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**Theodor W. Adorno**

*Sound Figures.*

Trans. Rodney Livingstone.

Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press 1999.

Pp. 288.

US\$49.50 (cloth: ISBN 0-8047-3557-3);

US\$16.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8047-3558-1).

The thought of Theodor W. Adorno (1903-1969) has often been approached as a problem in the English-speaking world. His German is immensely difficult, his theoretical approach is considered very strange, and the English translations are consequently often marred with errors that in their turn add to the confusion. However, Adorno has successively been rediscovered, as it were. New texts appear in translations every year, and a more complete picture of this eccentric multidisciplinary thinker slowly emerges.

The publication of the collection of musical essays in *Sound Figures* (originally written during the fifties) is particularly important for the establishment of a more sensitive reception of the rich thought of Adorno. Here we have a very good translation of texts, which to some extent are more straightforward and distinct than better known books from Adorno's pen.

*Sound Figures* is a somewhat artificial translation of the apt German title *Klangfiguren*, which is a very usual German term in musical analysis (connoting such qualitative aspects of sound as timbre, resonance, tone etc.). More important, however, is the idea of 'figures', which the English title preserves, and which links the content of the book to Adorno's general understanding of philosophical reflection. Philosophy — and philosophy of music in particular — should be exercised in models and figures of thought rather than in terms of systematic notions.

His basic idea is that too strong emphasis on systematic notions will hamper the productivity of reflective thought, establish a stifling social order, which only reproduces the ideology that critical thought aims to avoid. Thus, when he approaches the idea of sociology of music in the first essay of the book he somewhat oddly proclaims: 'Let us abandon the separation between method from subject matter' (1). This obstinate motto can be said to run through the otherwise variegated material of the book, which contains essays on various musical topics such as opera, musical serialism, and the notion of the maestro, to mention a few.

The two most theoretically substantial texts, 'Criteria of New Music' and 'Music and Technique', become a kind of commentary on and continuation of an earlier book called *Philosophy of Modern Music*. Yet the most well known essay is perhaps the second, called 'Bourgeois Opera'. Here Adorno exercises a dialectical critique of the opera genre by unfolding it as a specifically high bourgeois phenomenon. This relates to his philosophy of music and to the famous idea of a 'dialectic of enlightenment' that his musical philosophy reiterates. Adorno claims that opera presents us with a magic element. At the surface, this is a curious thing since opera appears in the frames of an



enlightened culture. Adorno calls opera a 'glimmer of light' in the prison of bourgeois disenchantment. It is therefore deciphered as a 'glimmer of light' that falls into the historical prison of human self-seduction. But for the same reason its legitimacy in the post-bourgeois situation is questioned.

As often is the case with Adorno's texts, one cannot be neutral in face of their intelligent but bold — and, sometimes, too fantastic — theorizing. The committed voice that meets the reader of *Sound Figures* is one that wants to break through the contextual bounds in a time where the context seems to finally rule out the idea of an exterior and a truth. Adorno never solves this paradox, but he speaks anyway. And since we all seem to live in the condition of such a contradiction, this book on music surely reveals the fruitfulness of a body of thought that does not shy away from the consequences of a contradictory life.

**Mattias Martinson**

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Uppsala University

**Edward Alexander, ed.**

*On Liberty: J.S. Mill*

Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press 1999.

Pp. 294.

Cdn\$/US\$7.95. ISBN 1-55111-199-3.

**Bruce Baum**

*Re-Reading Freedom and Power in J.S. Mill.*

Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2000.

Pp. xiii + 360.

Cdn\$/US\$65.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-8020-4761-0);

Cdn\$/US\$24.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8020-8315-3).

In *Re-Reading Freedom and Power in J.S. Mill*, Bruce Baum presents four theses concerning Mill's conception of human freedom and power. First, Baum argues against the view that Mill regarded freedom and power as inversely related. Second, Baum rejects the attribution of a negative view of freedom to Mill. Third, Baum reconstructs Mill's developmental theory of human freedom and uses it as a basis for 'a new perspective on the emancipatory possibilities of the liberal tradition' (15). Last, he amends Mill's position so as to 'contribute to a critical sociology of freedom' (15). Baum concludes that far from not having any relevance to the social and political circumstances of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, once they are seen in the fullness of their

complexity and sophistication, Mill's views on freedom and power continue to have considerable normative import.

As a whole, the work is comprehensive, insightful and provocative. Nudging the often oversimplified view of Mill's social and political commitments, Baum does a much appreciated job of consolidating Mill's familiar works with those that are usually treated separately as well as several which rarely get sustained attention. For example, he treats *The Subjection of Women* as on a par with *On Liberty* and *Representative Government* in order to clarify the extent to which Mill considered relationships of familial, social and political power as equally fundamental to the possibilities for individual freedom. Baum's research of Mill's correspondence is also impressive and a welcome antidote to the practice of relying on *On Liberty* and *Utilitarianism* as sources for Mill's social and political theories.

Baum's first thesis explores the putative inverse relationship between freedom and power in Mill. He argues that Mill's reconstructed theory of power implies instead that power has both positive and negative effects on individual freedom. The power of parents, society and the state to regulate our behavior is positive when it aims at maximizing the individual's sphere of liberty. But as Baum notes, Mill is no authoritarian and is highly sensitive to the potential for abuse of power over others especially in unequal relationships.

Baum's second thesis denies that Mill held a 'negative' conception of freedom. 'Mill's conception of freedom includes notions of self-development and self-mastery according to which, in Smith's words, "a free agent is someone who is capable of acknowledging responsibility for his desires as 'his own' because he, rather than others, has formed the character from which they spring"' (25). As Baum argues, Mill sees the 'yoke of conformity' as perhaps an even more devastating internal attack on individual freedom than any external or legal constraint and bases his antagonism to many of the socialist and communist theories of his day on this concern.

The illustration of Baum's third thesis takes up the bulk of the book. He reconstructs Mill's theory of social power in connection with his theories of education and political democracy. In the course of this reconstruction, Baum presents Mill's views on the key role which relationships of power in families, schools and workplaces have in enhancing or impeding the political emancipation of individuals. Of particular importance in this regard are Mill's developmental and participatory views of individual autonomy and collective sovereignty. Baum notes with favor Mill's sensitivity to historical and to a lesser extent, cultural contingency and argues it is especially in light of a theory of social power which takes such factors into account that Mill's overall position remains relevant for us today. Baum concludes alongside Mill that egalitarian liberalism under the condition of universal adult suffrage at the familial, social, economic and political levels still holds out the best hope for the greatest happiness of the greatest number understood in its broadest and most evenly distributed sense.

Finally, Baum retraces his steps in arguing to this conclusion in order to illustrate their relevance as well as their limitations for a contemporary



'critical sociology of freedom'. His critical evaluation focuses on what Baum identifies as Mill's ethnocentrism, his elitism and his lingering Victorian gender and sexuality biases. First, Baum argues (problematically), we must temper Mill's 'ethnocentric' devotion to the skeptical and rationalistic ideal of critical reflection with openness to the possibility of free yet unreflective commitment to traditional religious and cultural practice. Second, Mill's theoretical reliance on expertise as a limit to the excesses of democratic rule must be revised in light of Post Modern critiques of authority. Third, Mill expected that given true freedom of choice, most women would choose homemaking labour over work outside the home since they could not do both. Baum rightly echoes significant feminist criticism of Mill's thinking here when he points out the expectation needs to be revised in light of the simple truth that men can clean houses. Given his wife's activities outside the home, 'Did Mill Do Housework?' seems an apt question for future research.

Baum concludes by summing up these objections in terms which reflect the essential concerns of a critical sociology. '[Mill's] theory of freedom is limited by his flawed account of social change. He shows that extending freedom more fully and equally in modern society demands an enormous *redistribution of power* in economic, political, educational, gender and familial relationships. Yet he seriously underestimates the degree to which achieving such change requires social and political *struggle* to overcome vested interests' (274, author's emphasis). Baum's conclusion thus suggests that while, with certain minor amendments, Mill's theory of freedom and power can form a very strong basis for contemporary reasoning on the matter, it lacks a social activist component which must be vigorously brought to bear if Mill's own dreams for a freer and happier future have any hope of being realized.

Despite its focus on freedom and power, I regard Baum's book as setting a new standard for scholarship in the area of Mill's social and political philosophy. Again, the research is outstanding. In spite of this overwhelming overall endorsement, however, I have two complaints about the book. One is methodological. Baum's strategy in the first half of the book is to begin with a reconstruction of Mill's view on a particular question, raise objections to that view and conclude by defending Mill against those objections on the basis of the initial reconstruction. No doubt the objections Baum raises hail from Mill's critics of the last 150 years. However, they are presented in Baum's own voice and so come across as ones which he endorses. This is problematic since each reconstruction clearly informs the reader that the objections which follow are very weak or mistargeted. Baum's subsequent defenses of Mill then sound redundant and the whole effect is disorienting. This is, however, not as big a problem in the latter part of the book.

The second concern has to do with Baum's logic. While there aren't many logical errors, the ones which occur are glaring. Normally even a handful of mistakes like this would undermine the value of an entire work for me — this is not the case here. Nevertheless, since the errors play an important



part in some of Baum's critical conclusions, they need to be addressed. Here is one example.

[Quoting Mill] Then, if the parents show a strong feeling of the importance of truth & also of the difficulty of attaining it, it seems to me that young people's minds will be sufficiently prepared to regard popular opinion or the opinions of those about them with respectful tolerance & may be safely led to form definite conclusions in the course of mature life.

In Mill's view [Baum continues], people can *freely choose* to follow their religion and their religiously informed values only if they are not, as children, instilled with the belief that any one religion is uniquely right or wrong. (38)

Clearly, Baum's interpretation of Mill's words does not follow from those words. The errors, few as they are, seem to dog Baum's critique of Mill's 'ethnocentric' views about the role which religious belief and practice plays in the sense of freedom people have. Mill, in mistakenly generalizing from his own case, indeed underestimated the resistance of religious belief to rational scouring. It is unfortunate to have such an excellent volume — highly recommended for graduate level studies — marred by non sequiturs advanced in support of an otherwise obvious problem with Mill's expectations for the future of an educated society.

Edward Alexander's *On Liberty: John Stuart Mill*, in which the essay is edited with an introduction and a selection of commentaries and reviews by Mill's contemporaries, is a very useful work for the philosophical historian and Mill aficionado. Alexander has collected both notable and lesser known works of Victorian critical evaluation which provide a stimulating context for one's reading of Mill's most famous work. However, while Alexander's Introduction does a good job of surveying that context, it has a tiresome tendency to paint Mill as Harriet and Helen Taylor's (Mill's wife and stepdaughter) henpecked lap dog — a tendency which occasionally borders on being offensive. Still, the work will make an excellent volume for any study of *On Liberty* but especially one which emphasizes its historical dimensions.

**Susan M. Turner**  
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**Stuart Barnett, ed.**

*Hegel After Derrida.*

New York: Routledge 1998. Pp. v + 356.

Cdn\$128.00: US\$85.00

(cloth: ISBN 0-415-17104-0);

Cdn\$35.99: US\$25.99

(paper: ISBN 0-415-17105-9).

The central assumption of this collection of essays addressing Derrida's relationship to Hegel and the consequences for us is that Hegel essentially defines Modernity, the Enlightenment and the ideology of closure. Given that we are currently in a postmodern age, it is not true, however, that we are simply post-Hegelian. To by-pass Hegel has not been possible, lest one be pre-Hegelian, and to be anti-Hegelian is to be swept up in his system at a particular stage within it. Thus Derrida's readings of Hegel are addressed here in a way that both articulates and retraces Derrida's insights and attempts to open and fracture the closure accomplished by Hegel.

What is exciting about this text are the new and novel readings of *Glas*, Derrida's opus on Hegel, that it offers. *Glas* remains largely unread and for many scholars, unreadable. Thus, situating this tome is a major contribution of Barnett and his authors here.

Crucial for all contributors in this collection is to explain Derrida's readings of Hegel's early writings on Christianity, reason and faith, the meaning of the Eucharist, the Holy Family and their relations to his political writings. In addition, Hegel's articulation of the brother/sister relation in *Antigone* as it both contributes to and destabilizes Hegel's larger system is addressed by several authors.

Overall this text divides into three distinct agendas — the first being a return to Hegel after the work of Derrida, using Derrida's insights to read Hegel anew. Within this perspective we have essays concerning the meaning of 'surprise', to be surprised or overtaken by an event and the event of surprise itself by Jean-Luc Nancy; the role of racism in Hegel's understanding and misunderstanding of Africa and its peoples by Robert Bernasconi; a call to reinvestigate the notion of 'will' in Derrida and Hegel as other than dialectically organized by John H. Smith; the call to return to art as the irony of Hegel's idea of the end of art by Werner Hamacher; a return to Hegel's early works on Christianity and his attempt to overcome it philosophically while at the same time it becomes the motif for his philosophical system and agenda as a whole by Stuart Barnett.

Part II focuses on the impact of Derrida's Hegel on our larger intellectual culture including Freud and psychoanalysis, Marx and political theory. Suzanne Gerhart takes Sarah Kofman to task concerning her focus on fetishism in the Derrida/Hegel connection and calls for a turn to the issue of repression as a more insightful approach to understanding Hegel through Freud through Derrida. Andrzej Warminski, on the other hand, takes up the mantle of a Marx after Derrida-Hegel and distinguishes Marx himself from

the Young Hegelians and their idealism. The focus here becomes the relation between consciousness and life and the need to rethink both of these terms after deconstruction and hence, to rethink Marx.

Part III is at once the most ambitious and the most textually proximate to Derrida's work on Hegel in *Glas*. This section provides diverse readings of *Glas*, using both the Hegel columns and the counterpoint Genet columns and offers new insights and starting points into this as yet uncharted territory. Simon Critchley takes on the issue of the family as Derrida's link between Hegel's work on Christianity and political theory and shows how everything in both domains hinges on his reading of the nature of the family and its dissolution. Heinz Kimmerle focuses on Bataille — the issues of death and laughter, sovereignty and the Holocaust. Again the concept of the family is the centrepiece for his analysis and its ramifications. Kevin Thompson considers the issues of affinity and simultaneity in Derrida's relations to Hegel and the role of the simulacra in relation to the dialectics of the family for both. Finally, Henry Sussman offers a dramatic finish to this ambitious collection by summing up the relations between Hegel and Genet in Derrida's rendition of them in the double column architecture of *Glas*. In conclusion, the relation between Modernity and its underbelly, or hidden, repressed and downtrodden side is played out between Hegel and Genet, respectively, Sussman contends. Further, this relation maps that between Modernity as culminating in Hegel and Postmodernity which might well make a hero (as anti-hero) of Genet and his outsider, rebel and non-dialecticizable status. At least, one might argue that Derrida has done this. There is a tinge of romantic irony and the nostalgia of restoration in Sussman which, I suggest, one is hard pressed to find any traces of in the works of Derrida. The undecidability of Derrida does not tilt in favor of Genet for Derrida, but neither does it rest comfortably with Hegel. Neither is it a foundation or a direction for him, I suggest, but instead the waters still uncharted between them. This text is thus yet to be written and is not offered here although Barnett's collection goes the farthest of anyone's to date to this brink.

**Irene E. Harvey**

Pennsylvania State University



**William D. Blattner**

*Heidegger's Temporal Idealism.*

New York: Cambridge University Press 1999.

Pp. ix + 325.

US\$54.95. ISBN 0-521-62067-8.

Contrary to the now commonplace practice of interpreting *Being and Time* as motivated primarily — if not exclusively — by questions of the nature of human being, William Blattner, in his *Heidegger's Temporal Idealism*, takes seriously Heidegger's own claims that the real project to be undertaken is the more abstract, ontological one of inquiring into and concretely determining the sense (*Sinn*) or meaning of 'being' in general. Yet, Blattner recognizes that Heidegger's novel attempt to take on this project by positing the central thesis of *Being and Time*, namely, that our understanding of 'being' must arise within the 'horizon of time' or 'in terms of temporality', is rife with potential problems — not the least of which is the naïve tendency to construe this as saying nothing more than that an understanding of the way things are is simply a matter of showing how they exist in time. As Blattner notes, such a formulation 'takes too much for granted' (25), begging the more essential question of determining precisely what *time* is. Accordingly, Blattner's *Heidegger's Temporal Idealism* undertakes a careful analysis and a thought-provoking critique of Heidegger's complex answer to the question of the nature of time and temporality in *Being and Time*.

In essence, Blattner's analysis boils down to the claim that in *Being and Time* and (less clearly) in *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, Heidegger embraces a variant of 'temporal idealism'. This idealism, which Blattner argues, Heidegger shares with a 'venerable philosophical tradition' that begins with Plotinus and includes Leibniz, Kant and Bergson (27), can be understood as a doctrine which holds that time — as it is ordinarily grasped either as 'a sequence of qualitative or contentful moments' (127), or as it is more traditionally thought of as an 'insignificant series of moments ... that belong to nature' (185) — is dependent on a more primordial mode of 'originary temporality' characteristic of Dasein's unique temporal structure. In other words, according to Blattner, Heidegger, like his temporal idealist predecessors, holds that time depends in some fundamental way on *us*, and that as such, 'without Dasein there would be no time' (27). Ultimately, Blattner ends his inquiry into Heidegger's account of time and temporality with a 'negative conclusion', contending that 'Heidegger's arguments for originary temporality and temporal idealism do not work' (30).

Now, while this narrowly tailored and exceptionally lucid analysis of the ideality of time or the dependency of both 'world time' and 'ordinary time' on Dasein's temporal structure in Heidegger's early thought is interesting in its own right — indeed, interesting enough to occupy Blattner's readers for much of the book — this does not yet cut to the heart of the matter that he apparently aims to address in his book. Rather, his ultimate object in working through the theme of Heidegger's temporal idealism is an *evaluation* of the

effects of the *failure* of that idealism; and as Blattner argues in his concluding chapter, these effects are far reaching indeed. Perhaps most controversial is Blattner's claim that the failure of Heidegger's idealist philosophy of time necessarily entails the failure of the larger ontological effort to understand being, which constitutes the real project undertaken in *Being and Time*. What Blattner is in effect arguing is that, insofar as Heidegger holds that being can only be understood within the horizon of time, and time is itself ultimately dependent on Dasein, then being *too* must be so dependent on Dasein. In other words, according to Blattner, in committing himself to temporal idealism, Heidegger is equally committed to *ontological* idealism about being in general. But, as Blattner argues, given the failure of Heidegger's temporal idealism, *mutatis mutandis*, his ontological idealism — which depends on his temporal idealism — must likewise fail. In the end, then, Blattner concludes that without the support of his temporal idealism, the ontological idealism Heidegger defends in his early attempts to tackle the problem of determining the sense of being 'has no legs to stand on' (279).

What ultimately proves most intriguing about Blattner's claims about the shortcomings of Heidegger's account of time and temporality and the corresponding failure of his early ontological project, is the use Blattner makes of this to clarify Heidegger's much discussed (but little understood) 'turning' or '*Kehre*' from his early philosophy of being to that characteristic of his more obscure and less familiar later works. Echoing Frederick Olafson's 1987 account of Heidegger's *Kehre*, Blattner takes up the view that Heidegger's early thought differs from his later thought in its rejection of ontological idealism. What is novel about Blattner's account, however, is that he maintains that Heidegger effected this fundamental shift in his thinking on the basis of his recognition of the untenability of his temporal idealism. That is, according to Blattner, Heidegger himself recognized that his early commitment to temporal idealism ultimately proved to be indefensible and as such, he was prompted not only to abandon the ontological project slated to be completed in the aborted Division III of *Being and Time*; but moreover, to take the 'turning' and adopt a wholly different 'quasi-mystical stance toward the obtaining of being' which is 'neither idealistic nor realistic in any recognizable sense' (291). To my mind, it is this novel contribution Blattner makes to the contentious question of how best to interpret the transition Heidegger makes from his early to his later thinking that constitutes the most interesting and valuable aspect of the book taken as a whole.

In spite of the fact that I *do* recommend Blattner's *Heidegger's Temporal Idealism* to those interested in gaining a better sense of how *time* fits into Heidegger's *Being and Time*, it is important to note that the book does suffer from some defects. Chief amongst these is the fact that the issue that seems to stand at the crux of Blattner's concern with Heidegger — namely, that of accounting for his '*Kehre*' — receives relatively little attention until the conclusion of the book; and even there, the matter gets only a cursory treatment. Granted, it was necessary for Blattner to have laid the ground work for this conclusion by first examining in detail Heidegger's account of



the originary temporality characteristic of Dasein and how this unique mode of temporality determines ordinary time, but this relatively uncontroversial prefatory discussion of temporal idealism ought not to have overshadowed the more important and engaging theses about the ontological idealism that follows from Heidegger's account of time or the account of how Heidegger's recognition of the failure of temporal idealism led to his 'Kehre'. At the end of the book, one is left with the sense that this philosophically central question arose only as an accidental (albeit interesting) by-product of a more rudimentary discussion.

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**Ernst Bloch**

*Literary Essays.*

Translated by Andrew Joron et al.

Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press 1998.

Pp. 538.

US\$65.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-8047-2707-4);

US\$24.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8047-2706-6).

