power that S-J advocates throughout her text.

To the postmodernism credo of the body as a social construct and to the Derridean claim on the 'metaphysics of presence' S-J contests that both deconstruction and postmodernism manifest a metaphysics of absence. What is absent in them is the concrete, material, biological and evolutionized body. Postmodernism conceives the body 'as a somatological tabula rasa. But such a body is a product of an immaculate linguistic conception' (109). This absence of the body has haunted Western philosophy from its very inception, according to S-J. The socio-historical density contributed by Marxism to humanist studies acquires an onto-phylogenetical version in S-J's approach by considering evolutionary biology on power and sexual behavior. This combination

of phenomenological and somatological approaches to philosophy with evolutionary biology proves to be a well fertilized soil for understanding power relations.

S-J's demolishing critique of Lacanian theory targets three key aspects: the erasure of the body which nonetheless haunts Lacanian psychoanalytics all along, the glottocentric bias, and the lack of any empirical grounding to support its scientific aspirations. No less than half of the book is dedicated to tearing to pieces Lacanian claims charging him of 'jouissance envy' and exposing Lacan's personal unconscious problems with females. S-J seems to have been more interested in destroying Lacan's theory than in pursuing the much more interesting problem of developing the title of her book, that is, in analyzing how power is generated and reproduced in contemporary societies through corporeal and animated forms. One has the feeling that the end of the book suddenly took her by surprise while being enraptured in her passionate attack on Lacan, forcing her to add an epilogue to correct her direction and refocus her objective.

If the destruction of Lacanian theory was her goal, the title of the book should have been instead 'The Roots of Power: A critique of Lacan's concept of Phallus.' A further development of the enticing and original Sartre-Foucault combination from the animated bodies perspective through concrete situations would have been more interesting and more broadly influential for researchers on power than her sometimes repetitive critique on Lacan.

Other aspects strangely missing in S-J's depiction of gendered bodies are temperature, smell and other kinesic, vocal or paralinguistic and proxemic cues. The body is not only a tactile-kinesthetic entity as S-J seems to define it. Precisely estrus cycles are marked by smell, swelling, change of color and temperature. The positive consequences of this concept of human estrus for understanding alternative relations between genders deserved more examination than what S-J has dedicated to it, and would have prevented her final, somehow prescriptive epilogue. In her plight against constructivist and culturalist positions, the author has neglected as well cultural prosthesis to the corporeal such as clothing and various technological devices which function as extensions of the body in power relations.

All in all, *The Roots of Power* displays a visual and playful, yet nonetheless rigorous prose which adds to the delight of reading S-J's down to earth and well documented claims.

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**Roger T. Simonds**

*Rational Individualism: The Perennial  
Philosophy of Legal Interpretation.*

Atlanta, GA: Editions Rodopi 1995.

Pp. xvi + 298.

US \$28.00. ISBN 90-5183-750-X.

The problems associated with the application of general legal rules to particular cases, especially new and unexpected ones, are well known to students of jurisprudence. Attempts to fathom the mysteries of legal reasoning have led some scholars to abandon reason altogether in favor of the vagaries of judicial arbitrariness or the more sinister forces of political manipulation. Contrary to the obfuscations of recent critics, Simonds maintains that the historical development of Western jurisprudence does in fact embody a philosophy and methodology of legal interpretation which continues to inform judicial reasoning even to this day. What is even more intriguing is his belief that the highest court of appeal is none other than reason itself.

The exposition and defense of this perennial philosophy of legal interpretation, what Simonds calls the philosophy of 'rational individualism', is both historical and philosophical. Chapters one through five document the historical development of the Western tradition of legal interpretation from its classical origins in Roman law to its eventual incorporation into all subsequent European and Anglo-American legal systems. Chapters six through eight consider the implications of the persistence of this tradition of legal interpretation for contemporary philosophy.

The historical chapters of this book are particularly impressive. Although the classical Greek philosophers were aware of the difficulties associated with legal reasoning, an explicit theory of interpretation had to await the internationalization of law and the full development of Roman jurisprudence. Accordingly, chapter two examines the legal literature preserved in the *Corpus iuris civilis* of Justinian, especially the first book of Justinian's *Digest*. Simonds points out that the exposition in the *Digest* unfolds as a series of oppositions. Almost every general principle is first advanced and then subsequently limited or partially rejected. After a careful analysis of the editorial process of this notoriously difficult work, Simonds concludes that this manner of presentation was intended to convey an important legal insight. In short, the editors of the *Digest* meant to indicate that 'a viable jurisprudence must find a middle way between the two extremes of literalistic legalism (where interpretation is regarded as a mechanical procedure) and intuitionistic moralism (where one indulges in "creative" decision-making unfettered by rules)' (57).