This book is a translation of the essays collected by Bloch himself into volume nine of the Ernst Bloch *Gesamtausgabe*. The essays it contains were originally written over a long time, ostensibly spanning the period from 1913 to 1964 and are very much literary in character rather than in topic. Some of the material has previously been translated into English and is reproduced in this volume, but the bulk of the text adds considerably to the quantity of Bloch's writings available in English.

As in most of Bloch's works, there is a juxtaposition of short, aphoristic fragments which are placed alongside longer essays like a weak glue designed to bind the parts into a coherent whole of some kind. The essays are grouped into sections, some of which ('Estrangements' for example) were originally published as collections in themselves. The breadth of material covered is very broad and contains much of interest for many areas of study, but a recurring theme is that of music, whether in relation to the cinema, in opera, or as a paradigm instance of human experience in the writing of the rhythm of landscape and journey. Many key figures in German literature are addressed, ranging from Schiller, Goethe and Thomas Mann, to Lichtenberg, Hebel, Gotthelf and Hoffman. Essays on detective stories and fairy stories sit alongside those on 'high' culture in a typical Blochian approach which seeks out the principle (namely, 'hope') through which the unity of seemingly



disparate literary phenomena can be understood. There is also a large section of travel writings, essays about travelling — about the view of a city from the landscape, about going up and coming down, cathedrals and waterfalls, about the ground on which Berlin is built and lack of ground beneath Venice. These are as much about the activity of travelling as about where is visited in travelling, which gives them a deep resonance beyond the encounter with an immediate environment which they document. Some essays address the kind of atypical themes which are typical for Bloch, such as the political import of contemporary interpretations of the nature of the Neanderthal and the significance of reported sightings of the Loch Ness monster. Others are slightly incongruous in a different sense — ‘Can hope be disappointed?’ (Bloch’s Inaugural Address at the University of Tübingen in 1961 after his move to West Germany from the East) is more significant politically, rather than being purely literary, and ‘Self-Portrait without Mirror’ is important philosophically — yet their presence adds to the richness of the text and they sit well in the collection given the web-like structure of Bloch’s thought. However, one is sometimes left with the impression that Bloch simply included everything in this volume that he wanted to find a place for in his collected works, but that didn’t quite fit anywhere else.

I found the translation to be in general excellent. Translations of Bloch into English have too often ended up as very strained and, although Bloch’s prose is certainly difficult in German, it is not often captured in English as well as it is here. Adorno named Bloch as one of the great German prose writers, an often incomprehensible claim to the reader of Bloch in English translation — however, not given this translation. The strength of the style is undoubtedly due in part to the nature of the essays translated here, but not wholly so — this, in my view, is a very valuable translation of Bloch in that it successfully captures the flow of his prose without losing its various tones and often anomalous, X-Files-like, feel. Bloch’s writing alternately walks and runs with a torch through the darkness of human existence and just fails to capture that which ‘pre-appears’ into all of the manifestations of human culture — this translation succeeds in conveying not just the quality of ‘Something’s missing’ (which is all too often all that readers of Bloch in English are left with), but also the sense that the ‘something’ is just missed, not quite captured, or is seen and yet not seen.

The extensive footnotes which provide background information on the many individuals referred to in the essays are very useful (as are the indications of when Bloch used an English word or phrase in the original), although the few attempts at explicating some of Bloch’s theoretical concepts are not so helpful. For instance, it is claimed that: ‘In Bloch’s philosophy, *novum* is a technical term used to denote the emergence, inherent in the process of becoming, of what is utterly and unexpectedly new’ (522), whereas in fact for Bloch, the New is never wholly new. This book badly lacks a preface or introduction of some kind. Some form of introductory treatment of the categories of Bloch’s aesthetics would have been helpful, as not all of the essays can be understood in their full richness without some knowledge of

Bloch's theoretical ideas. That said, such familiarity is a bonus, not an indispensable prerequisite, and the essays can be enjoyed and their insights appropriated without a deep knowledge of Bloch's other works.

It cannot be taken for granted that these essays appeared in the German edition, and hence in this volume, in their original form; they may in fact have been changed several times before their appearance here. A similar problem occurred with the volume of political essays that Bloch produced, with Suhrkamp having to bring out an additional volume containing the original essays incorporating what were often highly unpalatable political judgements which had been edited out of the collected works. This is of course not such a crucial issue when it comes to literary essays, although many do contain political references, and these references need to be treated cautiously and not uncritically taken as always being the remarkable presentiments that they sometimes appear to be. Some of the shorter pieces appear to have been written specifically for this volume, and it is in no way exhaustive in that there are other literary essays by Bloch which are not included. Some of the essays appeared here for the first time (thus a date of 1930 in the text does not necessarily mean an original publication date of 1930): the dates need to be read as those of the original composition of an essay, and even then there are probably changes to them. A full critical apparatus is not to be expected of a translation, especially given the ongoing lack of a critical edition of Bloch's writings in any language; yet some indication of such issues was really necessary, and, again, a critical preface is badly lacking.

This volume is a substantial and very welcome addition to Bloch's writings available in English. It will do little to redress the imbalance in the appearance of Bloch in English, as the major philosophical works remain inaccessible. For the English reader, Bloch the philosopher remains as dubious a creature as the Loch Ness monster itself. However, it will hopefully help to shift perceptions of Bloch from simply being a literary figure into an increasing recognition that he is a literary figure of some merit.

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**Hilary Bok**

*Freedom and Responsibility.*

Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press

1998. Pp. 214.

US\$39.50. ISBN 0-691-01566-X.

This is a 'two-standpoint' argument for compatibilism about freedom and responsibility. The problem for the compatibilist comes from misunderstanding the relations between two standpoints. Freedom and responsibility are concepts drawn from the standpoint of practical reason, while mechanism is a claim of theoretical reason. Theoretical reason does not and cannot derive claims which use the concepts of practical reason. Consequently mechanism cannot have the consequence that we are never free.

This is an extraordinarily interesting book. Elements of the position are familiar, but here they are deployed in a new configuration. The result is a new argument for compatibilism, closely and carefully argued. It is a genuine addition to the discussion.

Chapter 1 lays out the problem, with particular emphasis on what the libertarian legitimately sees as weaknesses in the standard compatibilist position. Chapter 2 introduces the two standpoints. Reasoning undertaken to determine the will, to answer the question 'What should I do?' is reasoning from the practical standpoint. Reasoning undertaken to 'describe the world insofar as this can be done without engaging in practical reasoning' (63) is reasoning from the theoretical standpoint.

Bok argues that claims established by the two standpoints cannot conflict. Moral and practical properties supervene on theoretical properties, i.e., any two situations indiscernible from the theoretical standpoint are indiscernible from the practical standpoint. The practical standpoint must begin with information about the world derived through theoretical reason, since action affects the world. But the practical standpoint adds something of its own (it 'manipulates these data, in accordance with procedures of its own devising' [68]). Consequently, theoretical reason will be 'indifferent' to the deliverances of practical reason: 'no set of theoretical claims is equivalent to a claim about ... what we should do' (65-6). A 'practical concept' is a concept which will be deployed by any attempt to engage in practical reasoning. Freedom and responsibility are two such concepts; claims involving these concepts are ones that only practical reason gives us reason to make (74). So theoretical reason cannot justifiably make claims that conflict with the practical claim that we are sometimes free and responsible.

Must we, though, use practical concepts? We have reason to engage in practical reason to the extent that sometimes it is unclear what we have most reason to choose (78). Theoretical reason cannot settle such questions. Suppose I am equipped with a Pocket Oracle, 'a tiny yet unimaginably powerful computer that has been perfectly programmed to predict my behavior' (81). If my deliberation is at all responsive to what the Oracle might tell me, it cannot, Bok argues, tell me what I will do. For to do so, it would have



to factor into its calculations what it will tell me and how that bears on my practical deliberation. But that would require that prior to completing its calculation of its prediction it would have to have access to the end state of its calculation. Hence I cannot learn any theoretical claim concerning what I will choose or do.

Still, if mechanism is true, then there is exactly one way my deliberation can go, so isn't freedom after all an illusion? Bok argues (Chapter 3) that this begs the question, by relating freedom with a particular conception of possibility. There is another and more appropriate conception of possibility. Take a description of the state of the world at some time prior to the choice; add a statement of the physical laws; subtract any information about what the agent actually chooses. Whatever is compatible with that statement is possible for the agent (97). Why should we remove information about what the agent actually chooses? Agents deliberate about some set of alternatives. If some action is impossible then it is not an alternative. But it must be possible in principle for the agent to know that it is not an alternative. Consequently, 'if there is some type of information that is in principle inaccessible to an agent engaged in deliberation, then we cannot define the alternatives available to a given agent as those that are possible relative to a description of her situation that includes information of that kind' (107). Information about their own choices is in principle unavailable to deliberating agents and so cannot narrow the range of what is possible for them. Hence in some cases at least agents deliberate about genuine alternatives. (This is not to say that the agent is able to choose other than what she does end up choosing, only that she has alternatives such that she would perform the relevant actions if she chose them.)

Freedom requires two things: the ability to choose among genuine alternatives, and the ability to step back and evaluate our motivations and reasons. Bok's account gives us both. The argument just summarized shows that agents sometimes choose among genuine alternatives. The second requirement is secured by the account of practical deliberation, according to which practical deliberation is engaged precisely in those cases in which we are not certain about which motivation on which to act.

Chapters 4 through 6 articulate a conception of responsibility and defend the overall account against various difficulties.

Much can, and will, be said about this admirable defense of compatibilism. Let me close with just one worry. How secure is the guarantee that theoretical reason will not give us reason to reconsider key claims of practical reason? The distinction between standpoints is made relative to the purposes for which we engage in the respective kinds of reasoning. But concepts do not respect purposes. Reasoning of any kind may involve any concept, even if the point of a given kind of reasoning would not lead us to deploy just that concept. If a bit of reasoning is undertaken to determine the will, then it is by definition practical reasoning. But a bit of reasoning could, I think, use a practical concept in order to describe the world and not in order to determine

the will. If that is right, then it seems possible that such a piece of reasoning could conclude with the claim that no action is free.

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**Pierre Bourdieu**

*Pascalian Meditations.*

Trans. Richard Nice.

Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press 2000.

Pp. vii + 256.

US\$49.50 (cloth: ISBN 0-8047-3331-7);

US\$18.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8047-3332-5).

Along with the philosophical reader edited by Richard Shusterman (*Bourdieu* [Oxford: Blackwell 1999]), the translation of *Pascalian Meditations* provides an indispensable resource for coming to terms with the distinctive form of poststructuralism and postfoundationalism that follows from Bourdieu's sociological conceptions of habitus, cultural fields, language and symbolic capital. Born in 1930, B currently teaches at the Collège de France and is part of the heretical French generation that includes Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida. Though originally trained in philosophy, fieldwork in Algeria led him into anthropology and sociology, initially under the influence of Claude Lévi-Strauss. As a kind of settling of accounts, for which Pascal serves as a surprising mentor, this remarkable book effectively synthesizes the results of a lifetime of research and reflection on philosophy, culture, social theory and methodology.

The central theme outlined in the first two chapters is a 'critique of scholastic reason', i.e., how the detachment of intellectuals from worldly constraints engenders three characteristic fallacies derived from overgeneralizing specific cases and forgetting the historical conditions of all thought. This discussion draws upon his pivotal category of 'habitus', a 'generative' concept that attempts to define the social subject historically in terms of a 'structuring and structured structure.' The first fallacy of scholastic thinking is the tendency to view social action from the perspective of theoretical reason (rational intentions); this obscures the specific logic of practice as embodied activity. A second fallacy involves humanitarian appeals to universalism that do not take into account the conditions that result in the inequality of access to such possibilities. And a third stems from the universalization of aesthetic claims without understanding their embeddedness in the power dynamics of cultural fields. Chapter 'postscripts' on 'impersonal confessions', 'forgetting



history', and 'how to read an author' serve as reflexive interludes to address the paradox of B's own location within the scholastic universe he seeks to unmask and redeem.

The third chapter on the 'historicity of reason' is the most philosophically ambitious in its attempt to defend a 'historicist rationalism' based on recognition that the social sciences are 'without a foundation' (115). Insisting that one need not choose between Habermas's ostensible idealization of scientific discourse and its reduction by Foucault to power-knowledge relations, B adeptly attempts to show how the unique specificity of the scientific field guarantees that internal struggles are, paradoxically, the condition of possibility that the 'referee' of knowledge is ultimately the 'sanction of reality' (121). Though critical of Rawls and Habermas, he nevertheless accepts the form of ethical universalism implied by the 'ideal speech situation', though stressing the problems of inclusive participation (122).

A chapter on the primacy of 'bodily knowledge' discusses the deeper implications of the concept of habitus as an alternative to the opposition between phenomenological and rational accounts of intentional action and objectivist accounts of structure without a subject. The resulting account of the logic of practice is held to realize Marx's intention of rescuing from idealism the 'active side' of materialism: 'this is precisely the function of the notion of habitus, which restores to the agent a generating, unifying, constructing, classifying power, while recalling that this capacity ... itself socially constructed, is not that of a transcendental subject but of a socialized body' (136).

A chapter devoted to uses of symbolic violence in political struggles provides a compelling analysis of symbolic power, domination and the modern state. Though critical of 'populist illusions' about resistance, his nuanced alternative provides a realistic account of the conditions of possibility of radical change. Moreover, in speaking of male domination as 'the form par excellence of symbolic domination', B introduces the theme of gender that was neglected in his earlier work (171).

The concluding chapter develops a rich account of the relations between time, habitus, existence and power, as well as a multi-faceted critique of rational choice and decision theory.

No summary can do justice to the theoretical paradoxes revealed by the 'negative philosophy' of this intellectual who does 'not like the intellectual in myself' (70). A philosopher *malgré lui*, B's position is quite out of tune with the fashionable 'postmodern' mood, a tendency which he links to 'scholastic enclosure' — typical of the American elite universities — where 'one lives in a little social and electronic paradise from which all trace of work and exploitation has been effaced' (41). Against postmodern skepticism, B's constructivist structuralism defends both an historicist ethical universalism and a commitment to the rigorous representation of the social. The mission of sociology thus becomes a critique of monopolies of universalization as part of 'a permanent *political struggle* for the universalization of the means of access to the universal' (84).



Despite a plea for intellectual generosity in the reading of his own work, an uncharacteristic caricature of Habermas inhibits recognition of the broader convergence of their thinking. Though Habermas is not immune from 'scholastic' sins, and his 'quasi-transcendental' position open to objections, it is surely unfair to say that his approach involves a 'purely theoretical universalization' that 'obscures and represses the question of the economic and social conditions that would have to be fulfilled in order to allow public deliberation capable of leading to a rational consensus' (65). Nor is it clear 'that all those who endlessly declare their faith in democratic dialogue, the ethics of communication and rational universalism will be quick to denounce the cynical realism of a description of how things really work' (127); such a '*Realpolitik* of reason' concerned with 'the setting up of non-distorted social structures between the holders of power and the citizens' is, after all, a central concern of students of deliberative democracy. Upon second thought, over a glass of *vin rouge*, the theorist of competitive 'distinction' and untiring promoter of the internationalization of knowledge might be dialogically compelled to chuckle reflexively in recognizing the Gallic genesis of his own *misrecognition* of 'Teutonic' theory.

Despite the complexity of B's language, the text has moments of moving, literary gracefulness. Though the difficult translation is elegant, the subject and author indexes (which regrettably do not follow those in the more comprehensive French original) are surprisingly unreliable, an unfortunate blemish given that this book will surely endure as a major classic of late twentieth-century social theory.

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**Peg Zeglin Brand, ed.**

*Beauty Matters.*

Bloomington: Indiana University Press 2000.

Pp. xv + 368.

US\$45.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-253-33726-7);

US\$19.95 (paper: ISBN 0-253-21375-4).

Ever since the time of Plato, beauty — both as a concept and as a feature — has played an important role in the philosophical discussions on aesthetics, politics, religion and truth. But when the modern academic field of aesthetics emerged, formerly an area once defined as being the very core of the many discussions on beauty, philosophers were not too keen to cling to this heritage. Instead, in an age where the commercial and propagandistic uses

of beauty in every kind of media escalated, aesthetics turned to formal theories of art and neglected the idea of beauty. However, during the last decades this landscape has been transformed. Discussions on beauty have once again entered the common agenda in the field of aesthetics.

This anthology, edited by Peg Zeglin Brand, is a good example of this trend. The contributions give an illustration of what has been considered to be of interest in the recent debates. At the same time the texts show very well how issues on beauty interpenetrate all levels of culture. Divided into three major parts, the texts in this anthology extend the classical discussion on beauty and explore other areas of philosophical investigations, such as cultural studies, ethnicity, gender, fashion, feminism, politics and religion. The overall impression is that this anthology is intended for a reader who wants an overview of the recent discussions, as well as some rather specialised but illustrative essays on various trends in post-modern art.

The essays in the first part, 'Beyond Kant', take off from the traditional definitions of the concept of beauty. Starting with Kant's theory of beauty in *Critique of Judgement*, Marcia M. Eaton tries to explain the problematic nexus of the traditional conceptions of beauty in aesthetics. As Eaton argues, beauty, seen as a subjective ideal on the one hand, and as an objective feature on the other, resists an easy definition that would settle the debate once and for all. But as it is argued in the three following essays, written by Noël Carroll, Paul C. Taylor and Arthur Danto respectively, there are also heavy cultural and ethnical underpinnings behind the concept that must be considered in depth before we even know what we are talking about. The racist matrix behind the notion of human beauty, both in the history of aesthetics and in the ideals of today, cultivated in our own cultural soil, is often extremely overt.

The second part of the anthology, 'Body Beautiful', focuses on the ideal of human beauty from different perspectives. In this part Kathleen M. Higgins, Susan Bordo, Dawn Perlemutter, Eva Kit Wah Man and Anita Silvers explore notions of human beauty and non-beauty, as well as other standard measures, by an explicit turn to the empirical material and vernacular standards that cannot be ignored in this context, as even Kant once realised. It is generally argued that conceptions of beauty are related to certain contingent features, such as historical conceptions of sexuality, that have strong connections to the political and religious dimensions in a certain society at a certain time. Vivid examples taken from kitsch production, ads for male underwear, Miss America competitions, Chinese ideas of female beauty through history, and human disability illustrate the points being made.

The third part, 'Body as Art', is dedicated to artworks where the body is both the medium and the message. Hilary Robinson, Kaori Chino, Sally Banes and Peg Zeglin Brand give some interesting examples of works by recent artists, that use their own bodies in their art (Orlan, for example) to problematise mainstream conceptions of (feminine) beauty. The theoretical

substance and philosophical tint are less obvious in these texts than in some other parts of the anthology, which, of course, is due to the subject matter.

On the whole, the contributors of this anthology make very clear that beauty matters in various ways. But in which way does philosophical aesthetics matter in this context? It is, as I see it, far from evident how philosophy can contribute to the development of cultural ideals of beauty today. Still, this seems to be the ultimate and ambitious goal in some of the essays.

I am sceptical toward the possibility of success of such attempts. A proposal of a philosophically sound concept (and idea) of beauty would probably be quite in vain, if the goal really was to change the contextual standards, since it would be ignorant of the medium by which the modern icons of beauty standards are transmitted.

It is obvious that the main medium of beautification is pictorial and non-verbal, in contrast to the philosophical argument. Thus, outside the strict borders of philosophy we have the practises of visual art, kitsch, fashion and pornography, which today through every kind of visual media all contribute to a more unified and visualised standard definition of beauty than ever. In these virtual contexts of beauty and beautification, academic philosophy of aesthetics clearly plays a less significant role. For example, it is far from obvious that the critique from philosophical feminism has been able to reshape the mainstream fashion and pornography standards of beauty in any considerable way. A comparison of some of the texts, e.g., the texts by Bordo, Man, Perlemutter, and Robinson, make that situation painfully clear.

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**Judith Butler**

*Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity.*

New York: Routledge 1999. Pp. vii + 221.

Cdn\$29.95; US\$19.95. ISBN 0-415-92499-5.

**Patricia Hill-Collins**

*Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment.*

New York: Routledge 2000. Pp. vi + 335.

Cdn\$120.00; US\$80.00

(cloth: ISBN 0-415-92483-9);

Cdn\$29.95; US\$19.95

(paper: ISBN 0-415-92484-7).

Where has feminism found itself at the end of the millennium? Both Judith Butler and Patricia Hill-Collins address this question in the tenth-anniversary editions of their germinal texts, both of which contain new prefaces. Hill-Collins has also revised a good deal of *Black Feminist Thought* due to the expansion of race, class, and gender studies since the initial publication. Recognizing feminist scholars are writing from different institutional locations and historical moments than in 1990, Butler and Hill-Collins situate their texts within current feminist debates and acknowledge the criticisms lodged against their work.

With *Gender Trouble*, Judith Butler destabilizes notions of the body as they relate to sex and gender, proving that what feminism came to accept as a stable divide was in fact an uncertain boundary. Butler writes that '[sex] was always already gender, with the consequences that the distinction between sex and gender turns out to be no distinction at all' (7). Thus, Butler argues that analyses that rely upon the sex/gender dichotomy are mistaken because there is no intelligible body prior to gender. In other words, Butler argues that when a baby is born, s/he is simultaneously marked as sexed *and* gendered, producing a culturally intelligible body. Because she understands gender as performative and claims that there are infinite proliferations of gender identity, Butler asks feminist theory to re-think its dependence on of the category of Woman.

Also questioning what might have been excluded by the category of Woman constructed by feminism, Patricia Hill-Collins' *Black Feminist Thought* examines the role of race and class, suggesting that an alternative epistemology is needed to study and understand the lives of black and working class women. Working against earlier feminism's penchant for advancing universal claims, Hill-Collins charts an epistemology of Black women's experiences that takes into account alternate family arrangements and a sexual and racial division of labor. In short, she sketches a framework for understanding Black women's lives that places them at the center of

analysis rather than simply being added into theories and methodologies for which race is an afterthought.

Writing from what she perceived as an embattled position, Hill-Collins defined Black feminist thought. In the preface to the first edition of *Black Feminist Thought*, Hill-Collins states that she 'decided not to stress the contradictions, frictions, and inconsistencies of Black feminist thought' (vii). Believing this strategy to be most appropriate for that historical moment, she presented a coherent and monolithic account of Black feminist thought. Her preface to the second edition, however, claims a revised methodology. Rather than defining a singular Black feminism against which other models will be measured, Hill-Collins seeks 'more fluidity without sacrificing logical rigor' (xi). Thus, Hill-Collins has become less concerned with staking territory and more concerned with how Black feminist thought can and should intersect with various sexual practices, identities, and global women's issues.

Similarly, Butler remains as dedicated to challenging feminism's regulatory functions, believing that feminism's dependence on identity forecloses the possibilities of transforming existing identities. Butler writes in her latest preface that publishing *Gender Trouble* was a means of questioning feminism about its reticence to question the identity at its base. Butler maintains she sought not to re-define gendered existences in ways that would establish new models of behavior, but rather to open up possibilities for the proliferations of myriad gendered identities across a variety of political commitments. In response to those who continue to question the validity of scholarship that explores possibilities without necessarily forwarding new models, Butler acerbically replies that those who have been the 'illegitimate' or the 'impossible' would never raise such questions. As for the possibilities of her concept of performativity and the understanding of race, Butler asserts that race and gender must be simultaneously read through multiple frameworks, with gender and race being limited as exclusive categories of analysis. Thus, in the same vein as Hill-Collins' new commitment to a sense of fluidity, Butler remains committed to understanding the possibilities of identities and coalitions without defining new categories or suggesting one category of analysis take precedence.

Both Butler and Hill-Collins respond to growing concerns about potential audiences for feminist scholarship. In response to animosity toward 'high' theory and its (in)accessibility, Butler and Hill-Collins have very different strategies and commitments. In defense of what has frequently been called an unreadable book, Butler's new preface directly addresses those who question her text's accessibility, particularly for those outside academia. Butler asserts we should be suspicious of standard grammar, writing that the notion of transparent language can lull us into a false sense of understanding. Endorsing Monique Wittig's argument that standard grammar is one medium through which gender is naturalized, Butler states that the 'alteration of gender at the most fundamental epistemic level will be conducted, in part, through contesting the grammar in which gender is given'

(xix). Thus, Butler believes that through its very structure, *Gender Trouble* confronts standardized notions of grammar and therefore gender.

In contrast, Hill-Collins believes it important that her book be readable, in particular for Black women both inside and outside the academy. In her preface to the first edition of *Black Feminist Thought*, Hill-Collins plainly states that complex ideas can be presented in ways that are 'no less powerful or rigorous' (vii). Like many other scholars, Hill-Collins is suspicious of how academic rhetoric creates and maintains certain privileges. Although the tenth-anniversary edition of *Black Feminist Thought* incorporates new theoretical paradigms and investigates identity in more complex ways than the original publication, ten years on Hill-Collins remains committed to producing an accessible text, especially for the black women whose lives she hopes to illuminate.

The nineties bore witness to feminism's attempted accommodation of expanded categories of analysis, and a good deal of feminist scholarship became vulnerable to criticism when every possible political or social identity failed to be incorporated into analyses. Both Butler and Hill-Collins respond to the challenge of categorical expansions. However, it is interesting to note that Hill-Collins does not respond to Butler's argument that 'the subject' might not be the vehicle for women's liberation, and that Butler's treatment of race is cursory. Perhaps more interestingly, neither author questions the explosion of categories or when and if this expansion might become a hindrance to feminism. Must each framework speak to an infinite horizon of identities? Or is there an end point to the proliferation of identities Butler suggests? A finite number of potentialities? These questions haunt feminism and are frequently grounds for criticism and dismissal, making it all the more important that key figures such as Butler and Hill-Collins address them.

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**John W. Cook**

*Wittgenstein, Empiricism, and Language.*

Don Mills, ON and New York: Oxford

University Press 2000.

Pp. xv + 224.

Cdn\$120.00: US\$63.95.

ISBN 0-19-513298-X.

Wittgenstein scholars can be divided roughly into two groups. The first group focuses on what it regards as the important philosophical content of his work, most famously the private language argument and rule-following considerations. The second group emphasizes Wittgenstein's larger ethico-religious purpose and the philosophical method he advocates in its service. Cook, one might say, takes the worst of each approach. He agrees with the first group that Wittgenstein advances a certain metaphysical theory, in violation of his own dictum that philosophy should be purely descriptive. He agrees with the second group that such theories are no good.

Cook points out that it is one thing to take Wittgenstein at his word, but another to understand what his words mean. One might agree that we should not advance theories, but what would count as a theory for Wittgenstein? Cook's view is that Wittgenstein is, confusedly, just as much a theorist as the skeptics and realists he opposes. Wittgenstein, he argues, is not just a methodological phenomenalist describing — what else? — phenomena, but a metaphysical phenomenalist, denying the possible existence of anything beyond phenomena. Cook works hard in defense of this provocative view, but the burden of proof on anyone offering such an uncharitable interpretation is probably more than anyone could bear.

The first nine chapters and the appendix (which shows how much Russell's *Our Knowledge of the External World* influenced Wittgenstein) defend a reading of Wittgenstein as an empiricist and a reductionist, following up on Cook's *Wittgenstein's Metaphysics* (Cambridge 1994). In that book, as in this, Cook argues that the only significant difference between Wittgenstein's early and late work is that his reductionism became subtler. According to Cook, Wittgenstein's lifelong opposition to skepticism led him to reject realism (which holds that other people's minds, for instance, are objects of a quite possibly unknowable kind) and to embrace phenomenism (which reduces minds to behavior and other publicly observable criteria). Here Cook's wide familiarity with the primary literature serves him well, as he cites various remarks that seem to show Wittgenstein as an empiricist, a behaviorist, a verificationist, and so on. Cook's reading is very plausible.

However, with so many other readings of Wittgenstein's notoriously difficult work competing with Cook's, he needs to be more than merely plausible, especially when advocating such a hostile (but not therefore necessarily wrong) interpretation. It is his treatment of the secondary literature that is least satisfactory. To be sure, those interested in the (alleged) arguments and theories of the *Philosophical Investigations* will find much

here to engage their interest. P.M.S. Hacker's writing on criteria, for instance, is directly challenged, and Cook's alternative view is developed and defended at length. Generally, though, there is little direct engagement with the secondary literature, except in footnotes. The work of David Pears, Stanley Cavell, James Conant, and Richard Eldridge is not even mentioned. M. O'C. Drury is written off as 'naïve' and labeled, without evidence, as one of Wittgenstein's least able students. D.Z. Phillips' understanding of religious belief is dismissed as applying to the beliefs only of Phillips himself 'and three of his friends' (196, note 22), even though Cook 'is forced to admit that we [sic] don't know what we are talking about when we use religious terms' (158). If the reader is to be convinced that Cook's reading is the best that can be made of Wittgenstein's work, she needs to be shown how other commentators go wrong. Cook does little to provide this service.

The last six chapters of the book deal with ordinary language. Cook distinguishes between three kinds of Ordinary Language Philosophy: Standard (roughly the idea that any philosophical conclusion that violates ordinary language is therefore wrong); Metaphysical (traditional philosophy plus the claim that, despite appearances to the contrary, the true meaning of ordinary language matches the philosopher's favored theories — allegedly practiced by Augustine, Leibniz, Berkeley, Reid, and Wittgenstein); and Investigative (favored by Cook and Frank Ebersole). This last kind of philosophy consists in looking not only at the conclusions of philosophical arguments but also at the steps that lead up to them, and in paying careful attention to how the relevant words are actually used in everyday speech. This is something that Wittgenstein fails to do, Cook argues. Had he practiced the right kind of ordinary language philosophy, though, he would have avoided all the failed theories and muddled thinking that Cook attributes to him.

The Cook/Ebersole approach, of course, sounds like what a lot of people have thought the later Wittgenstein was doing all along. Cook even quotes Wittgenstein sounding a lot like Cook. He points out, though, that Wittgenstein's work is full of extra-ordinary examples and obscure, aphoristic remarks, not extended passages of genuinely ordinary language. On the other hand, as Cook reminds us, Wittgenstein did not believe in doing for the reader anything that the reader could do for herself. One would think that coming up with large chunks of ordinary language concerning the use of a word such as 'mind' might well fall into this category. That is not to say that Cook and Wittgenstein really agree on how philosophy should be done, though. Wittgenstein denied that there was any one method for doing philosophy, as Cook believes (with some exceptions involving religion and ethics). Otherwise, though, there is something strikingly Wittgensteinian in Cook's approach, and he acknowledges a debt to Wittgenstein. This makes it all the more disappointing that he does not take more seriously those who have struggled most to understand and render plausible Wittgenstein's remarks on philosophical method, religious belief, and the connections between the two. The secondary literature that Cook most ignores focuses on precisely the areas of Wittgenstein's philosophy that fit worst into Cook's interpretive



frame. To prove he is right he will have to take on these competing views. Unfortunately, the way out of a fly-bottle is the way the fly least wants to go.

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**M. James C. Crabbe, ed.**

*From Soul to Self.*

New York: Routledge 1999. Pp. xi + 158.

Cdn\$95.00: US\$55.00

(cloth: ISBN 0-415-17117-2);

Cdn\$32.99: US\$21.99

(paper: ISBN 0-415-17118-0).

This book grew out of the annual lecture series given at Wolfson College, Oxford, in 1996. It consists of eight essays by well known scholars, and is intended to appeal to specialists and non-specialists alike. As the title, *From Soul to Self*, suggests, these wide-ranging essays explore the development of the notion of soul and self from both historical and contemporary scientific perspectives. In brief, this work acknowledges the perennial importance of questions surrounding the soul or self through both figures from the history of philosophy (like, Aristotle, Augustine, and Hume), and scientific psychology's advances in cognitive mapping. For instance, the editor, M. James C. Crabbe, understands these essays to circulate around the four major themes of 'process, language, maps, and consciousness' (3). These essays then, engage some of the following questions: What is the nature of the soul or self? Do we have souls? Do all animals have souls? Is the very notion of the soul *practically* necessary for human life?

The first six essays are largely particular historical analyses or surveys of the idea of soul, self, or mind. The following list of essays is helpful in revealing the breadth of this collection: M. James Crabbe's 'Introduction', Richard Sorabji's 'Soul and Self in Ancient Philosophy', Anthony Kenny's 'Body, Soul, and Intellect in Aquinas', Kallistos Ware's 'The Soul in Greek Christianity', Peter Rivi  re's 'Shamanism and the Unconfined Soul', and Gary Matthew's 'Augustine, Descartes on the Soul of Animals'. As the titles of these essays should convey, this collection highlights the persistence of the question of the soul and self, for humanity as such, in both Western and Non-Western traditions.

The remaining two essays offer a more contemporary scientific approach. Galen Strawson's essay, 'The Sense of Self', functions as a bridge by situating the question of the self from the history of philosophy within the context of



scientific inquiry. Susan Greenfield's essay, 'Soul, Brain, Mind', is the more scientific of the two. Greenfield confronts the notion of a transient soul, self or consciousness in the more physical accounts of the brain and its 'transient assemblies of neurons' (121).

These essays offer a rich survey of our historical and scientific obsession with the notion of soul and self. And while the connections between, for instance, Hume's theory of bundles, the Buddhist conception of five bundles, and scientific psychology's description of our transient assemblies of neurons, offers intriguing parallels, such breadth in such a brief book can be as overwhelming as it is thought-provoking. In this sense, however, this book's weakness is simultaneously its strength. These eight essays offer an expansive and well ordered survey that leaves one wanting more. In other words, this brief collection of essays, like any good sampler, offers the reader a taste, and in doing so, opens a new world, acts as a brief guide, and points the way for further exploration, for a reader already enlivened by this 'sampling'.

**F. Scott Scribner**

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**Arthur Davis and Peter Emberley, eds.**  
*Collected Works of George Grant: Volume I,*  
1933-1950.

Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2000.

Pp. xxxvii + 501.

Cdn\$/US\$80.00. ISBN 0-8020-0762-7.

George Grant (1918-1988) published six very slim volumes and some essays. His collected works will take up a foot-and-a-half of library shelf, and fill some 5,000 pages. Six thick volumes will collect his published and some of his unpublished work. Two further volumes, being edited by William Christian, will collect his correspondence. One is inclined to ask whether a thinker deserves such a monument, and to think that it is often an accident whether keen scholars will be energized by such a project. This project is not an accident, however. Literary executors with the acumen and dedication of these are themselves partly a product of, and a tribute to, the power of the personality being thus honoured.

A retrospective of a person's life work would be incomplete if it did not personalize the man. This volume begins with a photo of the young Grant looking like a dyspeptic Glenn Gould. There are moments of tenderness recorded here, reflections on youthful sensuality, and testimony of lengthy depression ('utter sense of defeat' [18]), all of which bring to life the deep sensitivity which was so often remarked upon throughout Grant's life.

Passages in the diary that he kept for just a couple of months in 1942 are full of renewed life, wicked satire, and growing self-awareness.

Grant is known first of all as the author of *Lament for a Nation*, his 1965 lamentation that the forces of continentalism (the Pearson Liberals, with support from John F. Kennedy) had defeated forever the forces of Canadian nationalism. In that work he argued that a kind of conservatism (nothing like that offered by our current Alliance party) was a necessary condition of the survival of a recognizable Canada with some independence and some respect for its heritage. It is interesting, then, to be able to read in this first volume, evidence of Grant's early innocence. The juvenilia include a book review written at Queen's University when Grant was 17, which is respectful of the 'liberal tradition' of Christian progressivism in which he was brought up. Another such review accepts Robert Maynard Hutchins' critique of American higher education as directly applicable to all of 'us' in North America (9). The border is invisible.

These complacencies began to change during the Second World War. In London for the first horrifying years of the war (as an air raid officer during the Battle of Britain), Grant lost his faith in progress. After convalescence from tuberculosis and depression at home, he spent the last years of the war reconstructing himself by trying to reconstruct Canada. As national secretary of the Canadian Association for Adult Education, he was responsible for coordinating and summarizing the reports from fifteen hundred Citizens Forum groups across the country. This involved writing and broadcasting aimed at supporting a democratic movement for the post-war redesigning of domestic and foreign policies for the country. (It is a poignant coincidence that Simone Weil was at the same time working on a reconstruction project for France, while she was dying in London.) As Davis and Emberley remark, this 'public engagement made his later writing more vivid and immediately accessible than most academic work' (43).

It also made Grant's later work much more informed about Canadian realities and difficulties. He wrote about participation by women, union members and immigrants, about the importance of the French-English partnership, about anti-racism campaigns, about the growth of U.S. investment in the Canadian economy, and about the importance of continued membership in the British Empire. The Empire says, 'don't just be American or European or Asiatic or African; be something more than that, be world-wide,' he wrote (100). This last point was deployed against those who urged cutting ties with Britain in the name of noble internationalism. In *Lament* this lesson is echoed in the claim that Canada will become *less* international as it is absorbed into the American empire; independence from the U.S.A. is a prerequisite of world citizenship. The fear was fully formed in a 1945 article, 'Have We a Canadian Nation?': 'For in this country many Canadians (and in places of high responsibility and power) consciously or unconsciously are leading this country in a direction that can only eventually mean one thing — union with the U.S.A.' (134).



After the war, Grant returned to his Rhodes Scholarship at Oxford, but now he thought he should study philosophy. When he confronted it, in the persons of Ayer and Austin, he was sure that that was not what he had meant, and switched to theology. More than half of the present volume is taken up by Grant's doctoral theses, 'The Concept of Nature and Supernature in the Theology of John Oman'.

There have been reports that the thesis is uncritical. That is false. On nearly every page there are questions raised, hesitations expressed, or objections mounted. Oman, a Scottish pacifist and Christian Platonist who had died in 1939, is examined with scholarly insight and thoroughness. What is not questioned is the intellectual autonomy of theology, and, except very rarely, the critical moves are made from within that standpoint. A moment of confrontation with 'the court of secular scepticism' occurs in Chapter VII, where Grant accuses logical positivists of believing that, if moral judgements must be analyzed as expressions of emotion, then a dislike of hot weather cannot be different in type from a dislike of racism (358). In discussing the epistemology of our study of nature in Chapter III, Kant is invoked in some detail, and 'naturalists' and 'empiricists' are challenged. The overwhelming sense, however, is that Grant is struggling with the problem of evil, with how a spiritual dimension can still be found in the world of WW II. His biggest debt to Oman is to his 'theology of the cross'. This is Luther's phrase; he distinguished it from the 'theology of glory'. One of the implications of the theology of the cross is that God is to be approached through the suffering of Christ rather than through human reason; another is that pain and evil are not to be underestimated. It insists on humility about the gulf between God and the world. As the editors note: 'Grant would often quote [Luther's] 21<sup>st</sup> Heidelberg Thesis in later years: "The theologian of glory says that evil is good and good evil; the theologian of the cross says that the thing is as it is"' (164). Scholars will find that this theological foundation underlies much of Grant's later thinking.

The volume ends with useful appendices, including an admirable one on the editors' principles. Another lists known broadcasts on CBC radio and television, which constitute what the editors call Grant's second career. It also ends as Grant was entering his maturity, marrying, starting a family, and beginning a career in the Philosophy Department at Dalhousie University, in Halifax, Nova Scotia. (In 1960 he would leave, eventually to join the Department of Religion at McMaster University, in Ontario.)

Decades later, I served as Grant's assistant in the supervision of a doctoral thesis on Simone Weil. He was a generous, supportive and inspiring supervisor; he also clearly loved the subject. Something I shall anticipate in future volumes is the appearance of Grant's unpublished essays on Weil. One of the extraordinary minds of the last century, she repays the kind of care and insight that Grant will no doubt have brought to the exploration of her life and work.

**Steven Burns**

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**Jeffrey Edwards**

*Substance, Force, and the Possibility of Knowledge: On Kant's Philosophy of Material Nature.*

Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press 2000. Pp. xiv + 277.

US\$55.00. ISBN 0-520-21847-7.

What is the relationship between Kant's final writings in the *Opus postumum* and the earlier works of his critical philosophy? Are the restrictions on our knowledge we find in the *Critique of Pure Reason* inconsistent with the bold speculations we find in the *Opus postumum*? Some have argued that Kant moved into a 'postcritical' phase in his later writings; others that there was no fundamental shift away from his earlier critical philosophy; others that his abilities had simply waned in old age. In *Substance, Force, and the Possibility of Knowledge* Jeffrey Edwards argues that 'Kant was finally unwilling to conform to the orthodox view of his critical philosophy that he himself had so actively promoted during the 1780s and earlier 1790s' (192). Most notably, Edwards argues that the *Opus postumum*'s conception of an all-pervasive material ether or 'caloric' (*Wärmestoff*) is crucial for understanding the tensions between realism and idealism that Edwards contends were not fully resolved in Kant's 'classical' critical period.

In defending this thesis, Edwards develops 'a heterodox picture of at least one strand in the unfolding of the critical theory of our a priori knowledge of nature' (192). In the *Opus postumum*, he argues, Kant moves away from his earlier conception of the transcendental idealism of space and time toward 'a form of Spinozism' (191) in which 'Kant's ultimate standpoint demonstrates ... affinity with Hegel's positions ...' (253), and according to which, as one of Kant's very last notes has it, 'transcendental idealism is realism in an absolute sense' (Kant, *Opus postumum*, Akademie edition, volume 21: 99). Edwards' intriguing claim is that crucial elements of this apparently stronger brand of absolute realism are already to be found operating as indispensable (if standardly overlooked) premises in the Third Analogy of the First *Critique*.

The aim of the Third Analogy is to establish that the cognition of objective coexistence in time is possible only if all material substances stand in reciprocal dynamical community. Edwards argues that the proof in fact relies upon a passage toward the end of the Third Analogy in which Kant argues 'that only continual influences in all positions of space can guide our sense from one object to another; that the light that plays between our eye and the [celestial] world-bodies effects a mediate community between us and them, and thereby shows the coexistence of the latter ...' (A213/B260). Edwards' basic idea is (i) that Kant's transcendental argument here amounts to an *a priori existence proof* that an all-pervasive dynamical-material ether is necessary for the possibility of experience; (ii) that this *material* transcendental condition is inconsistent with Kant's official and purely *formalist* characterization of his transcendental philosophy; but (iii) that such an a

priori yet material condition is entirely consistent with the strongly realist dynamical theory of matter that has been an important part of Kant's thinking all along and finally comes to the fore in the *Opus postumum*.