In chapter three, Simonds traces the development of this insight by the glossators and commentators who revived the study of Roman law at Bologna in the eleventh century. By drawing attention to mutually relevant texts in widely separate parts of the *Corpus iuris*, the medieval commentators were

able to begin the construction of a theory of interpretative jurisprudence on a classical basis. This theory came to include various rules of interpretation, for instance, the presumption in favor of the literal meaning of a legal instrument, that a denotation narrower than common usage, but not broader, ought to be respected, or that no provision should be treated as superfluous, if some reasonable interpretation would render it significant and effective. Simonds then goes on to explain how this general theory of legal interpretation became the foundation of the Continental and Anglo-American systems of jurisprudence.

Chapter four describes how the work of the glossators contributed to the beginning of modern European legal science, despite the fact that this has been concealed by the division of Europe into separate states with their own vernacular legal systems. As a consequence, Simonds notes, many early modern jurists were often given credit for 'innovations' actually borrowed from the Latin sources.

Chapter five, which focuses on the Anglo-American legal tradition, is especially engaging, in so far as Simonds challenges the common belief that the legal history of England and thus the nations of the British Commonwealth were largely independent of the Continental tradition and the reception of Roman law. According to Sir William Holdsworth, England was able to avoid the rebirth of Roman jurisprudence because its own native common law, rooted in cases decided in the King's court, was already established. While there is some truth in this account, Simonds effectively argues that it fails to recognize the extent to which English common law was already deeply influenced by Roman jurisprudence.

Having defended the historical continuity of the Western legal tradition, the author turns to a more philosophical analysis of the traditional methods of interpretation. Simonds argues that these rules of legal interpretation are actually derived from two general principles, which he calls the consistency principle and the effectiveness principle. The consistency principle states that every valid legal instrument is internally consistent and that the legal system as a whole is logically consistent. The effectiveness principle states that every valid legal instrument is intended to have some practical effect. Simonds maintains that these two logically 'self-sustaining' principles are sufficient to generate almost all the traditional rules of legal interpretation and that every modern legal system does in fact contain these two principles.

Chapters six and seven focus on the philosophical implications of this enduring tradition of jurisprudence. Simonds argues that the aforementioned principles are part of a theory of jurisprudence which incorporates a philosophy of language, and hence a philosophy of the human person, which is teleological, rationalistic, dualistic, and individualistic. Ironically, all of the philosophical positions involved in the rational individualism of traditional jurisprudence have come under attack in modern times. Simonds concludes that if we are to understand the survival of these classical principles in Western jurisprudence, 'we must consider the possibility that there

is a rational strength in that system which has protected it from being undermined by hostile speculation' (194).

Chapter eight, which is perhaps the weakest part of the book, investigates the application of this theory of law to contemporary issues in American constitutional jurisprudence. This chapter is followed by an extensive bibliography, an appendix containing the Latin texts of the glosses used in chapter three, a complete listing of legal references cited in the text, and an index.

The present text is the first volume in *Natural Law Studies*, edited by Virginia Black, and sponsored by the Value Inquiry Book Series. Although Simonds does not specifically address the relationship of his philosophy of legal interpretation to the tradition of natural law jurisprudence, he does provide a detailed study of one of that tradition's salient features, i.e., its devotion to the role played by reason in the regulation of human affairs. Simonds has produced a provocative defense of that approach which is both scholarly and passionate.

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*Bertrand Russell.*

Bristol: Thoemmes Press 1994. Pp. xii + 171.

UK £25.00 (cloth: ISBN 1-85506-347-6);

UK £9.99 (paper: ISBN1-85506-346-8).

In this slim volume in the Bristol introductions series, John Slater gives an engaging and concise introduction to Russell's life and work. It contains a preface (which essentially reviews the book) by Ray Monk, a brief introduction, and devotes a chapter each to Russell's life, and his work in logic, philosophical methodology, descriptions, metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, religion, political theory, political activism, history and education. The book would be well suited as a first text in an undergraduate class on Russell, or as an interesting general overview of Russell's thought.

An undergraduate student at U of Toronto, where Slater taught Philosophy 100 for many years, once explained to me why he was such a great teacher. 'He explains things in a way that WE can understand,' the student said, 'and he makes things interesting.' This talent is evident throughout the book, and nowhere more than in its first chapter, which weaves a sketch of Russell's life together with well-chosen anecdotes. In it we learn not only that

Russell had an aristocratic family and was instructed by a series of governesses and tutors, but that during his childhood no less than eleven servants took care of a family of four. We learn about Russell's early love for mathematics, as well as his early love for Alys Whitall Smith. Also that after eight years of marriage to Alys, Russell fell out of love for his first wife, although they continued to live together for eight more years. Slater tells us, 'It was during these trying years that *Principia Mathematica* (1910-1913) was written, and he poured into that great work all of his pent-up passion' (7).