In this brief space I cannot possibly do justice to the detailed case Edwards makes for his basic revisionary thesis, but I will raise two related questions that defenders of more standard interpretations of Kant's system will want to put to Edwards.

First, does the *proof* of the Third Analogy really rely upon the full-blooded *empirical* conception of dynamical matter that Kant alludes to near the end of that section? The Third Analogy requires comprehensive reciprocal interaction among material substances. Comparisons with the other proofs for Kant's principles of pure understanding will show that he ends each proof, as here, with a reflection on further *empirical* criteria that are bound up with the a priori principle he has just proved, and that throughout he knowingly illustrates his a priori principles with empirical illustrations that are not as yet officially sanctioned. Edwards is right that on Kant's *full* story (involving the *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science* as well as the *Opus postumum*), the empirical instantiation of the Third Analogy's a priori conception of community will be a continuous dynamical field of matter-as-force. However, I suspect that many readers of Kant will not be convinced by Edwards' argument that the latter robust empirical instantiation is indispensable to the Third Analogy's proof of community itself. (Note, by the way, that Edwards does not venture any interesting critical assessments of the truth or reasonableness of Kant's various transcendental arguments: his concerns are historical-interpretive rather than critical-evaluative.)

Second, has Edwards correctly characterized Kant's 'official' conception of his transcendental philosophy? Many of those who have wished to save Kant from his formal idealism — typically by unearthing or creating internal tensions that allegedly reveal Kant to be wresting himself from his idealism despite himself — have interpreted transcendental idealism's correlative *empirical realism* in grossly subjectivist terms. This is clearly the case with Edwards, who holds (mistakenly) that there are 'strictures against any objectivistic account of space entailed by the proposition that space is a mere sensible form or form of intuition,' whereas on the alleged 'Spinozistic realism' of Kant's last years 'matter or sensible (i.e., material) space cannot be something that is merely *called* external, or that is represented merely in thought as being outside us, as the classical critical theory of space would have us maintain' (173).

But the closest Kant himself ever came to *that* woeful version of transcendental idealism was in the Berkelean-sounding first edition Fourth Paralogism, which predictably ends up being the abandoned text that Edwards relies on for his characterization of Kant's classical critical theory (e.g., 248n20). The truth is, however, that Kant's formal idealism is *not* inconsistent with the a priori knowledge of 'a sensible (i.e., material) space' — in fact it ultimately *demand*s it, as will be confirmed by any of the more standard readings of the complex movement from the transcendental deduction (with



its notion of a *formal intuition* of space as object) to the First Analogy (permanent, all-comprehensive material substance external to our subjective apprehensions) to the Refutation of Idealism (external material space) to the *MFNS* (matter as the movable against relative material spaces). And on a more plausible conception of Kant's 'classical' empirical realism the ostensibly like-minded realism of the *Opus postumum* will not shock one into reinterpreting Kant as a latter day Spinozist or nascent Hegelian.

Even if one disagrees fundamentally with Edwards' revisionary conception of Kant's critical philosophy, however, this book is of significant value for carefully tracing the development of Kant's philosophy of material nature across the entire spectrum of his career and for embedding his dynamical theory of matter in the tremendously important disputes of the eighteenth century concerning the nature of matter and force.

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**Paul Fairfield**

*Moral Selfhood in the Liberal Tradition.*

Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2000.

Pp. viii + 278.

Cdn\$/US\$60.00. ISBN 0-8020-4736-X.

This is an ambitious book which seeks to found a traditional liberalism on a new understanding of the self. Paul Fairfield criticizes atomic individualism, egotistic hedonism, the metaphysics of individual substance, contractarianism, the concept of utility-maximization, and the hegemony of instrumental and formal modes of rationality. Fairfield is, however, a staunch liberal, if not a libertarian. He seeks to rescue liberalism from communitarian critiques by refashioning the liberal account of self-identity.

*Moral Selfhood in the Liberal Tradition* is a well-organized book. After a short introduction, Fairfield advances a critical history of the liberal tradition, discussing in turn, original liberals: Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau and Kant; utilitarian liberals: Bentham and Mill; new liberals: Thomas Green and Leonard Hobhouse; neoclassical liberals: John Rawls and Robert Nozick, and communitarian critics of liberalism such as Charles Taylor, Alasdair MacIntyre, and Michael Sandel. Fairfield provides a standard account of intellectual history seen from a particular perspective. His chapter on communitarianism is, however, more controversial.



Fairfield criticizes the alleged communitarian justification of coercion. Communitarianism offers an explicit conception of the good, whereas Fairfield supports a neutral liberal state. But liberalism is not so neutral as Fairfield supposes. The usual talk of moral neutrality is greatly exaggerated. There is some consensus about the good, and as many have argued, the liberal view presupposes its own good. However implicit, liberalism promotes a vision of the good that permeates its theories and its policies.

Fairfield goes on to advance a social and historical account of self-identity. Invoking authors such as Hegel, Nietzsche, Sartre, Dewey, Heidegger, and Ortega y Gasset, he proposes a phenomenological self embedded in a particular *Zeitgeist*, time and place. The individual self 'is constituted by an array of social and historical conditions' (212). Indeed, 'its basic constitution is a social contingency' (214). It 'possesses no deep metaphysical core of being, no inner citadel or occult entity safely removed from the vicissitudes of history and sociality' (212). Fairfield's self expresses itself in linguistic and narrative terms. Its existential goal is individual authenticity and radical self-creation. 'Mature selfhood is [then] properly viewed as an achievement of self-creation which fashions all morally significant actions and experiences into a narrative unity displaying coherence and directionality' (172).

The preoccupation with personal autonomy is a defining trait of liberalism. This emphasis on individual identity may, however, degenerate into narcissism. Contemporary social critics such as Charles Taylor, Richard Sennett, Christopher Lasch, Allen Bloom, Tom Wolfe, Gilles Lipovetsky, and Robert Bella have all criticized the overweening subjectivity of the modern, liberal culture. Fairfield does not acknowledge or respond to this kind of critique.

Fairfield's account of individual autonomy is, in another sense, problematic. Fairfield advances a 'revisability thesis,' 'that individuals ... constituted by ... moral ends and attachments are fully capable nonetheless of revising these ends and attachments' (130). But how can a self that is so wholly a product of culture and society be capable of such radical self-creation? Fairfield discards the traditional liberal account of the self as too metaphysical. If, however, there is no individual core that exists beyond the reach of social conditioning, no inescapable innate sphere of individuality, how can the self triumph over social conformism? Fairfield owes us a fuller explanation of the origins of robust individuality.

In a chapter on rational agency, Fairfield elaborates a critique of technical and formal accounts of rationality. Much of this critique rings true but there is a generality to the discussion that is disconcerting. If 'the general scientification and technification of cultural discourse is a leading cause of their present deterioration' (191), this needs to be demonstrated through a careful examination of specific examples, cases and issues. Perhaps the requirements of peer review muted the discussion of specifics, but the text, which makes a valid point, suffers as a result.

Fairfield proposes a new account of 'communicative reason' inspired by Karl Jaspers, Hans-Georg Gadamer, and Jurgen Habermas. On this herme-

neutic reading, reason is a discursive skill, a practical, nontechnical, ordinary-language conversation which is open-ended and 'opposed to dogmatism in all its forms' (199). But not everything is open to endless questioning and not everything, particularly in the moral realm, is open to revision. If Fairfield offers us a serious alternative to reductionist models of rationality, the emphasis on non-dogmatism seems overstated.

Finally, Fairfield introduces his version of 'the free society'. Espousing a liberalism reminiscent of Friedrich Hayek, Fairfield attacks socialism, communitarianism, fascism, majoritarianism and nationalism. Fairfield is a complete liberal. He argues for a free-market economy and complains about the welfare state: 'From cradle to grave, we are all wards of the state now' (233). He supports 'a right ... to refuse participation in a labour union' (238) and asserts that 'big government fouls almost everything it touches' (237). The free society will not guarantee 'any particular pattern of economic distribution' (222). Nor will it ensure 'the continued flourishing of communal traditions' (222). Fairfield's views are, in many ways, reminiscent of a certain brand of American libertarianism.

Authors such as Joseph Raz and William Galston propose an altruistic or a virtuous liberalism. But Fairfield defends the traditional liberal preoccupation with negative liberty. Freedom is the absence of coercion. Coercion is normally wrong because 'the coerced individual is an instrument of another's purposes' (220). But the social individual *willingly* becomes the instrument of the community's purposes. The social self is able to identify with causes larger than the self. This commitment, if it is towards a worthwhile end, is not the absence of freedom. It is freedom itself.

This is a provocative book dealing with fundamental issues. But the social individual who aspires to some shared insight into the good will find Fairfield's highly individualistic liberalism unappealing. They may come away believing that the book only demonstrates what they already knew, that the embedded social self cannot be reconciled with the liberalism Fairfield so passionately supports.

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**Andrew Feenberg**

*Questioning Technology.*

New York: Routledge 1999. Pp. xvii + 243.

Cdn\$113.00: \$75.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-415-19754-6);

Cdn\$37.99: \$24.99 (paper: ISBN 0-415-19755-4).

The industrial revolution was a technology revolution, an acceleration in the number and complexity of technologies. This multiplicity of technologies is not one single entity with one single purpose, role, or consequence, but this exponential increase in the past two centuries has produced two prevalent ways of thinking about technology. To sketch in caricature, technology is either the benign implementation and improvement of the basic laws of nature, harnessed as a prosthetic extension of our senses and mechanical abilities, or the malignant realization of the broader structures of society, reduplicating and amplifying the worst (along with the best) social and cultural factors. To favour the first approach is to consider technological development as ahistorical and acultural, as a natural progression. To take the second is to consider such progress as socioculturally directed, the product of cultural decisions. Specific technologies embody specific values. If technology is as much the product of such decisions as merely the expansion of the laws of nature, then it reflects conscious (or ill-considered) decisions — and these decisions can be questioned.

Feenberg conceives *Questioning Technology* as the third in a series of related books on the sociocultural aspects of technology, following the lead established earlier in the century by the members of the Frankfurt School (Marcuse, Adorno, and Habermas). It can, though, be read independently of those earlier books. In the first part of the book, *The Politicizing of Technology*, Feenberg argues that technology is value-laden and humanly controlled, beginning from the position that 'Technological development transforms what it is to be human' (2). Technology is political. Sympathetic with the Frankfurt school and critical theory, Feenberg is also critical of the approaches of Marcuse and Habermas, Weber and Heidegger, and of those who argue that technology is a neutral means to shorten the route to natural ends.

In the first chapters readers may be puzzled to find little talk of technology per se, and no talk of specific technologies. Feenberg's stated intention is to demonstrate via two historic social movements that technology has come to be, and come to be understood as, political. His first example is the May 1968 student protests and general strike in France. (The second is the environmental movement of the 1970s.) He claims a thorough reading of the leaflets, manifestoes and graffiti reveal a rejection of technology — specifically of an increasingly technocratic state. But his argument, then, is not that technology is political but that the students and workers rejected technocracy.

Such a view is compatible with the belief that technology is value-neutral. To say the members of a society reject a specific technology, or group of technologies, need be no stronger a claim than to say the citizens reject a particular, though natural, progression of their society. At worse, it is no



more than a charge of Luddism. Further, even granting that technocracy (primarily the organization of humans into systems) is a form of technology, Feenberg still falls short of his goal. His definition of a technocracy allows that 'What makes a society more or less "technocratic" is largely its rhetoric rather than its practice' (4). So the rejection of a technocracy need be no more than the rejection of an attitude or belief; it may be a wake-up call to be more diligent in our administration of a large social organization. Feenberg notes that the 'reliance on technocratic arguments evokes similar reactions from the administered whether the computer really is "down" or the employee behind the counter too lazy to consult it' (4). A rejection of technocracy may be only partially a rejection of technology and may be compatible with a positivist view of it.

The second section, Democratic Rationalization, elaborates the lessons of these two examples of political and social unrest. Feenberg carefully develops an argument for critical constructivism, an application of key elements of critical theory to social constructivism. He argues that the dominant view prior to the 1960s was a deterministic positivism. The social movements of the 1960s, along with the work of people like Thomas Kuhn and Paul Feyerabend, made increasingly credible a social constructivist view of technology. The supposed ahistorical determinism of technology, Feenberg argues, is a cultural construction. For example, technical design is not determined by a value-neutral, ahistorical quality — efficiency. Efficiency itself is a cultural choice, based on a determination of needs and a process of differentiating technical alternatives. It is this historical shift in dominance from the one view to the other that forms the central concern of the first two sections of the book.

It is the third section, Technology and Modernity, that makes the book worth reading. Here Feenberg excels at unpacking the various technological approaches to manipulating the world that come to be misleadingly described in the singular as 'technology'. Feenberg argues that while careful writers are aware that dividing the question of technology into two polar approaches is a caricature, most nonetheless tend equally to treat technology as a singularity. His main criticism of the social constructivists, with whom he clearly has stronger sympathies, is a general lack of facility in drawing out and analyzing component features of technology. Both Habermas and Heidegger fall prey to this despite their general critiques of historicity. The reification of deterministic justifications leads to a negative view of a modern technology based culture.

Key to Feenberg's critical re-evaluation of technology is his ability to integrate the Frankfurt school's negative instrumental rationality with a positive account of the social, ethical, and aesthetic role of technology. Drawing on the work of Gilbert Simondon and Don Ihde, Feenberg contrasts differentiation with concretization. Differentiation is the actual or analytic separation of function (instrumental use) from form (aesthetic and ethical use) which sustains the view of an ahistorical, deterministic technology. Concretization, efficiency and elegance of design, specific to a social and

natural environment, refer 'to the positioning of technologies at the point of intersection of multiple standpoints and aspirations' (218). This amounts to a systematic criterion for determining the positive and negative effects of specific technologies, the roles and consequences of citizen (especially non-expert) involvement, and the way decisions about specific technologies derive from and support specific cultural practices and socio-economic and political groups.

**M. Carleton Simpson**

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**Steve Fuller**

*Thomas Kuhn: A Philosophical History for Our Times.*

Chicago: University of Chicago Press 2000.

Pp. xvii + 472.

US\$35.00. ISBN 0-226-26894-2.

In earlier books, Steve Fuller made bold recommendations for the study of science, including the history, sociology, and philosophy of science. Here now he presents at length a concrete and worked out example of how things are to be done on his approach. His boldness is undiminished, but the results are mixed. *Thomas Kuhn's* more socio-historical content, which predominates, is a substantial expansion of an earlier article by Fuller. ('Being There With Thomas Kuhn: A Parable for Postmodern Times', *History and Theory* [1992].) On the other hand, there seems to be little in the book's more theoretical philosophical content that is not presented more fully in Fuller's earlier books. (*Social Epistemology*, 1988; *Philosophy of Science and Its Discontents*, 1989; *Philosophy, Rhetoric, and the End of Knowledge*, 1993; *Science*, 1997.) Indeed, there are only a few overt references in *Thomas Kuhn* to Fuller's own position, 'social epistemology', and most of those are in footnotes. Thus, notwithstanding the book's subtitle, philosophers interested in the theoretical aspects of Fuller's social epistemology and its argumentative underpinnings should look to his earlier books and to the critical discussion of those books in the literature.

I don't think the socio-historical plot of *Thomas Kuhn* is either misrepresented or given away too much by the following summary. One fact to be explained is that Thomas Kuhn and his book, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, have been canonized by the academy (379). A second fact to be explained is that 'the impact of *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* has



been largely, though not entirely, for the worse' (xvi). Specifically, the consequences of the 'Kuhnification' of the academy have been overwhelmingly anti-critical and anti-democratic (7-8). (If it seems to strain credulity to hold Kuhn personally responsible for all the evils Fuller sees, readers should note well Fuller's caution that his 'main interest is in evaluating "Kuhn" as an ideal type of how academics respond to their social environment' [381].) A naive explanation for the first fact is to suppose that Kuhn was an extraordinary person with superior intellectual abilities and that *Structure* is a profound and original book. But this explanation cannot be correct. For one thing, Kuhn was not particularly gifted intellectually or even particularly admirable or competent as a person. (Connoisseurs of schadenfreude will appreciate Fuller's diligent and acute rhetorical exploitation of his obligation to defend this premise, even as they wonder about the accuracy and fairness of his claims and insinuations. But they should beware the possibility that they themselves are instances of Fuller's ideal type 'Kuhn'.) For another, 'many Kuhn-like ideas were "in the air" both before and during the time *Structure* was written' (5) and, 'certainly, [*Structure*] does not encourage a deep reading' (31). Further, the naive explanation does not account for the fact that the impact of *Structure* has been largely for the worse. Fuller defends a different explanation, on the grounds that it best accounts for all the facts at issue. That explanation is much more complex than its naive competitor, and appeals to personal and situational factors in the particular socio-historical context of which *Structure* was the product. The general drift of Fuller's explanation is suggested already in his initial urging 'that *Structure* be read as an exemplary document of the Cold War era' (5). To describe the socio-historical plot further here would be to risk spoiling the story for readers of the book.

The theoretical and applied philosophical content of *Thomas Kuhn* is motivated by Fuller's desire 'to overcome *Structure*'s effects on its readers' (37), and thus to recover 'that lost [critical] space in the academic sphere' and to contribute 'to a democratization of science in the public sphere' (7-8). Fuller uses his own disappointment at how things have gone 'to point out better paths that were originally not taken, but that (with some adjustment) may be taken up in the future' (xvi). Here it seems clear that Fuller is consciously taking up the challenge issued by Kuhn when he said that 'the search for the integrity of a discarded mode of thought is not what philosophers generally do; many of them, in fact reject it as the glorification of past error. But the job can be done ...' (*The Essential Tension*, 11) The 'paths not taken' identified by Fuller include 'social science as critique of natural science' (229), C.I. Lewis's view 'that philosophy is primarily a normative discipline, with logic and epistemology ultimately grounded in ethics' (267), 'Toulmin's route from philosophy to rhetoric' (309), and, most importantly for Fuller, an approach to knowledge production that involves 'movement-driven "citizen-science"' rather than 'paradigm-driven "professional science"' (418).

Fuller tries to distance himself historiographically from Kuhn by claiming that, 'according to Kuhn, a history of the contemporary world — such as the



one you are now reading — is impossible' (3). Fuller exaggerates the distance, I think. To support his claim, Fuller offers a footnote reference to a paper by Kuhn. (The reference offered is to a paper in Suppe's *The Structure of Scientific Theories*, but context and the pagination in Fuller's footnote suggest that the intended reference is actually to the first paper in *The Essential Tension*.) However, what Kuhn says in the paper referred to does not support Fuller's claim. What Kuhn says is that 'an ability to predict the future is no part of the historian's arsenal. He is neither a social scientist nor a seer. It is no mere accident that he knows the end of his narrative as well as the start before he begins to write. History cannot be written without that information' (*The Essential Tension*, 16). All this is fully compatible with the historian's being able to write a history of the contemporary world with a narrative that ends roughly *now*. There is a stronger appearance of incompatibility between Fuller's 'philosophical history' project and Kuhn's statement that 'to say that history of science and philosophy of science have different goals is to suggest that no one can practice them both at the same time' (5). But even this appearance of incompatibility evaporates when one realizes that Kuhn and Fuller use the word 'philosophy' differently. For Kuhn, 'philosophy' is essentially a cognitive activity. 'The philosopher ... aims principally at explicit generalizations and at those with universal scope. He is no teller of stories, true or false. His goal is to discover and state what is true at all times and places rather than to impart understanding of what occurred at a particular time and place' (5). For Fuller, on the other hand, 'philosophy' (in the primary sense in which he conceives of his own project as philosophical) is essentially a practical activity, not a cognitive one. For Fuller, philosophy essentially uses 'community-building, action-getting' rhetoric to further the present and future common good (313). And telling someone a historically-based parable might well be a good way to inspire her to change her behaviour for the better. I don't see Kuhn disagreeing with that.

The fact that Fuller conceives of philosophy as rhetoric goes a long way to explaining his manner of presenting the more theoretical philosophical content of *Thomas Kuhn*. Another explanation lies in Kuhn's observation that 'there are great difficulties about practicing [history and philosophy] alternately' (*The Essential Tension*, 5). Fuller's discussion of C.I. Lewis is a good example. Fuller is perhaps right that Lewis deserves more attention than he gets nowadays from philosophers. However, it misleadingly understates Lewis's impact on contemporary philosophy to say that 'he is forgotten ... for his rather bold claim that philosophy is primarily a normative discipline, with logic and epistemology ultimately grounded in ethics' (267). In fact, the idea that epistemology is founded on ethics does have a respectable place in contemporary epistemology. (For a well-received recent defense, see Linda Zagzebski, *Virtues of the Mind* [1996].) The idea might have been more widely accepted, had it not been undermined indirectly by Lewis himself, via influential critiques published by two highly regarded students of his. (See Roderick Chisholm, *Theory of Knowledge* [1966], 11-14, and 'Lewis's Ethics of Belief', in P.A. Schilpp, ed., *The Philosophy of C.I. Lewis* [1968]. See also

Roderick Firth, 'Are Epistemic Concepts Reducible to Ethical Concepts?', in A.I. Goldman and J. Kim, eds., *Values and Morals* [1978].) Fuller goes on to offer a long discussion of Lewis's views on the place of logic in philosophy (268-80). I regret to say that, so far as I can see, this discussion is largely incoherent, in part because Fuller runs roughshod over standard conceptual distinctions between analyticity, a prioricity, and necessity. In the context of Fuller's rhetorical project, my complaints may seem only to be symptoms of 'culturopathy', a disorder characterized by a 'state of diminished cultural responsibility' and one to which academics are susceptible (397-8). After all, in discussing Lewis's theoretical doctrines, Fuller does succeed in emphasizing the undeniably important truth that how one lives is fundamentally more important than how one reasons or what one knows. Nevertheless, a too blatantly ironical handling of facts and arguments seems rhetorically counterproductive, if one's aim is to build ethos with potential audience members who are earnest, not only about the common good, but also about the public trust they hold to handle facts and arguments conscientiously in their respective areas of expertise. (I thank Francis Remedios for helpful discussions.)

**David B. Martens**

University of Guelph

**André Gallois**

*Occasions of Identity: A Study in the  
Metaphysics of Persistence, Change, and  
Sameness.*

Don Mills, ON and New York: Oxford

University Press 1998. Pp. xiii + 296.

Cdn\$108.00: US\$65.00. ISBN 0-19-823744-8.

Occasional and contingent identities are metaphysically possible. This is the challenging view that Gallois defends in this book. Challenging, we say, because it seems incompatible with Leibniz's Law (i.e., the law that identicals cannot have different properties) and with the necessity of identity.

The thesis that some identities are occasional and contingent, Gallois maintains, offers a solution to five traditional puzzles presented in the first introductory part of the book: the gradual and total replacement and rearrangement of the planks of the ship of Theseus; the possibility of implanting one's brain hemispheres in two different bodies; the car that loses its right front wheel; the statue and the remodeling of the clay; and the case of amoebic division.



Consider this last puzzle. An amoeba undergoes division into amoebas SLIDE and POND. Does the amoeba persist after the division? Is it identical with any, or both, of the resulting amoebas? If so, then SLIDE and POND should also be identical. But this seems impossible: they have incompatible properties at the same time — one is in a pond; the other on a slide. Gallois proposes a solution to the puzzle. There is a time, the time before the division, at which SLIDE and POND are identical: they are the original amoeba. And there is a different time, the time after the division, when they are distinct. There are occasional identities: *things distinct at one time may be identical at another*. From this thesis it follows that there are also contingent identities — though the converse is not true. *Things distinct at one world may be identical at another*.

The second part of the book (chapters 3 to 7) is devoted to prove that the occasional identity thesis is coherent and consistent with some fundamental principles. It is consistent with a version of Leibniz's Law. Identicals at a given time cannot have different properties at that time. In the same vein, occasional identity allows for the transitivity of identity if the transitivity is time restricted.

However, the consistency of the thesis that identity is a temporally variant relation has a price. It is possible that something will have a property at a time and that it does not have the property when the time comes. From (1) At  $T_1$ : at  $T_2$ : a has property P, it does not follow that (2) At  $T_2$ : a has property P. Before the division it is true that after the division SLIDE will be in a pond. For, before the division, SLIDE is identical with POND, and POND will be in a pond after the division. But after the division SLIDE is not in a pond. So the coherence of the occasional identity view needs the invalidity of the inference from (1) to (2). There is principle (E) saying that something has, at  $t$ , the time-indexed property of being P at  $t'$  if and only if it, at  $t$ , is identical with something that has the property of being P at  $t'$  (84). If identity is occasional, nothing stronger than (E) should be true. And (E) does not allow the inference from (1) to (2). Equally, from (3) At  $T_1$ : at  $T_2$ :  $a = b$ , it does not follow that (4) At  $T_2$ :  $a = b$ .

Gallois's treatment of the contingency of identity, in chapter 6, is similar. Again, this thesis has 'surprising' consequences. For it to be consistent, it has to be accepted that in a world it is true that, in a different world, some identity holds, but that in this second world the identity does not hold.  $a$  and  $b$  could refer to the same entity in  $W_1$  and to different ones in  $W_2$ . So, from (5) In  $W_1$ : in  $W_2$ :  $a = b$ , it does not follow that (6) In  $W_2$ :  $a = b$ .

The reader is left to judge whether other alternatives are cheaper. Consequently, the book deals with different proposals on identity, their problems, and their prices. The views that the same thing can be at different places at the same time and that different things can be at the same place at the same time, the views that existence and identity are extrinsic, or the relative identity account defended by Geach, are considered and compared with the proposed approach in chapter 2. In chapter 7 Gallois considers, and argues against, other occasionalists like Perry and Myro. In the third and last part



of the book (chapters 8 to 10) Gallois presents and criticizes Chisholm's account of loose identity and its close relative the flexive designation view, the view that identity comes in degrees or is indefinite (including an interesting discussion on Evans's argument against it), and four-dimensionalist identity as defended by Lewis and others. The purpose of the discussion is not so much to eliminate competitors as to show that the occasional identity thesis deserves at least the same credit as them.

In general, the book presents a very carefully and honestly argued view on identity which is, for the most part, against standards. In fact, it is so scrupulously presented that the reader runs the risk of getting lost in a jungle of arguments, counterarguments, repetitions, and logical details.

Read it if you care about identity.

**Agustín Arrieta and M.J. García-Encinas**

University of the Basque Country & Rutgers University

**Marcella Tarozzi Goldsmith**

*The Future of Art:*

*An Aesthetics of the New and the Sublime.*

Albany: State University of New York Press

1999. Pp. xvii + 220.

US\$59.50 (cloth: ISBN 0-7914-4315-9);

US\$19.95 (paper: ISBN 0-7914-4316-7).

*The Future of Art* is an ambitious book, attempting at once to trace a challenging and neglected lineage in the history of aesthetics (German philosophy from Schiller to Nietzsche, with an admirable attempt to connect this tradition to current trends in postmodern aesthetics) and to offer an original contribution to current debates on the nature of the aesthetic object. Like many books of this scope, reading it requires a patience as wide as the reach of the work. But it is a patience that eventually pays off in full, for with some effort one will find a unique and valuable vision of aesthetics gradually emerge.

Though Goldsmith's book defies brief summary, the core of her argument can fairly be expressed by the following three claims. She begins by bringing into view the limitations of a central historical notion, that of art as 'objective' in the sense of representing a significant aspect of reality. As alluring as this way of conceiving art may be (it is, in effect, the humanistic approach to aesthetics), Goldsmith expertly argues that it is inherently flawed. Art, thus understood, calls on philosophy to give adequate conceptual expression to

that towards which its beauty points us, and it thus makes aesthetic understanding imminently self-voiding, always asking to be purified of itself and turned into something else — philosophical understanding. Goldsmith argues that the fallout of this idea — that art invariably meets its death in the dialectic march towards philosophical understanding — can be seen as giving rise to another historically entrenched conception of art: the idea of art as purely subjective. Goldsmith wisely goes on to reject this view of art, and the remainder of the book is an attempt to find another foundation for aesthetics, one which allows us to steer a middle course between the Scylla of the objective theory and the Charybdis of the subjective theory. The crux of Goldsmith's insight is that we locate this foundation in the category of the 'new'. By offering us an encounter with the sublime, art expands, simply put, our sense of the possibilities of human experience.

The value of a book that traces how 'Continental' aesthetics grew from Schiller into postmodernism goes without saying, and Goldsmith is to be commended for filling in this lacuna in most English-language philosophers' knowledge of the history of aesthetics. The vision of aesthetics Goldsmith culls from her historical study is of equal merit, making the book a pleasure for both historians and theoreticians. Her book will also be of importance to those of us who admire postmodern aesthetics but want to find a way to avoid many of its excesses, in particular its often frightfully nihilistic tendencies. In short, *The Future of Art* deserves a place in the study of any serious student of philosophical aesthetics.

**John Gibson**

University of Toronto

**Lewis Edwin Hahn, ed.**

*The Philosophy of Donald Davidson.*

The Library of Living Philosophers

Volume XXVII.

LaSalle, IL: Open Court Publishing 1999.

Pp. xviii + 782.

US\$72.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-8126-9398-1);

US\$42.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8126-9399-X).

This volume of The Library of Living Philosophers (LLP) series is an invaluable addition to the dozen or so books and collections of essays that have already been written on the influential American philosopher, Donald Davidson. Lewis Hahn has done a superb job in bringing together the top scholars and critics of Davidson's work. Not since Ernest Lepore's two collections of essays, *Actions and Events* and *Truth and Interpretation* (Basil Blackwell,



1985; 1986), has there been a better variety of thinkers commenting on all aspects of Davidson's interests. This LLP volume also has the added bonus that it contains an autobiography and a complete bibliography (compiled by Davidson himself). Furthermore, many of the essays deal with material that Davidson has been working on since the Lepore volumes, making it the best available companion piece to his work.

One of the aims of the LLP series is to present an intellectual autobiography of the philosopher, which makes this edition unique of all of the books on Davidson. Except for a few anecdotes in some interviews, there is no biographical information about Davidson's life in print. Davidson has been very open in his published writings about who his major intellectual influences are, so it is not surprising to learn here of his relationships with Quine, Tarski, Carnap, Dummett, Rorty, and many other thinkers whom he has worked with and befriended during his career. The more interesting aspects of this entertaining and well-written autobiography concern Davidson's unpublished academic life and his non-academic life. As a teacher, for example, we learn of his interests in Marxism, aesthetics, ethics and morality, and ancient and modern philosophy — topics on which he has published almost nothing. We also learn of his passion for travelling and lecturing in far-off places (e.g., in 1967 he gave 37 lectures outside of his own university, Princeton) and his interest in such extracurricular activities as mountain climbing, heli-skiing, bodysurfing and sailing — these usually involving the participation of other notable philosophers.

Another aim of the LLP volumes is to present a series of essays and criticisms by the leading exponents and opponents of the thinker's work with a reply by the thinker himself. This volume contains thirty-one essays, divided into six sections, roughly reflecting the main philosophical areas on which Davidson has written. There is some overlap in content between the sections, but this is not surprising when one is dealing with such a systematic philosopher. Some of the more interesting essays in this collection centre around Davidson's arguments against the 'third dogma of empiricism' and scepticism.

This empiricist dogma is an adherence to a dualism between a scheme or language that fits or shapes experience. Stephen Neale argues that some of the rhetoric Davidson uses in his arguments against the dualism has led some thinkers to conclude that there is no relationship at all between the mind and world, that there are no non-linguistic entities and no world. He urges that there must be an innocuous, non-philosophical sense in which we can say that the world makes our sentences true, lest we fall into idealism. In his reply, Davidson concedes Neale's point, and insists that he has always maintained that we stand in a causal relationship with the world. But John McDowell argues that we reinstate the dualism when '... we say that impacts from the world exert a *causal* influence on how [man's conceptual] sovereign power is exercised, but deny that they set *rational* constraints' (95). To hold that the world causes our beliefs is to be seduced by the untenable notion that we can have 'intuitions without concepts', a position, which McDowell

attributes to Quine and naturalist philosophies in general. Richard Rorty also argues that Davidson is reinstating a form of the dualism, but he holds, unlike McDowell, that it is because Davidson is not naturalistic enough. In his adherence to the theses of anomalous monism and the indeterminacy of translation, Rorty accuses Davidson of forcing ontological and epistemological gaps between a mental, non-causal, man-made realm and a physical, strictly causal, law-like, 'found' realm. Bjørn Ramberg responds to criticisms like those which Rorty has brought against Davidson. He argues that Rorty has failed to recognize that Davidson is operating with two notions of causality (heteronomic and homonomic) and that his thesis of anomalous monism does allow for an element of causality (heteronomic) in mental idioms. However, Ramberg does agree with Rorty that this means that there is nothing metaphysically special about the mental.

Another group of essays centre around Davidson's anti-sceptical arguments. Davidson has argued from the fact that we have beliefs and that we are able to communicate and interpret others, that our beliefs and the beliefs of others are veridical. Barry Stroud argues that there is a weak and a strong version of this anti-sceptical argument, which Davidson is misleadingly running together. The weak form of the argument is that we have no choice as interpreters but to treat the beliefs of others *as if* they were mostly true. The strong argument is that they *are*, in fact, mostly true, independent of our interpretations. Stroud argues that Davidson is entitled to the weak, but not the strong, form of the argument. There is no way that we could assess whether our beliefs are true since this would require that we step outside of our web of beliefs and somehow compare them with the world. A.C. Genova also wants to determine what we are entitled to infer from Davidson's anti-sceptical argument. He holds that if we accept Davidson's semantic realism, then scepticism is not an option. But scepticism is still a live option for those who do not accept Davidsonian semantics. Genova and Thomas Nagel try to determine whether these anti-sceptical arguments are transcendental. But the question of whether Davidson's arguments are transcendental may be outdated. According to Dagfinn Føllesdal there has been a methodological shift in Davidson's attempt to deal with scepticism (and other problems) that occurred around the mid-80s. Since then, Davidson has relied more on his notion of 'triangulation', the social and perceptual relationship between two rational individuals and their shared world, to account for why it is that our beliefs are veridical, why scepticism fails, or why the scheme-content dualism is an incorrect account of the relationship between mind and world. In most of his responses to the essays in this volume, Davidson repeatedly outlines this model and spurns his earlier attempts that rely on his famous science-fiction thought-experiments such as the 'Swampman' or 'The Omniscient Interpreter'. One almost gets the impression that Davidson would like to re-write much of his treatment of these and other topics in light of the triangulation model.

The remainder of the essays in the volume are, in general, of a high quality and engage Davidson on his most fundamental positions. Davidson's replies



are always helpful and generous, and he frequently provides insights and perspectives that are not available in other works. The complete bibliography and the well-organized index, which runs twenty-five pages, are invaluable for those doing any serious research or study of Davidson's philosophy. Except for the autobiography, however, which any student or philosopher would find entertaining, this book is better suited for those who are familiar with Davidson's previous work and are interested in critically evaluating his thought.

**John R. Cook**

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**Ronald L. Hall**

*The Human Embrace:*

*The Love of Philosophy and the Philosophy of  
Love; Kierkegaard, Cavell, Nussbaum.*

University Park: The Pennsylvania State

University Press 2000. Pp. xii + 259.

US\$55.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-271-01952-2);

US\$19.95 (paper: ISBN 0-271-01953-0).

Imagine Abraham embracing Isaac atop Mount Moriah, weeping a river of tears. Is this picture the archetype of authentic human life and love? Hall insists it is, yet provides only meagre hints as to why it deserves this high honor, given the events that preceded it in Abraham's life. Instead, Hall takes us through a labyrinth of commentaries on the ideas of Søren Kierkegaard, Stanley Cavell, and Martha Nussbaum — foci often held together by little more than the author's own interest and agreement.

Several annoyances plague the book's style. Intermittent editing errors are now customary for scholarly books in the computer age, when publishers no longer proofread. More significantly, Hall often substitutes subjective expressions (e.g., 'it seems to me') for rational arguments. The third annoyance is not altogether inappropriate for a book on Kierkegaard: continual repetition of a few points: over and over (and over!) we read (for example) that someone is wrong because they refuse to 'embrace their humanness', while someone else is right because their faith (even if unacknowledged) makes possible 'a dialectical refusal of refusal' (12, et al). Fourthly, being an amalgam of commentaries, the book cites original writings too infrequently and contains too many third-hand statements of the form 'I agree with N's agreement with L's views on x' — affirmations that carry little more weight than would my *fourth*-hand agreement in this review.

Part One, on Kierkegaard, contains Hall's most rigorous argumentation. Claiming to offer a provocative new interpretation of Kierkegaard's 'ethical stage', he refuses to view it as a halfway house to authentic religion. Rather, it fails just as miserably (and for the same reason) as does the 'aesthetic stage': both are ways of attempting to 'transcend the human', whereas authentic religion (Kierkegaard's 'Religion B') leads us to embrace our humanity in an act of existential faith. This interpretation seems quite plausible and, despite Hall's protests, is only a very subtle variation on the standard view, especially given Hall's emphasis on Kierkegaard's dialectic, an affirmation that includes (requires) the negation of negation.

Hall claims to base his interpretation on Kierkegaard's specific examples; yet ironically, he almost completely ignores Kierkegaard's own life! Aside from passing references to one passage where Kierkegaard attributes his decision to break his engagement with Regina to a lack of faith (82), Hall completely fails to explain how Kierkegaard's life could be anything but a miserable failure to embrace the human. This irony reaches its height when we consider that Hall's central motif is *marriage* — the very institution Kierkegaard refused to embrace.

Parts Two and Three take us on a roller-coaster ride of quasi-Kierkegaardian expositions of Cavell's interpretations of numerous classic films and Nussbaum's interpretations of various ancient philosophers, respectively. Hall's strategy is to show how each film character (or philosopher) either failed or succeeded to embrace the human; they failed if they took refuge in any source of value (higher or deeper, external or internal) other than the simple willingness to *be with* the other in a human embrace. A strategic error here is Hall's tendency to disagree with many, such as Lewis (in 'Shadowlands') or Kant, whose ideas could have been used to develop, deepen, and promote his own standpoint. Among the theories he chooses to interpret dialectically (and thus accept) are Cavell's theory that all genuine marriage is 'remarriage' and Nussbaum's distinction between *technē* (human control of the world) and *tuchē* (uncontrollable happenings). Hall argues that we tend to use *technē* as a way of escaping our humanity; refusing this temptation to refuse requires us to embrace *tuchē*. Despite asking whether marriage is the *technē* that keeps the *tuchē* of love under control (217), Hall never develops this hint in any significant depth.

A nagging problem underlies this entire book: *how* does Abraham's story mesh with the philosophy of life and love Hall wants us to glean from his book? Supposedly, existential faith means having courage to be our true self by resisting the temptation to obey voices that call us to deny our essential humanity. How then can Abraham be put up as the model? What Hall blatantly ignores is that *Abraham chose to kill his beloved, the son of the promise*. Their all-important embrace came only *after* God spared his son's life. Instead of interpreting this as both the Bible and Kierkegaard do, as an embrace of *thanksgiving for God's gracious gift*, Hall consistently presents the story as if *Abraham chose the embrace* all along (84, 214, etc.)! This is simply inaccurate. To take Abraham as the paradigm of existential faith —



as Kierkegaard himself does — we must question Hall's entire interpretation. Not surprisingly, Hall finds Kierkegaard's *Works of Love* 'profoundly disappointing' (81). For despite Hall's protests to the contrary, Kierkegaard's existential faith consists in resigning oneself to *say no* to the human, to *choose transcendence*, but to do so in the dialectical conviction that God will honor this choice by *giving back* a renewed humanity — a gift we should then fully embrace in love. Perhaps the greatest tragedy of Kierkegaard's life was that his beloved Regina never returned.

**Stephen R. Palmquist**

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**Tamar Japaridze**

*The Kantian Subject:*

*Sensus Communis, Mimesis, Work of Mourning.*

Albany: State University of New York Press

2000. Pp. ix + 168.

US\$49.50 (cloth: ISBN 0-7914-4373-6);

US\$16.95 (paper: ISBN 0-7914-4374-4).

*The Kantian Subject* is an ambitious book. It is a study of 'another Kant', not of a Kant who is 'responsible for the oppressive shape of autonomous reason' (10), but of a Kant 'whose aesthetic is in the center of the philosophical inquiry into the subject and provides a basis for the critique of subjectivity' (10). In view of this critique, which, Japaridze claims, Kant develops in the *Critique of Judgment*, the subject is re-conceived as one that 'emerges through its relation to the other (through alterity)' (3) and 'this process ... constitutes the transcendental self' (3). The re-revised conception of the subject is one that serves, in turn, as the ground of the mediation of the first two *Critiques*, of the realms, that is, of nature and freedom.

This Kant is indeed other and can only be secured through a re-reading of portions of the *Critique of Judgment* (Analytic of the Beautiful, Analytic of the Sublime, *sensus communis*) that takes its cue from developments in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Continental thought (Freud, Heidegger). And here lies the major problem with the book. One cannot but wonder about the wisdom of doing the history of philosophy backwards, that is, of reading texts in the history of philosophy not in light of earlier positions, not in light of concerns contemporary to the author, but in light of later developments and insights. True, these may well be insights that have only become possible on the basis of the work that is now under re-consideration, but even if that is the case, this in no way demonstrates that the author in question already

thought in this way, or would not be horrified about being so interpreted. Nor does it give me confidence that any but those fully immersed in continental thought would be able to understand the re-reading here proposed.

Of course, by itself, this worry hardly makes the reading wrong — indeed I cannot identify any one claim that is clearly wrong. Surely though, this is the case because the portions of Kant's text Japaridze considers have been immersed in a language and a philosophical mode of thought quite foreign to the text. And that leaves me suspicious of this approach. What good does it do, for instance, to speak of the judgment of taste in terms of auto-affection (chapter 2), or to refer to the 'intrinsically ethical character of language' (134)? It puts a gloss on the text that is arguably not proper to it. And this means, in turn, that this book will likely appeal only to those who wish to put a contemporary spin on Kant. Why we should wish to do so is not made clear.

**Brigitte Sassen**

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**Nicholas Jolley**

*Locke: His Philosophical Thought.*

Don Mills, ON and New York: Oxford

University Press 1999. Pp. 233.