Slater goes on to present 'Russell's theory' on each of a series of subjects, carefully selecting a written work which is representative of Russell's work in that area. For many subjects this is a daunting task, given Russell's legendary propensity to change his mind, although I would say Slater has by and large succeeded where many would fear to try. With respect to logic the problem is not knowing what to choose, but rather knowing how to present accessibly and concisely a large and involved theory. Here again Slater succeeds not only in summarising the essentials, but in supplying personal and historical detail. Here is an example: having just described over several pages, how Russell constructed the theory of natural numbers from sets of equinumerous sets using logical principles, he continues:

The notion of class is clearly central to the definition of "number". In the course of his work on *The Principles of Mathematics* (1903), where the definition is first reported, he made a very unwelcome discovery concerning classes. Georg Cantor, in a work Russell was studying, gave a proof that there is no greatest cardinal number. Russell thought the proof must be fallacious, because it contradicted what seemed obvious to him, namely, that the number of things, in the universe must be the greatest cardinal number. Therefore, he decided to apply Cantor's proof to this number in order to expose the fallacy he believed it committed. (20-1)

Slater goes on to explain why the existence of classes seemed so intuitive to Russell, and how Russell's paradox arose from their existence.

By placing Russell's logical theory first in the order of exposition, Slater does more than point to the fact that it is chronologically first in the order of Russell's contributions to philosophy. The importance of logical analysis seems to bind together much of Russell's philosophical work, from the construction of objects from sense data via logic, to the encouragement of independent thinking in education. A seemingly unlikely example of this is Russell's political theory. Slater explains that Russell's horror at the destruction of the First World War motivated him to write on political philosophy. 'If future wars were to be rendered impossible, some political reconstruction would be required after the war was over. His theory was published as *Principles of Social Reconstruction* in 1916...' (103). But at the root of his theory is that it is through understanding ourselves and our world that we can prevent future suffering. 'The burden of the book is to argue for a democratic state in which the citizenry has been educated to develop its

creative impulses and desires and to control its destructive ones. Control will come, he argued, if children are taught to think' (104). And teaching children to think (as we learn in a subsequent chapter) means avoiding rote learning in favour of fostering understanding of the scientific method, the ability to theorize about the connections among things. A process in which logic is an invaluable tool.

Slater provides excellent selections of representative moments in Russell's work. They are accurate, concise, accessible and historically situated. But I note that Slater is an expositor here and does not engage Russell's work in philosophical debate. Indeed there are points where he seems too willing to endorse Russell's views, a point Monk notes as the only shortcoming of the book. For example, in discussing Russell's ethical theory, Slater calls a view Russell criticizes, 'a view fit only for despots and their willing slaves' (81). While Russell's own view, that we should 'Act so as to produce harmonious rather than discordant desires' is said to show 'that love is better than hate' (82), among other things. Of course, through excavating representative selections of Russell's work Slater explains how they respond to criticism and problems that Russell himself saw. In this way the reader is given his/her own invitation to assess whether the work lives up to the criteria that Russell hoped it would meet. In this and many other ways John Slater has done a service to Russell scholarship.

### **Judy Pelham**

York University

### **Francis Sparshott**

*A Measured Pace: Toward a Philosophical Understanding of the Arts of Dance.*

Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1995.

Pp. xviii + 580.

Cdn \$75.00/US \$75.00

(cloth: ISBN 0-8020-0510-1);

Cdn \$24.95/US \$24.95

(paper: ISBN 0-8020-6946-0).

"Three pas-de-bourrés, and then two of those things I showed you yesterday, and then do like this." (246). Dance is a fragile practice, and unlike music, it is unfettered by a comprehensive notation. One must 'talk the talk'. So where can philosophers begin? Sparshott feels that 'in the philosophy of practice, one's starting point can only be the practice itself, what is actually done' (7). In *A Measured Pace*, he wades deeply into the dance world, as he uncovers the realities of the practice and builds a cogent philosophical theory.

This volume is meant to overlap and continue Sparshott's first book on the philosophy of dance, titled *Off the Ground* (1988). Sparshott avoids traditional pronouncements (such as the dancer's body as 'medium', or 'instrument'), and instead delves into the significance of the dancer's self as transformed in the work. Interestingly, he insists that a dance 'cannot in any case be fully understood as a work of art, since our awareness of the dancer's bodies and personalities cannot be properly eliminated from our critical consciousness' (182). Yet he goes on to say that in dance we are particularly apt to 'see as art' and claim status for these things as works of art, especially since 'there is no prescriptive medium other than the stillness and movement of human bodies' (43). This is tantalizing stuff for philosophers, particularly those interested in issues of work identity in the performing arts.

Sparshott argues that given the dynamics of the human body, in dance we are more likely to counterpoint, and not replicate, a musical rhythm. Here is a sticking point for dance philosophy. In many cultures, dance and music are extensions of each other. Many Native American nations and African cultures, for example, have only one word for dance/music. In our culture the relationship between dance and music is less equal: we often have music without dance, but only rarely do we have dance without music (and its absence would be remarked). In fact, Sparshott finds himself falling back on musical analogies and structures to describe dances, and he acknowledges the naturalness of this practice. However, he notes that when performed, 'it is not uncommon for a dance to observe the dynamic outline of its accompanying music while ignoring its musical essence' (217). Simply put, much of modern dance and ballet does not look like what the music sounds like. Few aestheticians have attempted to pick apart the knot of musically-accompanied dance, and his comments are a brief but daring foray.

In modern dance companies, new dances are often created by the choreographer and the composer working together, in a delicately balanced collaboration. Given the perils besetting most contemporary dance troupes, this process can be impressively last-minute, with either the music or the dance lagging behind at any given time. Anyone who has observed choreographers teaching a dance is surprised, as Sparshott is, at how little needs to be said. Metaphor, simile, and, above all, physical example bring ideas across in advance of notation. One would suppose that the advent of inexpensive video equipment would have intruded upon this teaching process, at least for established dances, but Sparshott carefully details how even videotapes (much like photographs) have a limited point of view. He also finds that the primary context of a dance as danced or choreographed is its historical and social setting. Given that most new instances of dances are tailored to a specific set of dancers and the space, Sparshott believes that 'the conditions of identity of a particularly named dance are not strict in the way that obtains in music' (382).

The 'real world' insights in this text are particularly refreshing. Sparshott opens up frank discussions of power relationships and sexuality in the dance world, including an acknowledgement of the prevalence of gay artists, and

he speculates on the differing perspectives between the gay scene in the dance world and the general public as audience. He is also interested in the links between amateur and professional dance. For those of us outside of the practice, some illustrations of the different notational systems (Delsarte's nineteenth-century systemization of gesture, or contemporary Labanotation) would have been helpful, if only to demonstrate the difficulty of capturing dance on paper.

Typically Sparshottian touches can be detected in the numerous poetic allusions, whimsical footnotes, and apt exemplars from the Greek tradition. He always pays homage to the active role of the audience, and offers ideas for teaching about the performing arts in general, much as he is teaching us. Certainly the way should be lead by such a spirit, who has the gift to see that department store mannequins are actually caught dancing.

### **Jennifer Judkins**

*(Department of Music)*

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### **Nancy Tuana and Rosemarie Tong, eds.**

*Feminism and Philosophy; Essential Readings in Theory, Reinterpretation, and Application.*

Boulder: Westview Press 1995. Pp. xv + 549.

US \$74.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-8133-2212-X);

US \$26.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8133-2213-8).

The effectiveness of this anthology lies in the editors' skill in making the book innovative without relying on original content. None of the essays collected here is new, and most of them have been reprinted at least once in other feminist anthologies. The primary natural audience for this book will thus not be feminist scholars looking to keep their personal collections up to date. (Of course they too will be drawn to *Feminism and Philosophy*, especially since many of the older anthologies are now out of print.) The valuable goal of setting feminist theory more squarely within the realm of everyday philosophy, rather like setting a fox among the chickens, is accomplished through the daring move of *not* offering a book that preaches to the converted.

The factors contributing to the book's ingenuity are numerous. There is insufficient space here for a detailed review of each essay, but overall, the selections exhibit a depth and particularly a clarity of material too seldom seen in philosophical compilations. The manifold connections and dis-connections between feminists and feminisms are easily read out of its pages,

leaving the fluid rhythm of the text undisturbed. The editors' selections demonstrate that feminist philosophy is not merely a reactionary stance against traditional philosophy, but contains important new theoretical and especially practical insights. The need to escape from the 'Ivory Towerism' that dominates academic feminism is, of course, stressed, but not in the usual, inert way: the connection between theory and practice, and the importance of making feminism relevant to women's lives, is one of the defining principles of the book, and all of the selections reflect this commitment.