Cdn\$40.95: US\$23.95. ISBN 0-19-875200-8.

Jolley's book, intended as a general introduction to Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, is both clear and challenging. Jolley's main ambition is to furnish a reading of the *Essay* that shows 'the fundamental unity of Locke's thought' (3). To this end, seven out of ten of the chapters deal with major philosophical themes of the *Essay* (e.g., ideas, substance, the mind-body problem, personal identity, freedom and the will, linguistic theory, knowledge and faith). In each case, Jolley introduces standard critiques of Locke's views and provides responses that support a consistent interpretation of the *Essay* as a whole. The discussions run at a level that is perhaps too sophisticated for undergraduates coming to Locke for the first time. However, the book will be highly welcome to more philosophically experienced readers who wish to acquaint themselves with some of the more important contemporary and present-day responses to Locke's philosophy.

The remaining three chapters of the book ('Introduction', 'The Project of the *Essay*', 'The Evils of Absolutism') together express Jolley's broader interpretive line on Locke's philosophy. Jolley argues that Locke's project in



the *Essay* was that of discovering the foundations of universal and necessary knowledge as the first step toward establishing the methods and limitations of intellectual inquiry. According to Jolley, Locke's central aim was to encourage a brand of intellectual humility he considered necessary for promoting the values of toleration and anti-dogmatism in both philosophy and politics. Jolley contrasts his interpretation with alternatives that tie the details of Locke's philosophy to narrower aims. He points out that successive generations of Locke's readers have cast him in a variety of philosophical roles. To the seventeenth century, Locke was a philosophical radical, challenging well-established orthodoxies concerning innate ideas and the immateriality of the soul; to the eighteenth century, he was a liberator promoting freedom of thought and religious toleration; to the nineteenth-century, he was the champion of empiricism, grappling with the problem of the veil of perception; finally, in the twentieth century, he has been seen as an 'under-labourer' of the sciences, defending and, in some measure, justifying the corpuscularian science of his day. For Jolley, the Locke of the *Essay* is all of these things, but Locke is first and foremost an epistemologist concerned with the foundations upon which metaphysical, religious, political, scientific and moral questions may be legitimately based. Locke's project is driven by the belief that the human intellect is naturally limited, and that it is therefore necessary to take stock of what can and cannot be known. For Jolley, this is the picture that emerges once we 'allow Locke to define his own philosophical agenda in his own way' (2).

Jolley's characterization of Locke as a critical epistemologist casts light in a number of disputed regions of Locke interpretation. For example, Jolley interprets Locke's theory of 'substance' as forming a part of Locke's broader argument concerning the limitations of human knowledge. Jolley considers the suggestion, put forward by Michael Ayers, that Locke's concept of *substance in general* can be coordinated with his rejection of Aristotelian occult qualities only if 'substance' is taken to have the same extension as 'real essence'. In response, Jolley argues that the textual evidence does not support Ayers's view: nowhere does Locke characterize the concepts of *substance* and *real essence* as being extensionally equivalent and, indeed, there is some compelling textual evidence to the contrary (71-3). Jolley concludes that Locke's notions of *real essence* and *substance* express 'agnosticism at two distinct metaphysical levels' (73). For Jolley, the concept of *real essence* is invoked by Locke as part of the corpuscularian account of how 'properties' causally derive from natural kinds. *Substance*, on the other hand, is used to analyze the concept of *thing* as contrasted with properties or collections of properties (73). But is *substance* itself an empty concept, as Leibniz argued and as Locke seems to have hinted in his more ironic characterizations of the notion of *substratum*? Jolley thinks not. For Jolley, the substratum texts reflect an agnosticism relating to the *human capacity* for knowing substance, which contrasts with the knowledge of substance that an omniscient God could be presumed to possess. This contrast reconciles Locke's emphasis on the barrenness of the *idea* of substance with the view

that a 'thing' is (from a God's-eye-view, at least) something appreciably different from a mere collection of properties (76-8). Thus, Locke's account of substance takes its place in the overall project of defining the limits of human knowledge.

A notable weakness in Jolley's presentation lies in his failure to provide adequate historical evidence that Locke's critical epistemology was intended primarily as a response to Cartesianism. Jolley explicitly claims that Locke developed his anti-dogmatic epistemology 'in contrast to Descartes' (10). He explains that Locke saw the Cartesians as abusing the method of doubt by adopting Descartes's own brand of dogmatic rationalism. This is the perspective from which Jolley's exposition of Book I's attack on innate ideas takes wing. However, it has been compellingly argued (by Yolton in *Locke and the Way of Ideas*) that Book I has as its primary target the religious and moral innatists of Locke's native Britain, added to which Descartes's innatism is not obviously of the variety under attack in Book I. Jolley admits that in Book I Locke does not mention Descartes specifically by name, but he nevertheless thinks it reasonable to assume that the attack on innatism is aimed at the Cartesians. While this is certainly possible, and, indeed, highly compatible with Jolley's broader interpretive perspective, it is odd that Jolley should adopt this line without paying any considerable attention to Yolton's substantial historical arguments to the contrary, especially in a book that is otherwise highly sensitive to recent developments in Locke scholarship. This defect aside, Jolley's work provides a valuable overview of the major themes in Locke's philosophy — one that, for the most part, *does* give credit to important recent developments in Locke interpretation. Jolley's book provides a useful selective bibliography (organized by topic). In general, *Locke: His Philosophical Thought* is a valuable contribution to Locke scholarship — one that will be found useful to Locke specialists as well as to non-specialists wishing to get up-to-speed with the philosophical and interpretive issues surrounding Locke's masterpiece.

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**Salim Kemal and Ivan Gaskell, eds.**

*Politics and Aesthetics in the Arts.*

New York: Cambridge University Press 2000.

Pp. xi + 268.

US\$59.95. ISBN 0-521-45418-2.

What does politics have to do with aesthetics? It goes without saying that the possible philosophical answers to that question depend on what kind of issue we really are dealing with. Our answers also depend on how we want to define the philosophical task regarding the analyses of art and politics respectively. At a first traditional glance, so to speak (i.e., the first glance of many philosophers of the analytical branch), to engage political-philosophical issues together with philosophical aesthetics could be an example of analytical fuzziness, since the two fields commonly are regarded as distinct species and therefore considered as being strange bedfellows.

Immanuel Kant is often credited as the inventor of this analytical imperative that says that different issues or categories shall be kept apart when philosophising. And this is especially the case concerning the aesthetic side of the matter, since Kant insisted that aesthetic judgement was autonomous from all other fields of human experience (according to the standard interpretation of the third critique).

However, recent literature has stressed other interpretations of Kant and the tradition inherited from him, as well as interpretations regarding the issue itself: do aesthetics and politics really have something to do with each other? And if they have, the question is then of course how new philosophical theories and interpretations — in political philosophy as well as in philosophical aesthetics — could be developed.

This anthology, edited by Salim Kemal and Ivan Gaskell, is an example of these recent discussions. It brings together nine essays from scholars working in different disciplines: art history, literary studies, philosophy, etc. The consequence of this arrangement is, unfortunately, that some texts in the anthology are of less philosophical interest. Some of them are even examples of very specialised studies, e.g., on topics in literary history, and just happen to touch upon philosophical questions. However, since the issue of this anthology is a target of hot debates, one could perhaps have expected to find something else between the covers of the book, i.e., more fundamental philosophical discussions of art, politics, and theory.

Nevertheless, despite the lack of precision, this is in many ways an interesting and exciting volume. Three concepts stand in focus: politics, aesthetics, and art. But, as I remarked above, since the perspectives of the authors are very disparate, the scopes and aims in the texts vary.

Louis Montrose, for example, working within a very limited historical framework (the Elizabethan theatre in the times of Shakespeare), applies the concepts above in a mainly descriptive manner. He shows that the relationship between actual political and artistic practise is by no means a straightforward question of power and ideology. Aesthetic culture shapes

political discourse, as well as vice versa. But this observation, albeit interesting, is perhaps somewhat trivial from a strict philosophical point of view.

The essay by J.M. Bernstein has a rather different aim: a general critical discussion of the concepts in question, that really goes to the philosophical heart of the matter. To develop new approaches, combining fields that have long been separated, involves a normative step that requires careful preparation. Most theoreticians, politicians, and artists probably regard art and politics as having more to do with ethics than with each other. Thus, to say that politics is a matter of aestheticizing and vice versa is not the easiest move within mainstream contemporary philosophy. But as Bernstein demonstrates in his essay, drawing upon Rawls and Gadamer, the formal categories in contemporary political philosophy are constructed so that they are blocking an account that would take the desires that constitute cultural modernity into serious consideration.

Anthony Padgen and David Carroll focus on the aesthetic making of national character and cultural identity. Padgen, taking his example from Denis Diderot's political-philosophical doctrines on colonization and travelling, shows how the philosophy of language and culture laid a basis for a political doctrine of patriotism and national character. Diderot argued, as Padgen shows, that colonialism and travelling blunted collective aesthetic sensibilities, which were, according to Diderot, organically connected to one's own culture. The development of these enterprises had, due to that, decivilizing consequences. Although this is an interesting and fascinating early example of the underpinnings of today's communitarian thinking, Padgen's text on Diderot's argument does not take us any further than that.

In the subsequent essay, David Carroll explores the aesthetical foundations of nationalism as a political ideology. Scrutinizing the theoretical tenets in some well-known works on nationalism, he contends that the aesthetical techniques behind the political construction of the phenomenon have been largely ignored. In contrast, Carroll himself argues that the aesthetical dimension is essential to the implementation of a nationalist political agenda, observing that the cultural items used for the nationalist construction of identity cannot really be divided into simple categories of good and bad (as high art, folklore and kitsch). Similar views are to be found in Neil McWilliams' essay, but adopted in a different context: the making of class structures in mid-nineteenth century France, and how high-culture products were used to define hierarchal structures of social identity.

The three last essays focus on features of the modern art world, and on their possible relationships to issues in the political sphere. Taking his examples primarily from feminist theoretical approaches, Daniel Cottom explores the role of anger in criticism. Peter de Bolla examines the significance of the affective response to politically repulsive objects of art (such as Andres Serrano's *Piss Christ*). And Michael Kelly, in the last essay, analyses the controversies on art and politics that surrounded the 1993 Whitney Biennial. All three of course display a certain discomfort with mainstream theory of art and its reluctance to cope with the dynamics of the actual



political context and the contemporary art world. So it is hardly a surprise that Michael Kelly remarks in his essay that another theoretical account, not yet written, is needed to really cast light on the relation between art and politics. It is a pity that this anthology couldn't provide at least an attempt to do that.

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**Barbara Koziak**

*Retrieving Political Emotion:*

*Thumos, Aristotle, and Gender.*

University Park: The Pennsylvania State

University Press 2000. Pp. 203.

US\$29.95. ISBN 0-271-01921-2.

Koziak's development of a theory of political emotion that is relevant to how we think about and conduct politics today combines historical and contemporary treatments of the concept. Her analysis both draws on and contributes to interpretations of Aristotle, feminist theory, emotion theory, and political theory. While the range of disciplines examined is broad, Koziak's treatment focuses on Aristotle's texts and on care feminism and thereby avoids the dangers of over-generalization and vagueness. The result is a work of interest to Aristotle scholars, feminist theorists, emotion theorists, and political theorists alike.

Koziak begins by situating her project in relation to both historical and contemporary treatments of the relationship between reason and emotion. She identifies the need for a treatment of politics that takes into account recent revisionist theories of emotion as intimately connected with rather than opposed to reason and as social rather than merely individual and subjective. She sees the potential of constructing a theory of political emotion through an examination of Aristotle's treatment of *thumos* and through care feminism's development of the idea of politically relevant emotional work. While neither Aristotle nor care feminism alone can provide all the material needed to construct a theory of political emotion, taken together they provide a firm basis for such a theory. The book, then, is divided into two parts; the first (chapters 2-5) is devoted to a 'recovery' of Aristotle's treatment of *thumos* and the second (chapter 6) is devoted both to an analysis of what care feminism has to offer and to how the two theories can be combined.

In the historical section of the book, Koziak begins by providing a survey of the uses of *thumos* in Homer and Plato. Aristotle, she argues, while preserving the Homeric and Platonic senses of *thumos* as anger and spirit-edness in some contexts, moves significantly beyond his predecessors and establishes *thumos* as the capacity to feel emotion. Koziak recovers Aristotle's use of *thumos* through an analysis of his treatment, in the *de Anima*, of the three divisions (*epithumia*, *thumos*, and *boulesis*) that make up the soul's capacity of desire. Aristotle does not, in this text, establish the function and excellence of *thumos*, but Koziak constructs a typical Aristotelian analysis, drawing on both the *de Anima* and the *Nicomachean Ethics*, in order to identify the proper object of the desiring capacity of *thumos* as a desire for good social relationships. The proper object of *thumos* identifies it as politically relevant and the remainder of the historical section works toward clarifying Aristotle's notion of political emotion. An examination of political friendship and the importance of friendship to the state help to develop the claim that there must be institutional support for the development of the citizens' emotional capacities. Further, an analysis of tragedy in Aristotle's *Poetics* provides an example of such institutional support for the development of emotional capacities and establishes that a properly constituted political *thumos* will involve a balance between anger, fear, pity, and affection. The discussion of Aristotle's innovative sense of *thumos* is interesting and useful as a treatment of the historical development of the concept, and it has the further merit of providing a focus through which various Aristotelian texts can be approached. Once *thumos* is identified as a capacity with proper objects, we are forced to reconsider how we interpret various passages from Aristotle and we are provided with further tools to help fill in passages where Aristotle's meaning is obscure. This need to re-interpret is brought out in a convincing manner in Koziak's treatment of the political aspects of Aristotle's *Poetics*.

In the final chapter of the book, Koziak examines the emotional elements of the 1995 U.S. Senate debates about welfare reform and analyzes these debates from both a liberal and a care feminist perspective. Her discussions of liberal theory and care feminism show why and in what way Aristotle's treatment of *thumos* and political emotion is relevant to contemporary politics. The liberal analysis, Koziak argues, fails to account for the use of emotion in these debates. Care feminism, while it does incorporate the necessity of developing the capacity to feel certain kinds of emotion, neither adequately explains how political relationships and institutions depend on emotional dispositions nor provides a justification for the claim that political institutions ought to nurture emotional capacities in its citizens. Furthermore, while Koziak finds much of use in care feminism's treatment of emotion, she finds that the range of emotions it is concerned with is too narrow. Aristotle's treatment of political emotion, Koziak argues, is relevant to contemporary politics because it provides aid in the areas where care feminism is lacking. Aristotle's treatment of *thumos* and political emotion provides explanations of the relation of dependence between politics and



emotional disposition, it provides a justification for the fostering of emotions by political institutions and it provides a wider range of emotions to be considered. This final chapter has merit on a number of grounds. First, by appealing to a concrete contemporary example and to contemporary ways of analyzing such a situation, Koziak is able to transpose the discussion from an historical to a contemporary context. Second, while she does cover a lot of ground in this chapter, she is careful to draw out the nuances of each position and where this is impossible draws attention to the fact that she is generalizing. Finally, Koziak provides an interesting analysis of the ways in which Aristotelian philosophy can be useful to feminist politics and to contemporary politics in general.

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**Paul S. MacDonald**

*Descartes and Husserl. The Philosophical Project of Radical Beginnings.*

Albany: State University of New York Press  
2000. Pp. x + 281.

US\$69.50 (cloth: ISBN 0-7914-4369-8);

US\$21.95 (paper: ISBN 0-7914-4370-1).

Edmund Husserl has persuasively been called the last philosopher of the modern, post-Cartesian tradition. In his thought, the ambiguous splendour of modern philosophy as well as its shortcomings and failures become manifest. Husserl's phenomenology as science of how things appear provided not only a means to bridge the epistemological gap between subject and object and to reappraise the appearance of things, but also rudiments to overcome the one-sidedness of the methodological solipsism of modernity which was, nonetheless, still characteristic of most of Husserl's own writings. It is therefore uncontroversial to argue that the last modern philosopher, was, to an extent, already the first late modern philosopher. His legacy for contemporary philosophy, however, tends to be somewhat undervalued because of the rapid development of post-Husserlian phenomenology and its critical appraisal of Husserl's modernity.

Husserl explicitly interpreted transcendental phenomenology as 'Neo-Cartesianism'. His reverence towards Descartes is a reverence towards the prevailing principles of modern philosophy. It is a reverence towards a congenial philosopher who had to respond to a very similar challenge and who developed an answer following a trajectory parallel to that of Husserl.

To examine the convergences and divergences of Husserl's and Descartes' 'voyages of exploration', Paul S. MacDonald is right to point out, has for long been a desideratum of Husserl scholarship. MacDonald is even more justified in successfully fulfilling this desideratum by profoundly examining the Cartesianism of Husserl and Husserl's historical analysis of Descartes' œuvre (which is not restrained to analyze Husserl's explicit claims to adopt Descartes' thought) on the one side and the 'Husserlianism' of Descartes on the other. MacDonald thus lays bare the revolutionary character of Descartes' and Husserl's projects while not neglecting the crucial differences between Descartes' and Husserl's philosophies.

MacDonald particularly focuses upon Husserl's and Descartes's radical return to beginnings and their tendency to overthrow the achievements of previous philosophers, i.e., both their terminologies and their metaphysical frameworks. Given the way Descartes and Husserl pursued philosophy and the task of philosophy in their time, only an utterly new beginning could prevent philosophy from being undermined by skeptical and reductionist tendencies, be it the neo-scepticism of Michel de Montaigne and his congenials, or nineteenth-century empirical psychology and its claim fully to explain human knowledge, and thus logical laws too, psychologically.

These two projects of radical beginnings, as MacDonald argues, are based upon strikingly comparable points of departure. Both Descartes and Husserl had to face skeptical and relativistic tendencies among their contemporaries. Descartes was faced with the renaissance of Greek and Roman skepticism in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe, the questioning, and crisis, of theological and philosophical Reason, and the rise of the natural sciences. In an analogical way, Husserl was confronted with the increasing success of natural sciences, with the psychologisation of logic, the naturalization and historisation of reality and the skeptical implications of those developments. Over against what Husserl and Descartes thought would inevitably lead to the abolishment of reason and the transformation of philosophy, they refrained from deploying the vocabulary of contemporary philosophy and strived at coining not simply a new vocabulary, but also a new philosophical method which was meant to leave far behind dubious methods and the lack of consistent methodologies in their age.

Descartes and Husserl do not simply share a common starting-point, MacDonald argues, but also fundamental ontological notions upon which their respective philosophy is based. Both Descartes and Husserl aim at founding certainty and indubitable evidence within the subject, they radicalize the skeptical tendencies which they criticize (and thus, they explicate to what extent universal skepticism is self-contradictory), they develop a new formal ontology after having initially focused upon mathematical truths and their implications, and they develop an epistemology of intuitive knowledge. Both Descartes' and Husserl's projects entail the loss of a world in order to gain a new world which leaves universal skepticism behind. The building of philosophy is secured by re-invigorating philosophy as 'rigorous science', or, respectively, *mathesis universalis*. Descartes' methodological doubt and



Husserl's phenomenological reduction thus function in a largely comparable way.

MacDonald's fascinating book focuses upon a thoughtful analysis of seminal writings of Descartes and Husserl without neglecting the historical context and development of their thought. Philosophy as understood by Descartes and Husserl, MacDonald argues, is based upon a personal conversion which, to a certain extent, resembles religious conversation without being identical with it. The vocation of phenomenology of which Husserl speaks is different from a religious vocation. Phenomenology, MacDonald points out, is, like the Cartesian *Meditations* the title of which bears obvious religious connotations, a spiritual discipline *sui generis*.

Philosophy, Descartes' and Husserl's œuvre make clear, does not thematize a knowledge that is absolutely external to the person perceiving it; it is thus based upon personal involvement and active participation. MacDonald argues that this is a very distinctive feature of Descartes' and Husserl's trajectory: 'Every philosopher wants to convince or persuade the reader on a specific point, and to do so by appeal to rational argument; but this is not a call for *conversion*, which demands that one abandon all previous convictions and commit oneself entirely to a new path' (226).

It is one of the chief merits of MacDonald's examination of Descartes and Husserl to bring into mind that, in stark contrast to how Cartesianism and transcendental phenomenology is generally understood, Descartes and Husserl formulate a challenging task to their reader in that their appeal to thoroughly consistent methodologies also implies an appeal to the personal involvement of the philosopher, entailing the unfolding, and examining, of one's subjectivity.

It is one of the shortcomings of MacDonald's book that he does not situate the genuinely Husserlian and Cartesian notion of philosophy within the broader context of the history of modern philosophy. MacDonald wonders whether every philosopher wouldn't 'call for the reader to turn with him or her and see things in a new light?' (226) His answer prevents MacDonald from elaborating upon this thought: 'Every philosopher wants to convince or persuade the reader on a specific point, and to do so by appeal to rational argument; but this is not a call for *conversion*, which demands that one abandon all previous convictions and commit oneself entirely to a new path.' This statement implies a rather idealizing account of the uniqueness of Descartes and Husserl. Descartes and Husserl are genuinely modern philosophers. Their trajectories are not absolutely new. Descartes is as much indebted to the Platonic and Scholastic tradition as Husserl to nineteenth-century philosophy; MacDonald would certainly not deny this. Many modern philosophers have stated that conversion is essential for adequate knowledge. The call for a new beginning is, loosely speaking, characteristic (rather than not) of modern philosophy. The same holds true of a notion such as intuition without which the course of post-Kantian philosophy could hardly be understood. MacDonald's brilliant analysis of the radical beginning of Descartes and Husserl thus ought to be read as an exemplary account of how

modernity by and large tried to begin radically without always achieving this radical beginning. *Calling* for a demolition of previous philosophical achievements is different from, and more feasible than, demolishing previous philosophical achievements. History postulates its tribute, and where we come from, Heidegger famously emphasized, determines where we go to.

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**Wolfgang-Rainer Mann**

*The Discovery of Things:*

*Aristotle's Categories and Their Context.*

Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press

2000. Pp. xii + 231.

US\$39.50. ISBN 0-691-01020-X.

If you are reading this review in a printed format, you are looking at a booklet. The booklet will of course remain the same object even if its pages become dog-eared or yellow. If it is burnt and turned to ashes, on the other hand, it will be a booklet no more, and thus cease to exist. These observations illustrate our common-sense distinction between the kind to which a thing belongs, and to which it cannot cease to belong without ceasing to exist, and the features or properties of a thing, features which can change while the thing continues to exist. The distinction is constitutive of what it is to be a thing.

According to Mann, the recognition of things as belonging to kinds and having changeable features was not always obvious. It had to be discovered. Its discoverer, he argues, was Aristotle, and we find the record of his discovery in Aristotle's *Categories*. Before Aristotle, there were no things. Mann's goal is not just to argue for this thesis but to reconstruct the history of Aristotle's discovery, to make it become unfamiliar again, so that we can appreciate what his revolution in metaphysics has wrought. He thus offers us a careful explanation of the coherence and function of the opening three chapters of the *Categories*; an interpretation of Plato's middle dialogues as propounding an ontology without things; and a speculative reconstruction of what led Aristotle to discover things.

Mann's story begins chronologically with Anaxagoras, whose 'elemental quasi-stuffs' (108) include anything (except possibly mind) designated by non-count terms like 'the hot' and 'air', without the distinction we would make



(following Aristotle) between properties and stuffs. We observe mixtures of portions of these elemental quasi-stuffs. Each elemental quasi-stuff just is what it is. A mixture on the other hand manifests itself as those elemental quasi-stuffs which predominate; no mixture is purely what it manifests itself as. Any change in the proportions of elemental quasi-stuffs is a new mixture; Anaxagoras cannot distinguish between change and destruction of observables.

Likewise, Plato's middle-dialogue Forms are uniform, i.e., purely what they are; beauty is beautiful and nothing else. We observe 'participants' which manifest themselves as like the Forms in which they participate, but *are not* what they manifest themselves as. The distinction between being purely what it is and merely manifesting itself is the distinction between the *ousia* (being) of the Forms and the *genesis* of the participants. To say that beauty exists but a beautiful person merely *gignetai* is to say that the one just is what it is while the other merely manifests itself in a certain way. The participant is always subject to change in any respect, but this changeability is a consequence of being a *gignomenon*, not its basic meaning. Mann supports this interpretation of Plato's use of *genesis* in contrast to *ousia* with an impressive philological demonstration of a usage of the verb *gignesthai* to mean 'manifest oneself as'.

Observables on this account are named after (and dependent for their quasi-existence on) the Forms in which they participate. Socrates is a *homonymos* (a namesake) of the Form man in just the same way as he is a homonym of the Form white. The participant Socrates manifests itself as man, white, etc.; 'he' no more *is* a man than he *is* white. There is no basis for distinguishing the change 'he' undergoes when he gets a tan from the change 'he' undergoes when he dies. There are just endlessly fluctuating combinations of participations in Forms.

Aristotle however notices different ways participants are named after Forms. A participant in beauty is not strictly speaking a homonym of beauty; the participant is called 'beautiful' rather than 'beauty' and so is a *paronym* of beauty, something called after it with a change of ending. A participant in man is more than a homonym, because not only the name but also the definition of man can be predicated of a man like Socrates; Socrates is thus a *synonym* of man, something called by the same name and having the same definition. Cases where the name but not the definition is predicated are *homonyms* in a narrow sense; a white man is thus a *homonym* of the colour white.

The opening chapter of the *Categories* in which Aristotle distinguishes synonyms, homonyms and paronyms thus draws attention within the framework of the ontology of the Academy to a distinction Plato had not recognized. This distinction in turn is the basis of the distinction in the second chapter between attributes and kinds. An attribute is 'in a subject'; the criterion for attribute status is that the subject to which the attribute belongs is a paronym or homonym of it. A kind is 'said of a subject'; the criterion for kind status is that the subject belonging to that kind is a synonym of it. This link

between the 'onymies' of *Categories* 1 and the distinctions of *Categories* 2 becomes clearer if we repair the corrupted text of the *Categories* by moving certain paragraphs around and recognizing a lacuna.

The distinction between kinds and features constructed on the basis of the distinction between synonymy and paronymy/homononymy enables Aristotle to distinguish substances and their kinds from their accidental features (qualities, quantities, relations and so forth). Various linguistic asymmetries show that substances are primary and attributes depend on them for their existence. Things have been discovered.

This is an exciting story. It is supported by meticulous and thorough scholarship, both philological and philosophical. Mann argues his case step by step, starting with Aristotle's *Categories*, then working forward from Anaxagoras to the ontology of Plato's middle dialogues, and finally returning to the *Categories*. He considers carefully the major objections one might raise to his interpretation of Plato: passages which seem to indicate a distinction in Plato between the essence and the accidental characteristics of observable particulars, passages which seem to imply a different range of Forms than Mann's interpretation might be thought to imply, difficulties in thinking of Forms like man as 'ingredients' of participants. Perhaps his most debatable claim is that throughout the middle dialogues Forms are regarded as only what they are; one can say truly about Beauty, for example, only that it is beautiful. This claim requires Mann to put the dialogues where participation of Forms in other Forms is recognized (the second half of the *Parmenides*, the *Sophist*, the *Philebus*) later than the dialogues where we find the middle-period picture of Forms (the first half of the *Parmenides*, the *Timaeus*), or else to suppose that Plato was working simultaneously on two independent lines of inquiry. Mann also acknowledges that Aristotle's linguistic tests leave the differentia of a secondary substance with an ambiguous status, an awkward result which can be accommodated by taking the linguistic tests as merely heuristic devices to reveal independently supported ontological facts.

On the whole, Mann's argument is convincing. He has managed to say something new, interesting, philosophically important, plausible and perhaps even true about the transition from Plato to Aristotle, and about the origins of our 'common-sense' ontology of things. That is no small accomplishment.

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**Waller R. Newell**

*Ruling Passion: the Erotics of Statecraft  
in Platonic Political Philosophy.*

Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield 2000.

Pp. vii + 205.

US\$70.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-8476-9726-6);

US\$24.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8476-9727-4).

Newell's book can be said to explore an ambiguity in its title. The phrase 'ruling passion' means one thing if 'ruling' is a participle (Her ruling passion was airplanes), and another if it's a non-finite active verb (Ruling passion is a challenge). Newell's 'studies (168)' of the *Gorgias*, *Symposium*, *Republic* and of the pre-Socratic and Sophistic background to the *Gorgias* suggest that a complex dialectic — a complexity due as much to the personae of the dialogues as to the issues — between Eros and Thumos governs Plato's answers to questions about both senses of the phrase (96). Against the grain of received opinion that Logos rules, Newell's conclusion is that as a participle, Eros rules, and that as a non-finite verb it rules 'passion' (*epithumia*) through the mediation of Thumos. One of the complexities which cannot go unmentioned in so bald a summary, however, is the fact that Eros must re-enter the argument in order to control Thumos and that its control of Thumos is uncertain (81-2, 92, 189-90). Newell's interpretations of the well-known texts that get us to this point are clearly spelled out and thought provoking.

Newell's aim in this book is to answer the question of whether Socrates 'was able to find a bridge,' in these dialogues, between philosophy and politics (189). The book has five substantive chapters framed by an introduction and a conclusion; it is written from a Straussian perspective that weds consideration of drama to an examination of issues, and that takes its bearings from the primacy of questions about the relation of theory and practice. What stand out in Newell's pages are fresh readings of the dialogues. For example, the chapter on the *Gorgias*, 'The Problem of Callicles', undertakes a thorough examination of the implications of the homogeneity of Callicles' private erotic goal (the boy Demos) with his public one (the Athenian Demos) and its connection to tyranny (36, 93). The chapter on the pre-Socratic (sophistic) background, among other things, sheds interesting light on the meaning of art (*techne*) in pre-Socratic thinking and its Platonic counterpart.

The book also has several sub-themes. One of the most interesting begins in the chapter on the *Symposium*, where Newell initiates a discussion of the 'two poles' of the Platonic Socrates: the 'holistic' or dogmatic side that seeks after 'wholeness', and the second, skeptical and analytical (98, 194). Newell's train of thought on this issue suggests that these two sides, the first of which he identifies with the Delphic Story, and the second, with the Gadfly image, are reflections of Eros and Thumos at work in Socrates' soul. The chapter also includes an illuminating view of the *Alcibiades I* (60-2). The complex argument of the two chapters devoted to the *Republic* wrestles with the

question of whether there is a *paideia* common to citizen and philosopher (178).

Newell is kind to the reader. The book is full of signposts indicating where the thread of an argument will be picked up again (e.g., 30, 36, 152). As well as being marked by several sub-themes, the book also has several 'leitmotifs' (91), among which are the thesis that 'eros entails and explains thumos' (2, 16), an examination of the 'Platonic understanding of tyranny' (91), and an unpacking of the Socratic claim in the *Gorgias* that he is the only true practitioner of the art of politics in Athens (e.g., 38, 97, 178). Newell's quarrying of this latter 'seemingly absurd claim' may point to a horizon that encloses his book (97).

As Newell sees it, Socrates practices politics in his conversations, and it is here that he would have us look for the reality of this 'claim' in the world of everyday politics (97, 93). But this may be too modest a way of redeeming this claim from absurdity. Much of what the dialogues put forward has a hyperbolic flavor, seeming to suggest extreme prescriptive (normative) possibilities. For example, the first of the *Republic's* noble lies suggests an ideal of citizenly fraternity that transcends the plausible limits of politics. That all citizens of *Kallipolis* should see themselves as natural members of their community appears, at first blush, like a prescriptive absurdity. Yet all denizens of multicultural societies, whether Canadians, or Americans, know that in the absence of native birth, becoming a citizen is called 'being naturalized' as a result of a process called 'naturalization'. Hence what seems normative is but descriptive: *Kallipolis* — as befits the paradigm of politics — does explicitly what mere mortal cities do unwittingly. Accordingly, it may be the case that Socrates' 'absurd claim', which can be recast as the thesis that wisdom is title to rule, may have descriptive possibilities not covered by Socrates' private conversations. The same may apply *mutatis mutandis* for almost all of the limit propositions in the *Republic*, including that philosophers should rule. If this is indicative of a limitation of Newell's book, one should be grateful for a book that pushes us to the limits of Plato's texts.

**Joseph Gonda**  
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**John Rawls**

*Collected Papers.*

Edited by Samuel Freeman.

Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

1999. Pp. xii + 656.

US\$42.95. ISBN 0-674-13739-6.

**John Rawls**

*The Law of Peoples, with*

*'The Idea of Public Reason Revisited.'*

Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

1999. Pp. viii + 199.

US\$22.50. ISBN 0-674-00079-X.

**John Rawls**

*A Theory of Justice.*

Revised edition.

Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

1999. Pp. xxii + 538.

US\$46.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-675-00077-3);

US\$22.00 (paper: ISBN 0-674-00078-1).

John Rawls's stature as one of the most important political philosophers in twentieth-century political philosophy is derived in large measure from material in the three 1999 publications under review. These books develop and defend his social contract theory of justice as fairness, its later evolution into political liberalism, and its extension into a Law of Peoples. They provide the revised text of what has often been considered the century's most important book in Western political philosophy (*A Theory of Justice*, Rev. ed., or *TJ*), bring together most of Rawls's papers published over a half-century (*Collected Papers*, or *CP*), and reveal the culmination of his thought in the relations between peoples and the public justification of the fundamental basis of political relations (*The Law of Peoples, with 'The Idea of Public Reason Revisited,'* or *LP*). Though *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993, paperback ed., 1995, or *PL*) remains the best exposition of Rawls's later theory of justice for new readers, the *Collected Papers* lay out all periods of his thought, *A Theory of Justice* articulates in a more cohesive manner its own imposing theory of justice, and *The Law of Peoples* provides the best introduction to his thought and his latest positions. After an overview of the books, this review shows how Rawls's most recent writings relate to and illuminate ideas from older parts of his corpus.

Specialists and libraries will need to update their copies of *A Theory of Justice*, since the new edition provides the definitive English text that has been used for translations since 1975 but was previously unavailable in English. The Conversion Table for page numbers between the editions will prove handy for locating citations. Though a number of familiar passages have been rewritten to prevent misunderstanding, readers should expect few

surprises since the major revisions in ideas that Rawls undertook in response to critics have all been signalled and expanded upon in later works, particularly 'The Basic Liberties and their Priority' (reprinted in *PL*, lecture 8), and 'Social Unity and Primary Goods' (*CP*, ch. 17). Those reading the work for the first time will continue to find this big book — in pages, ideas, and architectural conception — as magisterial as its first readers, rooted in a deep erudition of modern thought. It is an essential reference for understanding many significant currents in the field since its publication.

Scholars and students in political and moral philosophy and related disciplines such as economics, political science, and law will find the *Collected Papers* a convenient source for preliminary and expanded versions of the arguments in Rawls's monographs, and its excellent index a valuable aid. Despite Rawls's initial reluctance to publish in book form what he considers exploratory efforts at working out ideas for his books, the essays contain arguments and insights of enduring relevance as well as historical interest. That many able philosophers continue to support the comprehensive liberalism of *A Theory of Justice* over Rawls's later *Political Liberalism* indicates the value of examining positions developed by Rawls that he later came to reject or downplay. Aside from three essays reprinted as chapters in *Political Liberalism*, and his 'Reply to Habermas' included as an appendix to the paperback edition of that work, all of Rawls's significant published articles are included in one form or another in the 27 chapters of *Collected Papers*.

From the first paper to the last, Rawls focuses on using reason to overcome fundamental divisions in public life in order to create a just liberal democracy. The early papers trace Rawls's steady development and justification of his social contract theory of justice as fairness against the then reigning orthodoxy of utilitarianism. Beginning with them, Rawls helped to revive systematic and substantive political theorizing in Anglo-American philosophy, in contrast to the sterile debates regarding emotivism and the analysis of normative language in mid-century. His initial concern was that utilitarianism permitted one to consider the advantages to a slaveholder in determining the justice of the practice of slavery, and would not allow a claim that the practice would lead to the greatest satisfaction of desire to be ruled irrelevant to its justice (*CP*, 67).

The papers published starting in 1958 ('Justice as Fairness', *CP*, ch. 3) and culminating in *A Theory of Justice* (1971) engaged equally traditional issues in moral and political philosophy and important political issues in his society at the time: the civil rights movement, conscientious objection to wars like in Vietnam, and distributive justice in the growing welfare state. By devising an original position where hypothetical parties representing natural persons with capacities for a sense of justice and for a sense of their good contracted on principles of justice for society as a system of fair cooperation behind a veil of ignorance about their actual talents and position in society, Rawls overcame many of the traditional criticisms levelled at social contract theories. *A Theory of Justice* and the papers published in the following decade, especially 'Kantian Constructivism in Moral Theory' (*CP*, ch. 16) set



the terms for new debates between liberals and communitarians over the appropriate moral and political conception of a person to be used in a social contract, particularly their commitments to others and their own projects, and the adequacy of the original position in representing an adequate model.

The essays that led up to Rawls's second book, *Political Liberalism*, asserted that an overlapping consensus regarding matters in the political domain alone, such as fundamental principles of justice, provides the best hope for a reasoned basis for a just and stable liberal society, in contrast with comprehensive views such as his own earlier theory that include prescriptions for all parts of life. The reason is that it is unreasonable to suppose that in the conditions of an ideal liberal society that agreement could be maintained on any single comprehensive doctrine without an oppressive use of force.

Rawls then extended his theory of justice for liberal states to their relations with other peoples, which instigated a debate with liberals with more universalist and egalitarian leanings. His arguments in 'The Law of Peoples' (CP, ch. 24) that liberal peoples should tolerate some decent but nonliberal regimes, and that the members of other peoples do not have rights to economic redistribution between peoples similar to those enjoyed by poor citizens within ideal liberal states provoked criticism. The issues centre on Rawls's view that the circumstances of justice between peoples are relevantly different from those between persons within a liberal society, leading to a specific representation of peoples and not persons in a second use of the original position, as indicated in *A Theory of Justice* (TJ, 331-2) and intimated in 'Justice as Fairness' (CP, 48-9).

*The Law of Peoples* fulfills the promise of a fuller and more satisfactory account of its topic than the sketch provided in the paper of the same name. Rawls writes accessibly and engagingly for a general audience in many passages of this work, and writes more personally than ever in the Preface. Still, knowledgeable readers will find that this piece and the accompanying essay on public reason clarify the ideas and procedures used in *Political Liberalism*, and add their own important innovations.

Reading these three works of Rawls's together prompts a question at the boundary between his two stages of ideal and non-ideal theory. The early concern mentioned above that unjust interests should have no weight in determining justice (CP, 67) underpins the view in *A Theory of Justice* that '[i]f a bill of rights guaranteeing liberty of conscience and freedom of thought and assembly would be effective, then it should be adopted [w]hatever the depth of feeling against ... these rights' (TJ, 203). Yet in *The Law of Peoples* Rawls writes that some hierarchical societies without full freedom of religion and other liberal rights deserve respect (LP, 84). What means are legitimate for liberals in nonliberal societies to attempt to realize a liberal conception of justice? Answering this question provides an opportunity to indicate important facets of the works under review.

In 'The Domain of the Political and Overlapping Consensus' (CP, ch. 22), Rawls describes sources of reasonable disagreement which he comes to call

the burdens of judgement, since they are the source of ineliminable reasonable pluralism in political liberalism. Accepting them does not impugn the political objectivity of political liberalism because reasonable and rational citizens still narrow their differences of opinion about fundamental matters significantly enough (*CP*, 356, 354; *PL*, 119). However, significant disagreement with justice as fairness after due consideration over constitutional essentials and matters of basic justice means that a person is not reasonable and rational according to political liberalism. So no reason that would lead a person to reject, say, domestic liberalism's conception of the burdens of judgement for disagreements among citizens could meet domestic liberalism's criterion of political objectivity. In this way, it possible to claim that a small number of persons who accepted Rawls's account of persons as reasonable and rational could determine objective political convictions for a society in which they were greatly outnumbered, at least according to political liberalism's account of political objectivity. A small minority of liberals in a nonliberal society might thus come to think that a feasible coercive imposition of liberalism by them would conform to political liberalism.

Three arguments suggest otherwise. First, political liberalism is liberal because it is designed to gain the *reasoned* support of citizens (*CP*, 487). The second stage of theorizing is concerned with how a society well-ordered by justice as fairness may establish and preserve unity and stability given reasonable pluralism. This is a problem of bringing others to affirm liberalism through addressing their reason, not getting them to conform to it or affirm it through coercion. Indeed, the first stage ideal theory would not endorse the use of coercion to change persons' beliefs if this is required in order to vindicate its own political objectivity. For while people might have come to appreciate and endorse liberalism through experience of its benefits in liberal peoples, a prospective intent to use coercion in order to create such beliefs would not meet liberal standards of legitimacy.

Second, even if a comprehensive doctrine is classified as unreasonable by political liberalism, it may have a conception of reasonableness that reasonably disagrees with political liberalism's conception of reasonableness according to political liberalism's conception of reasonableness. These reasonable grounds of disagreement include differences in the 'whole course of life' and 'total experience' of persons that shape 'the way we assess evidence and weigh moral and political ideas,' as well as differences which exacerbate the different judgements persons make when there are 'different kinds of normative considerations of different force on both sides of an issue'. There may also be reasonable disagreements due to 'conflicting and complex' evidence (*CP*, 476-7). All of these reasonable grounds of disagreement likely exist in societies with nonliberal public cultures, and are part of Rawls's burdens of judgement. Political liberalism holds it unreasonable to repress comprehensive doctrines that are not unreasonable.

Third, further difficulties would arise due to the presumed absence of a liberal public culture. Political liberalism's strategy of drawing its fundamental ideas from liberal public culture and addressing arguments to all of the



major traditions of public thought in that public culture ensured that political liberalism provided a reasoned basis for all to accept the political obligations that it recognizes, a basis absent without that public culture. Were its fundamental ideas not a part of public culture, political liberalism's status as a freestanding theory able to articulate impartial principles between rival partisan political conceptions would be undermined. These arguments suggest another rationale for Rawls's greater toleration of nonliberal political conceptions in *The Law of Peoples* than in his domestic liberalism.