Noteworthy among the volume's many strengths are Tuana and Tong's short general introductory essay, and the framework provided by the additional essays which precede each of the nine sections of the book. The general introduction is especially compelling, combining clear appraisals of the vigour and diversity of feminist theorizing with frank admission of its problems and even failures. The editors' enthusiasm for the potential of feminism to capitalize upon its potential and overcome its weaknesses, in ways that will be meaningful to the lived experience of as many women as possible, is clear. They also acknowledge the wide spectrum of feminist material that has been excluded from the compilation, but not in that pseudo-reflexive way common among philosophers. (You know: '*part of a larger project*', '*a work still in progress*', '*a starting point for further research*', blah blah blah.) Rather, Tuana and Tong confess their sins of omission in order to spur readers to heed and remedy these 'gaps and holes'.

The concise essays introducing each section constitute a superior road map for the reader looking to explore feminist philosophy for the first time, and they are complemented by the inclusion of fairly short but thorough references for further reading. The section introductions also provide excellent, even-handed summaries, important reminders, and new insights for readers more well-versed in the field. For example, the editors place Anarcha and Ecological feminist perspectives together in one section, rectifying the lack of attention typically paid to anarcha feminism while drawing our gaze to important connections between it and ecofeminist positions. (Aside from a stimulating section on phenomenological feminist perspectives, the remaining sections of the book will be more familiar to a feminist audience: liberal, Marxist, radical, psychoanalytic, socialist, and postmodern feminisms, plus a concluding section on a question correctly identified by the editors as underexplored by mainstream feminist philosophers, namely the intersection of feminism with issues of race and class.)

Tuana and Tong also provide helpful suggestions on how to read the book, and have deliberately presented the material so that the reader (and the instructor) should not feel bound by the conventional linear style of reading the text from front to back, perhaps juggling the order of sections just to be adventurous. (That is not to say that those who prefer to read in the customary fashion will be confused or put off by the structure of the book.) The sub-title of the volume alludes to the fact that each of the nine sections includes three essays: the first essay in each section contains an elaboration

of a theoretical position, the second an example of a feminist reinterpretation of existing philosophical thought in that area, and the third an example of how that feminist theory can be used in practice. The editors therefore suggest that one might wish to read all of the first, second, or third essays together, in a sense exploring three distinct approaches to feminist philosophy. This 'four-books-in-one' technique enhances the economic and pedagogical value of the anthology, making it appropriate for a broad range of introductory and higher-level courses, including courses not specifically designed around a feminist theme. (The rather waggish use of the phrase 'Essential Readings' in the sub-title also has enormous pedagogical, theoretical and practical significance, given the extent to which debates about essentialism currently dominate much feminist theorizing.)

The collection as a whole emphasises the varieties of feminist thought, while the individual essays prove that feminist diversity exists and is fruitful, for philosophy and for women. Each perspective is treated with equal care and persuasiveness, and the reader never feels forced to conclude that there is some 'correct' feminism to which one must be converted. Here, for example, liberal feminism is presented as an option that has been too easily dismissed, obliging many contemporary feminist readers to reassess their aversion to it. Such fairness surfaces throughout the book, reflecting the editors' observation that 'most feminist philosophers tend to wear comfortably the clothes of several schools of feminist thought' (3), and that there are advantages to be gained by doing so. Feminists have often participated in and acquiesced to the construction of divisive barriers between their various positions, but Tuana and Tong's balanced presentation will help to expose and wear down those barriers. A philosophical anthology that contributes to political solidarity in this way is a rare accomplishment.

Throughout the collection, even including the section on liberal feminism, one is struck by evocative treatments of those topics that philosophers do not (and some argue should not) write about: sexuality and the nature of desire, pregnancy and childbirth, the experiences of breast cancer and mastectomy, being (or wanting to be) thin, being (and wanting to be) both black and included by feminism. Yet such themes co-exist comfortably with more orthodox philosophical styles and subjects. All of the essays introduce feminist insights and extend them into new arenas, problematizing traditional philosophies, including established feminist philosophies, in ways that demand response.

**Edrie Sobstyl**

*(School of Arts and Humanities)*

University of Texas at Dallas

**Jan Von Plato**

*Creating Modern Probability:*

*Its Mathematics, Physics, and Philosophy  
in Historical Perspective.*

New York: Cambridge University Press 1994.

Pp. x + 287.

US \$59.95. ISBN 0-521-44403-9.

I thoroughly enjoyed reading Jan von Plato's new book, *Creating Modern Probability*. In it, von Plato has tackled a difficult problem: bringing together into a unified account the main intellectual threads that played a role in the development of the contemporary notion of probability. Until around 1900, probability theory was a fairly quiet backwater of mathematics, mainly of interest to gamblers. Then, within the space of only about thirty years, the main tenets of probability underwent enormous changes. Pure mathematicians, troubled by the finiteness requirements and symmetry postulates built into the classical account, started revising the formal foundations of the field. Physicists, astronomers, and applied mathematicians began to seriously use the tools of probability in their own theories. Difficulties in interpreting probability statements led de Finetti and other Bayesians towards considering probability to be a measure of a person's beliefs and epistemic state. And, towards the end of this period, Kolmogorov formulated the axiomatic, measure-theoretic approach which remains the standard mathematical account today. Von Plato's book is, first and foremost, a sophisticated and readable intellectual history of the development of probability theory during those thirty years, carefully tracing the linkages between all of these forces and showing how each of them contributed to the modern notion.

However, von Plato is interested in more than simply documenting the recent history of a piece of mathematics. The thirty years on which he concentrates were also a time of great upheaval in the physical sciences. The transition of probability theory from the classical to the modern conception happened at the same time as the final overthrow of the deterministic, mechanical worldview of 19th century physics. Statistical physics and quantum theories required basic, nonderivative notions of randomness and probability to be part of the structure of the world. The new mathematically sophisticated theories of probability were some of the fundamental conceptual tools that made these indeterminist positions plausible, and even possible. So, at the same time that probability theory was itself evolving out of the classical view, which was grounded in empirical data and whose philosophical relevance was limited, it was being used to support the transition of the physical sciences into their modern forms. Von Plato's account of interconnections between all these fields makes fascinating reading. The book is also quite sensitive to the philosophical issues here, and much of the fun in reading it is watching how von Plato uses the theoretical conflicts in devel-

opment of probability as a lens with which to view topics in this larger scientific transition.

The book is divided into seven major chapters, each covering a different theme in the modern history of probability. Von Plato starts with a chapter on the growing linkages between probability and pure mathematics which developed during the early 1900s, up to Borel's 1909 paper introducing the first strong law of large numbers, and Weyl's 1916 formulation of the first ergodic theorem. Next, he devotes three chapters to the development of probability theory in classical statistical physics and quantum mechanics, with careful attention to the attendant philosophical debates about determinism and objective probability. Here, von Plato's coverage is comprehensive, and includes careful treatments of the relevant work of Boltzmann, Maxwell, von Neumann, Born, von Smoluchowski, and Hopf. After this, having set the stage, von Plato gives us a chapter on each of the three major mathematical approaches to probability theory. He details von Mises' frequentist view first, paying careful attention to the critical (and controversial) notion of a collective. Next, he presents the now-familiar measure-theoretic axiomatization of probability, laid out in Kolmogorov's *Grundbegriffe* of 1933. The theory of the *Grundbegriffe* is examined in detail and placed in the context of Kolmogorov's entire body of work on probability, from his early collaborations with Khintchine to his later writings on reviving the frequentist view for applications of probability. Finally, von Plato describes the Bayesian (subjectivist) interpretation of probability, concentrating mainly on the mid-1920s work of de Finetti. To conclude his book, von Plato adds a brief but fascinating appendix on the work of Nicole Orseme, whose fourteenth-century work on the incommensurability of planetary motions is linked in an interesting way to the frequentist interpretation of probability.

All this having been said, though, a note of caution to less mathematically inclined philosophers is in order: the development of the modern conception of probability has some highly technical aspects. In most places in the book, von Plato is careful to maintain his focus on the history and progression of ideas, and to keep the mathematical machinery to reasonable levels. (The major exception is his treatment of Kolmogorov's *Grundbegriffe*.) He explains major theoretical concepts as he introduces them, and his statements of the principal theorems and results are precise and thorough without dwelling too much on the proof details. However, the story of probability in the 20th century is unavoidably the story of the development of a sophisticated, intricate, and powerful piece of applied mathematics. It is certainly possible to get a great deal out of this book with only an elementary grasp of the surrounding formalisms. But, some knowledge of the contemporary mathematical account of probability, plus a good deal of what is usually referred to as 'mathematical maturity,' would aid the reader immensely.

In spite of the complexity of his subject, von Plato's writing style is clear and unadorned. The book is on the whole quite dense with material, though, and many of the paragraphs inspire rereading and a careful working through.

Original sources are cited throughout, and there is an extensive bibliography, making it easy to delve further into the details. This book would be suitable for a graduate seminar, and would be a fine addition to the research library of anyone interested in probability theory, the history or philosophy of science, the history of modern mathematics, or the history and philosophy of physics.

**Mark Greaves**  
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**Daniel Wueste, ed.**

*Professional Ethics and Personal  
Responsibility.*

Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield 1994.

Pp. viii + 324.

US \$55.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-8476-7815-6);

US \$22.50 (paper: ISBN 0-8476-7816-4).