When conjoined with a factual correction of Rawls's interpretation of the international human rights regime, the same question of legitimate transitions regarding the Law of Peoples leads to a small but significant correction of Rawls's Law of Peoples. International public culture in the form of law, opinion, and practice does not recognize a right to war to vindicate human rights against a state's internal sovereignty, except perhaps the human right of self-determination. Commonly cited cases of possible forcible humanitarian interventions have all involved transborder effects, the consent of the relevant state, protection against external aggressors, or were not authorized by the UN. The continuing widespread, duly considered opposition to such actions except by NATO's minority of liberal peoples indicates that a strategy of building worldwide support for them would be more just than a unilateral application of a norm not yet established, even if it were justified.

Rawls is famous for the elaborate and powerful theoretical structures he has developed to justify his egalitarian liberalism, his generosity towards commentators and colleagues to whom he owes intellectual debts, and a never ending effort to improve his views in light of worthy objections and new thoughts brought about through public reason. His continuing aim has been to provide sufficient reasons to conclude that the most justified arrangement for political life in a democratic constitutional society is a social contract conception of justice domestically and among peoples. The works under review bear witness to this honourable search for a realistic utopia (CP, 12-3) that in Rousseau's words 'takes men as they are, and laws as they might be.'

**Joseph Murray**  
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**Sandra B. Rosenthal, Carl R. Hausman,  
Douglas R. Anderson, eds.**

*Classical American Pragmatism:*

*Its Contemporary Vitality.*

Urbana: University of Illinois Press 1999.

Pp. xii + 263.

US\$42.50 (cloth: ISBN 0-252-02454-0);

US\$16.95 (paper: ISBN 0-252-06760-6).

This collection of essays by leading pragmatist scholars is advertised on the flyleaf as 'providing a thorough grounding in the philosophy of American pragmatism.' It consists of sixteen essays on Peirce, James, Dewey and Mead, grouped under four headings. This provides a symmetrical matrix, within which one can explore classical pragmatism by considering aspects of each thinker's thought as thematically grouped by the editors. The four sections are entitled 'The Centrality of Practice', 'The Significance of Social Life', 'Quality, Value and Normative Conditions', and 'Creativity, Experience and the World'. The contributors are a mix of well-known pragmatists and younger scholars, all of whom display a firm grasp of the subject matter. The majority of the essays provide background to, and significant qualifications of, the views of the classical pragmatists. They are therefore primarily exegetical, explaining well-known passages in light of background material. This suggests that the volume be used as a supplemental reading for upper level undergraduate courses in Peirce, Dewey, et al.

The introduction, by John E. Smith, is designed to provide historical background for the pragmatist movement, and contains a brief recounting of the movement's antecedents in America and Europe. Smith also provides some fairly familiar thoughts on the pragmatists' antipathy for 'philosophy as usual' and its 'perennial problems'. Mention is made of the pragmatists' reshaping of epistemology and philosophy of science, but there is little detail, for the introduction is a mere eleven pages long. This brevity precludes Smith from adding any comments on the essays that follow, and this is a disappointment.

As for the essays themselves, the exegesis is for the most part solid, but whatever the volume offers in terms of orthodox scholarship, some more criticism or reflection on the subject matter would have been desirable. Standing out above the rest are the essays on Dewey: Larry Hickman's essay on 'Pragmatic Technology and Community Life' considers some criticisms of Dewey's seemingly optimistic reading of technology. Raymond Boisvert's treatment of Dewey's logic includes consideration of the historical factors (*viz.*, the extirpation of psychological lines of inquiry following the revolution in mathematical logic at the turn of the century) that led to Dewey's exclusion from the modern histories of logic. Thomas M. Alexander's essay 'John Dewey and the Aesthetics of Human Existence' is one of the more informative contributions. Alexander situates Dewey's thoughts on aesthetics within a history of the field and a summation of previous pragmatist's contributions



to Dewey's substantive position. Thereafter follows a useful summary of Dewey's *Art and Experience*, which would greatly aid a newcomer in understanding the ramifications of Dewey's aesthetic theory.

The essays on Peirce and James are designed for the most part to resuscitate certain dimensions of their thought: John Lachs describes Peirce's views on the social nature of inquiry, where the familiar end of inquiry is supplemented by the less well-known Peircean claim that in the end, the individualism of community members will fade with the increasing agreement over matters of fact. As for James, Charlene Haddock Seigfried argues against the received view of him as excessively individualistic, reassuring us that the 'sympathetic apprehension of the point of view of the other ... is central to James's philosophy' (92). These are useful additions to the existing literature on classical pragmatism, but the trade-off is in the area of the aspects one would expect to see in a volume like this. There is little talk of theories of truth or meaning, for example, and this suggests that the book is best used in conjunction with other commentaries or supplements. The Mead material is less esoteric, in part because of the less popular or familiar nature of the subject matter.

Like the introduction, the essays herein are exceedingly brief, averaging a mere fifteen pages each. This does not allow for much depth of treatment of the variety of themes and thinkers covered by this volume. Furthermore, only the contributions by the volume's editors seem to deal with the contemporary vitality of pragmatism highlighted in the title, and this can disappoint those looking for consideration of the field of pragmatist scholarship, or the utility of classical pragmatist thought to contemporary issues. This volume does refresh the memory as to the range of issues treated by Peirce, James, Dewey and Mead, but for readers unfamiliar with their thought, this volume might seem obscure.

**Matthew Stephens**

Athabasca University

**Mark Steiner**

*The Applicability of Mathematics  
as a Philosophical Problem.*

Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

1998. Pp. viii + 215.

US\$41.50. ISBN 0-674-04097-X.

Steiner sets himself two objectives. The first is 'to examine in what ways mathematics can be said to be applicable in the natural sciences or, if you prefer, to the empirical world' (1). The second is to explore the implications of mathematics' applicability for 'our view of the universe and the place in it of the human mind' (2). The conclusion that Steiner draws on this score is that we have a special place in the universe. This is intended to be a surprising result in the current era of rampant naturalization and, indeed, Steiner takes himself to be presenting an argument against naturalism.

The use of mathematical theorems in deductions raises a semantic problem. In statements of pure mathematics numerals purport to name mathematical objects, whereas in mixed statements they look like predicates characterizing physical objects. Thus such deductions appear invalid. But once we see that numerical attributions are second order predications to concepts and not to physical objects, we also see that the use of arithmetic theorems to effect deductions is valid. This Fregean solution, Steiner argues, also shows how one of the central objections to platonist accounts of mathematics is mistaken. Anti-platonists object that truths about an extra-spatio-temporal realm of mathematical objects should not be of any use in understanding the spatio-temporal world. But because mathematical objects relate to concepts that apply to physical objects, the relation is not direct but indirect. By rejecting the notion that mathematical objects need to be directly related to the physical world in order to be descriptively useful, Steiner appears to dispose of the worry that platonism solves the problem of mathematical truth at the expense of raising a more puzzling problem about applicability. One might wish, however, for an explanation of how this solution avoids raising a parallel difficulty. Steiner explains away the problem of the applicability of truths about platonic objects to physical objects, but this doesn't explain how truths about platonic objects are relevant to *concepts*. Perhaps this problem can be solved, but that Steiner does not even raise the issue is a defect in a book that purports to provide a solution to the general problem of the applicability of mathematics.

Steiner also considers questions raised by specific instances of the application of mathematics, some in which application 'is reasonable and no mystery' (35), and some in which the applicability of a mathematical concept seems mysterious. His strategy for explaining the applicability of particular mathematical concepts is to match them up with some general nonmathematical property of the world. This strategy seems right, as does Steiner's instinct that questions about applicability of this sort must be handled on a case-by-case basis.



But the main business of the book is to attack naturalism. Steiner aims to establish that the way mathematics was used in the development of some recent physical theories only makes sense against a background belief that the human mind has a special place in the universe. This is because the mathematical development of these theories involved both Pythagorean and formalist analogies. Pythagorean analogies are mathematical analogies between physical laws that cannot be paraphrased into nonmathematical language. Formalist analogies are Pythagorean mathematical analogies 'based on the syntax or even orthography of the language or notation of physical theories' (54). Both are methods for guessing theories by projecting features of mathematical structures onto the physical world, and since mathematics is an anthropocentric category, they involve projecting anthropocentric properties onto the world. That such strategies were successful shows that, contrary to naturalism, we have a special place in the world. Steiner discusses a number of episodes in which physicists reasoned using such analogies — for example, the use of Pythagorean analogies in Maxwell's prediction of electromagnetic radiation and the formalist analogies used by Dirac in his prediction of the positron. This history makes for an interesting read and Steiner is convincing in his characterizations of the ways in which physicists have applied mathematics to discover new physical theory. But as interesting as this recounting is, Steiner fails to establish that the strategies he identifies are inconsistent with naturalism.

First, Steiner makes no serious attempt to show that anthropocentrism is anathema to naturalism. He admits as much, saying '... I will *define* naturalism to be "opposition to anthropocentrism"' (55). Perhaps this is merely a terminological point, but it nevertheless undermines Steiner's insistence that he has established that physicists have been behaving in a way that *naturalism* can't make rational. Second, and more serious, is the weakness of the claim that 'mathematics' is an anthropocentric concept. Steiner's argument is that physicists have used methods for guessing theories that project anthropocentric features onto the physical world. Using Pythagorean and formalist analogies implicitly supposes that the mere fact that a structure is mathematical has some physical relevance. Otherwise how could we rationally expect to find anything physically relevant in features of mathematics that we have no independent reason to believe have physical relevance? But since the category 'mathematics' is anthropocentric we should not believe that it has any physical relevance. Thus the claim that mathematics is an anthropocentric category is crucial to Steiner's case.

Steiner hasn't really given us reason to believe that mathematics is an anthropocentric category. He claims that the identification of a structure as mathematical proceeds according to criteria that are themselves deeply anthropomorphic. Mathematicians look, among other things, to beauty or calculational convenience in order 'to decide whether to study a structure as mathematical' (7). But notice the ambiguity of this statement. It could be the claim that mathematicians choose which mathematical structures to study on the basis of beauty and convenience — which is surely the case to some

large extent — or it could be the claim that *identifying* a structure as mathematical is done on such a basis — a far more controversial claim, but the one the argument must rely on. The case Steiner raises to illustrate his argument trades on this ambiguity. He asks why it is that the ‘theorem’ of chess that a mate cannot be forced with a king and two knights against a king is not a theorem of mathematics, claiming that no mathematician he asked says it is (63). As it happens, the *first* mathematician I asked said this *is* mathematical theorem, just not one that many mathematicians are interested in. It may not be a deep, interesting or fruitful, but that does not mean that it isn’t a mathematical theorem. Playing chess is not doing mathematics, but chess has a mathematical structure and there are theorems about that structure. Mathematicians use aesthetic and pragmatic criteria to judge the mathematics they produce. That some proof, structure or theorem is ugly, shallow or inconvenient does not entail that it is not mathematical, however. And so, without further argumentation, Steiner cannot maintain this claim at the centre of his rejection of naturalism.

Though the argument of the book ultimately fails, Steiner has made an important contribution to our understanding of the use of mathematics in science. This is of considerable importance given the centrality of arguments from the indispensability of mathematics in science to various versions of platonism in recent debates. I recommend the book to anyone with an interest in the philosophy of mathematics, although I don’t assign it a special place in the universe.

**Sarah Hoffman**

University of Saskatchewan

**William Sweet, ed.**

*God and Argument / Dieu et*

*l'argumentation philosophique.*

Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press 1999.

Pp. x + 275.

Cdn\$32.00. ISBN 0-7766-0499-6.

William Sweet presents a well-edited and engaging anthology of essays on various topics of interest in the philosophy of religion. In his well-organized and substantial introduction to the collection, Sweet tells the reader that its purpose is to reexamine philosophical reflection about God in the light of contemporary concerns. For the most part, the essays offer fresh evaluations of the context and conditions necessary for arguing about God in philosophy,



as well as illuminating insights and perspectives on traditional topics in the philosophy of religion. It brings together reflections on arguments for God's existence from a variety of philosophical traditions, and in offering genuinely valuable contributions to the philosophy of religion, shows the vitality of this area of inquiry.

The anthology is divided into three parts. Part I considers the conditions necessary for rational discourse about God and his existence from a variety of perspectives. James Bradley argues that one must have a strong theory of existence in order to appeal to God as an explanatory concept. Moreover, the difficulty of determining the nature of a transcendent, infinite cause has led modern speculative metaphysics to regard the ultimate ground of being as immanent. As though to exemplify the point, Louis Perron argues that God's existence can be profitably approached from within a tradition which acknowledges the limits of human reason by examining Jean Ladrière's existential phenomenology wherein one finds a verification of God as the condition of the possibility of being. William Desmond argues that proofs for God's existence, i.e., 'ways,' depend on the ethos within which they are formulated, but that an openness to the particular ethos which gives rise to each 'way' also gives access to the 'primal ethos,' 'the deeper source out of which our approach to the divine takes place' (80). On the other hand, Danny Goldstick contends that Alvin Plantinga's Reformed epistemology is insufficiently grounded to be the necessary context for any rational access to God.

In one of the more interesting essays of the volume, James Ross offers a critical assessment of the value of arguments in proof of God's existence. Not only do such arguments fall short of strict demonstration, they can force committed atheists to abandon the rational principles on which such arguments depend. Ross concludes that the greatest value such arguments have is as intellectual bookkeeping for theists. While his assessment is insightful, it seems unfair of Ross to place the blame for an atheist's denial of the principles from which God's existence would follow on the argument that employs them.

Given the assumption in Part I that arguments for the God's existence are context dependent, Part II provides re-evaluations of some of the more famous arguments for God's existence in the light of their contexts. Leslie Armour believes that Anselm's Ontological Argument may succeed if one reads it in terms of the theory of reference implicit in *Proslogion* IV. Likewise, Peter Harris sees the theological context of Aquinas' Third Way as providing the basis from which Aquinas argues and, thus, as illuminating the nature of the God believed in. Fr. Lawrence Dewan takes the reader into a dispute between Etienne Gilson and Joseph Owens over whether Aquinas' doctrine of being is at the heart of the Five Ways of the *Summa Theologiae*. Ultimately Dewan believes the Five Ways do embody Thomas' basic insight into being, but that its elaboration in five arguments is conditioned by the pedagogical needs of the *Summa* to lead the student to this insight.

The final essays in Part II deal with more recent assessments of cosmological proofs. Bernard Vitany argues that Kant believed God's existence is

not susceptible to rational proof because Kant believed that the existence of God is presupposed in all argument. Jason West, on the other hand, believes that because Kant's criticism of Aquinas' Third Way depends on the former's transcendental philosophy, it ultimately does not succeed. William Sweet argues that the history of Anglo-American evidentialists shows that the standards for 'rational belief' can be satisfied.

The essays of Part III offer a reassessment of arguments less from the historical perspective than for the issues involved in arguments for God's existence. Interestingly, the essays all center around arguments from design. Denis Hurtubise notes that several of Alfred North Whitehead's works suggest that there is an ultimate principle which explains the order of, and standards of value in, the universe, but that such a principle is part of the universe, not an intelligent designer. John Haldane argues that modern science depends on a recognition of living things as having a distinctive organization and teleology. This basic fact cannot be explained within the science, but requires an intelligent designer. Robert Larmer notes that an appeal to miracle as evidence for God presupposes an ordered universe and that miracles are themselves a sort of purposive occurrence of which God provides the best explanation. Finally, Elizabeth Trott, in the only essay critical of the program of theistic argument, claims that the order and design supposedly present in nature depends on one's perspective; the universe could just as easily be viewed in ways which deny order. Arguments from design cannot succeed since the basis from which they begin are not objective.

What is most interesting about this anthology is its attempt to evaluate rational discussion of God from the perspective that rational discussion is conditioned by the context of both the purveyor of argument and its audience. All of the essays in Part I and several of them in Part II seek to re-examine arguments for God's existence in the light of pre-conditions and contexts. Even the essays of Part III, by focusing on design and the fact that the ability to see an order in nature is a matter of perspective, subscribe to this organizing principle. These essays were no doubt chosen, or at least arranged, on this basis. The value of the anthology, then, depends on the acceptance of this basic insight into the importance of context. The truth of the context-dependence of rational discourse receives no justification, however, and seems itself to transcend its own historicity and context.

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Catherine Wilson, ed.  
*Civilization and Oppression*.  
Calgary: University of Calgary Press 1999.  
Pp. vi + 288.  
n.p. ISBN 0-919491-25-1.

'But with settlements in groups and the establishment of agriculture, the species began its steep descent into servitude for the majority, profiteering, diseases of body and mind, insincerity and the bloom of pride and all the artificial emotions' (1). *That* oppression has been and continues to be the underside of progressive civilization seems to be a truism of the most disturbing sort. We need only stroll along any major street in any metropolitan city to see the wealth and contentment of advanced civilization juxtaposed with the fruits of oppression, which, provided we don't choose to stare at our feet instead, literally confronts us face to face. However, *why* civilization and oppression are connected and *how* (if at all) they might become separated are altogether separate issues; issues which many feel obliged — politically if not morally — to consider and hopefully resolve.

A scholarly text which takes up the task of examining this relationship finds itself faced with a potentially serious dilemma. On the one hand, the relationship, however obvious it might seem, should not be taken for granted. It must be shown that the advances of civilization and the improvement of living conditions for members result in the weakening of others' (sometimes non-members, but frequently members themselves) quality of life. On the other hand, a text runs the risk of irrelevance and pretension if it merely tries to reestablish the link between civilization and oppression. It must go beyond this *that* question and tackle questions of *why* and *how* (if at all) *things might be different*. In addition, one must be careful not to fall into an historically anachronistic primitivism that calls for a 'return'. Civilization can hardly be all bad. Most feel quite confident that human potential and freedom continue to develop, and this is quite laudable — for the most part. If civilization aims at something positive and if oppression has hitherto resulted from the progression of civilization, then it is incumbent upon us to discover some way to resolve the tension in this 'civilization-oppression' couplet.

The papers in Wilson's *Civilization and Oppression* collectively reexamine this relationship. Writes Wilson, 'historically, the advance of civilization has been construed both as the proliferation of modes of oppression and as the progress of freedom, and the present volume is intended to explore both relationships' (2). The problem is one of fleshing out the relationship between these two strands. What we begin to see is that important historical representatives of civilization and freedom have also been storytellers, justifying oppression or masking it altogether. These stories must be debunked if a space will be found where civilization-oppression can be thought out. The papers in this collection seek this space, asking: is there a way to reflect on civilization which is clearheaded and honest enough to see the oppression as

oppressive, and propose a way of being civilized which neither masks oppression nor remains oppressive?

The papers by Zack, Parekh, Brown and Larrimore explicitly engage in this sort of debunking. In these historical studies, the voices of freedom and civilization (Locke, Mill, Kant and even the more 'progressive' and 'radical' Vico and Montesquieu) are criticised and taken to task for their mythologisation of freedom. However, the compelling scholarly analyses these papers offer seem at times to fall prey to the kind of debunking game against which Wilson warns when she writes, 'excessive reproach of old philosophers is uncalled for' (18-19). Parekh's piece, for instance, exposes Vico and Montesquieu, whose work is generally taken to be radically opposed to the oppressive thinking of their time, as moral and cultural monists. Parekh shows that their ostensible openness to cultural diversity is trumped by their Eurocentric biases. Yet, what does this exposure show us? We see that Vico's and Montesquieu's thoughts speak from a position which accepts and justifies certain forms of oppression, but the exposure does not show us why, as advocates of advanced civilization and culture, they are also supporters of oppression (the same can be said of the papers on Locke, Mill and Kant). These representatives are guilty — but what of it?

We ought to be wary of being overly reproachful of these papers, of these 'new' philosophers. After all, the debunking is only the first part of the reflection on oppression. These four papers set the stage for the essays that follow. The latter leave aside the usual suspects and examine instead our own links to this oppressive heritage, considering ways in which oppression can be found in contemporary thought and how those forms of oppression can be jettisoned. Standing out among these is Noonan's provocative critique of post-modernism. Engaging in some contemporary debunking, Noonan shows how post-modern conceptions of identity are guilty of the same contradictions of liberal capitalism: 'postmodern critique has grown increasingly accommodationist in its relation to the liberal-capitalist order because its notion of democracy shares the same contradictions of the liberal notion' (148). If capitalism is guilty of leaving open conflict, aggression and oppression, post-modernism and its substitution of the subject-position for subjectivity has done little to avoid this. Instead, Noonan proposes that economic democracy might more adequately distribute life-goods than a radical post-modern form of democracy. Of equal interest is Fricker's piece that enters the ongoing debate surrounding epistemic oppression to propose a modification and vindication to standpoint theory. Fricker suggests that a privileged standpoint is possible, but only as a corrective standpoint and not another epistemically (and by extension morally and politically) privileged position.

The papers collected in *Civilization and Oppression* admirably engage in a serious and important debate concerning oppression and quality of life. Taken as separate pieces, the essays in this collection tend to fall short of the demands of a full reflection on civilization-oppression. However, taken collectively, the work done by these scholars serves as a wide-ranging and thoughtful critique (in the fullest sense of the term) of the civilization-oppres-



sion couplet, a critique which both covers familiar ground and opens new spaces for further reflection (for an example of the latter, Zwicky's essay on Freudian metapsychology and the 'logic' of the unconscious is of particular interest).

**Edvard Lorkovic**

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