This book consists of thirteen papers originally presented at a conference on professional ethics and social responsibility given at Clemson University in 1991. Each is by a different author, with the editor, Daniel Wueste, contributing the introduction as well as a paper. Each paper addresses a single problem relevant to the theme or explores issues within a specific profession. For example, Kenneth Winston discusses the problem of 'dirty hands', Larry May deals with conflict of interest, and Robert Baum examines the responsibilities of engineers to the public. David James's discussion of physicians selling prescription drugs rather than just prescribing them also deals with the problem of conflict of interest, but solely within the medical profession. The paper by Joel Feinberg, while well-argued and quite interesting in its own right, seems less directly related to the topic than the other twelve. Feinberg's article criticizes those who argue against the legalization of voluntary euthanasia even though they admit that individual cases might be ethically justified. Most of the articles are clearly written, even those that claim to adopt ideas from post-modern authors.

Wueste's introduction briefly surveys some of the sociological literature on professions and their social responsibilities and from this generates a description of some of the basic features of professions. Because professionals claim a certain expertise and this expertise is of considerable social significance, they may also claim that they should be governed by role specific norms rather than just those that apply to human conduct in general. Several

articles examine the latter claim. The introduction concludes with a brief but useful survey of each article.

The lead article, by Kenneth Winston, addresses the problem of dirty hands, particularly in political settings. The problem arises when an agent, usually acting according to some role norm, seems obligated to do something morally wrong. Winston carefully distinguishes three different types of situations that ostensibly involve the dirty hands problem and discusses instances of each type in detail. Winston concludes that a public official may choose an action that is morally better yet do something wrong. He thinks that this is possible because 'no single standard integrates all moral principles into a comprehensive scheme' (44). However, it is problematic to say that the official's choice is 'better' if there is no general principle of comparison. Winston realizes this but in the end tells us only that the official finds the two conflicting acts compelling but that one is found more compelling than the other (60). If one act is more compelling than another, must there not be some common feature they share and hence some single standard?

In his paper, Wueste argues that institutional morality is not reducible to general morality. His argument is too complex to reproduce here, but it depends in part upon a Rawlsian distinction between the justification of an institution and the justification of the practices and role norms associated with an institution. While this distinction has some validity, Wueste does not convincingly demonstrate that role obligations cannot be justified by principles of general or critical morality. His claim, that if the demands of general ethics trump those of institutional ethics then the legitimacy of teaching professional ethics is dubious, is surely not justified (103). Engineering principles depend on the laws of physics and chemistry, but this does not mean that to teach engineering is a dubious project, that one can simply teach physics and chemistry. Analogously, the justification of the principles of professional ethics may depend on general ethical principles but this does not entail that professional ethics is in any way a dubious project to be cut from the curriculum!

Larry May's article challenges the traditional view that professionals ought always to avoid conflicts of interest since they are liable to compromise professional judgment. May does a good job of showing that conflicts of interest are inevitable in the professions and that not all are problematic. He also convincingly demonstrates that such conflicts may involve deception of the client and violation of client autonomy as well as compromising professional judgment. While May's article stresses Lyotard's concept of the divided self, many of his points could be made without reference to this notion. May claims that a professional's obligation is to reveal any potential conflict of interest and let the client decide if the conflict is objectionable. However, May also argues that it is unreasonable to expect professionals to be totally loyal to clients and place client interests above their own. If this is so, I find it difficult to understand how May can expect professionals to come clean about their conflicts of interest in situations where it is not in their interest to do so!

In this review, I have concentrated on a few articles that challenge some widely accepted views on issues in professional ethics; however, there is not one article that does not contain some material of interest to philosophers. Even articles that contain a great deal of merely factual material, such as that by Kathleen Dixon on the drug RU 486, also investigate important ethical issues. Dixon argues that the developers of RU 486 have a moral responsibility to widen commercial distribution of the drug.

This collection of quite readable articles will be found useful by anyone with an interest in professional ethics. They cover a wide variety of topics and without exception make some contribution to our understanding of the issues.

**Ken Hanly**

Brandon University

**James O. Young**

*Global Anti-realism.*

Brookfield, VT: Ashgate Publishing Co. 1995.

Pp. vii + 163.

US \$59.95. ISBN 1-85972-058-7.

'Global anti-realism' (henceforth GAR) is a view about truth. Realists and anti-realists conceive of truth as a relation between truth bearers and their truth conditions, but differ as to the nature of these conditions, and the relation that truth bearers bear to them (2). The anti-realist holds that the truth conditions for specified classes of sentences are 'in all cases, recognizable or detectable by users of the sentence,' while the realist holds that truth is 'objective' in that 'the truth conditions of a sentence ... may obtain even though speakers of the sentence cannot know that they do' (4). GAR is *global* in taking an anti-realist view of *all* classes of sentences (1), identifying truth conditions with 'coherence truth conditions', those conditions under which a sentence 'coheres' with a specified system of beliefs. Further, this 'specified system' is not an *ideal* system of beliefs but a '*practicable*' system, 'the maximal consistent and coherent set of beliefs' of an actual community of speakers (117, 126).

Young offers two general arguments for GAR. First, he maintains that 'semantic relations' — the relations between sentences and their truth conditions — are *conventional*, and must be established through speakers' use of language (10). He then argues that the only semantic relations that speakers can thereby establish and manifest involve coherence truth condi-

tions. The second argument contends that, if the meaning of a sentence consists in its truth conditions and is what is known by competent speakers, then the only meanings that speakers can acquire and manifest in their use of language consist in coherence truth conditions. Each argument appeals to a coherence theory of knowledge in arguing for a coherence theory of truth, but in each case additional premises are required as to the origin of semantic relations (53) and the nature of meaning respectively.

There is much to admire in the boldness of this book, and the detail and density of its arguments. The world according to GAR is nonetheless puzzling in several respects, however. First, as Young acknowledges, GAR 'truth' departs significantly from truth as standardly conceived. It is neither 'transcendent' nor bivalent, necessitating some measure of logical revisionism. Less happily, GAR truth is not an 'eternal' property of truth bearers: even a Quinean eternal sentence can have different truth values at different times, on Young's account. He suggests that this troubles us only because our intuitions are corrupted by realism, and challenges the realist to identify the flaw in the argument for GAR. Consider, however, Young's outline of his argument (132):

- (A) The meaning of a sentence consists in its coherence truth conditions.
- (B) Speakers can only establish semantic relations between their sentences and coherence truth conditions.

Therefore

- (C) A sentence is true iff its coherence truth conditions obtain, which entails
- (D) Truth is not eternal, since the coherence truth conditions of a sentence may obtain at one time but not at another.

The argument for (B), which assumes that speakers establish semantic relations by asserting a sentence 'only when [certain] conditions obtain' (122), seems open to the 'disjunction objection' that plagues causal theories of content. Even granting (A) and (B), two arguments for the 'eternality' of truth suggest themselves. Consider first the inference to (C). 'Coherence truth conditions' are conditions under which a sentence 'coheres with' a system of beliefs, where coherence is a matter of being inferable from that system. 'Inferability', in turn, is a matter of being deducible or inducible from, or being 'otherwise supported' by, a system of beliefs (23, 57-8). But some such conditions are treated by speakers as *defeasible* conditions that can obtain *even though a sentence is not true*. Unless we factor out 'defeasible' conditions from the so-called 'coherence truth conditions', the inference to (C) seems unacceptable. If we restrict the 'coherence truth conditions' in this way, however, we generate a dubious verificationism. Second, even if we allow the inference to (C), (D) follows only if the specified system of beliefs must be practicable. Young argues against identifying the specified system with an ideal system, but the preservation of the 'eternality' of truth is surely a powerful reason in favour of such an identification. While philosophers have

indeed employed the term 'truth' to denote the property possessed by sentences that are 'rightly assertable' (7), they have also insisted on a distinction between truth, so conceived, and right assertability *on the basis of the evidence available at a particular time*.

GAR is also puzzling in that it combines the denial that sentences can have 'objective' truth conditions with the insistence that there are objective conditions nonetheless. Kant, whom Young cites in this context, denies us the capacity to represent or know things in themselves, even though we can 'think' them. Young, on the other hand, seems to think that we *can* linguistically represent specific 'objective conditions' which may actually obtain, but that those conditions are not truth conditions for the very sentences used to describe them. Thus he argues that, while Putnam may have demonstrated that 'We are brains in a vat' is not true, it is nonetheless possible that we are brains in a vat (147). But if, as just used, the expression 'we are brains in a vat' is an expression in our language, as it must be to express the 'metaphysical scepticism' proposed by Young, then, according to GAR, this sentence's meaning is given by its coherence truth conditions, which *ex hypothesi* do not obtain. Furthermore, Young insists that speakers cannot establish semantic relations between their sentences and objective truth conditions (132). In virtue of what, therefore, can an expression in our language somehow 'represent' certain objective conditions quite distinct from the coherence truth conditions that we associate with the sentence through our use? Given any positive answer to this question, the realist will surely maintain that it is precisely in virtue of *this* relationship between language and objective conditions that our sentences have objective *truth* conditions. Additionally, Young's response to Putnam seems to violate Tarski's 'material adequacy condition' on any theory of truth, as does his further claim that 'if all speakers in the universe ceased to exist, tables and chairs and wombats might continue to exist but no truths about these things would exist' (31).

While these matters require further clarification before we can assess the viability of GAR as a theory of truth, Young's book has the virtue of clarifying the explanatory burden that radical anti-realism must assume.

**David Davies**  
McGill University

# LUMEN

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