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Subscriptions should be sent to the publisher:

Les abonnements peuvent être pris chez l'éditeur:

## Academic Printing and Publishing

9 - 3151 Lakeshore Road, Suite 403

Kelowna, BC, Canada V1W 3S9

Tel: 250-764-6427

Fax: 250-764-6428

E-mail: [app@silk.net](mailto:app@silk.net)

Publications Mail Registration No. 08491 - ISSN 1206-5269

Agreement number 1392808

© 2001 Academic Printing and Publishing

Published six times a year

**Volume XXI, No. 4**  
**August • août 2001**

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APP acknowledges the financial support of the Government of Canada, through the Publications Assistance Program (PAP), toward our mailing costs.

APP reconnaît l'aide financière du gouvernement du Canada, par l'entremise du Programme d'aide aux publications (PAP), pour nos dépenses d'envoi postal.

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**Robert Brandom**

*Articulating Reasons:*

*An introduction to inferentialism.*

Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

2000. Pp. 230.

US\$35.00. ISBN 0-674-00158-3.

Robert Brandom's first volume, *Making It Explicit* (*MIE*), is (to borrow from Twain) the sort of book that, once you've put it down, you can't pick it up. Weighing in at 650 pages and about 300,000 words, *MIE* is poorly written and far too long. Yet *MIE* is also an interesting book: in it, Brandom paints a detailed and coherent picture of mind and meaning that has its roots in the thinking of Wilfrid Sellars and the later Wittgenstein. The tragic flaw of *MIE* is its unreadability. Hence the need for *Articulating Reasons* (*AR*), Brandom's wonderfully compressed, far more clearly written introduction to the ideas found in *MIE*. At 200 pages and something in the vicinity of 60,000 words, it is a manageable introduction to an important research program.

Brandom's program can reasonably be called *social normative inferentialism*. Brandom is an *inferentialist* in that he holds intentionality to originate in systems of inference. He is a *normative inferentialist* in that it is not actual inferences but the rules for inferring which one must consider when thinking about intentionality. And he is a *social normative inferentialist* in holding that it is rules for the inferences made in public discourse, not in thought, that are the source of intentionality.

*AR* surveys large parts of Brandom's program, beginning with an Introduction that helpfully describes the theoretical options among which Brandom is choosing, and then filling in details. Chapter 1 is the foundational chapter, sketching out how meaning arises from norms of inferential practice. Crudely, it is the fact that utterances of 'Spot is a cat' are *licensed* by utterances of 'Spot is a domesticated feline' and *commit* one to accepting 'Spot is a mammal' that make these utterances mean what they do. Licensing (entitlement) and commitment are the normative statuses Brandom invokes to explain intentionality, but in *AR* they are unexplained explainers: the reader interested in Brandom's theory of norms must turn to *MIE* for a fuller account.

The second and third chapters deal with action and perception, respectively — language exit and entry rules. Chapter 2 sketches a somewhat Kantian theory of agency, in which doxastic commitments (including moral commitments) can commit one to action regardless of one's own desires. Chapter 3 has some surprisingly positive things to say about reliabilism and perceptual knowledge, though Brandom rejects the idea that reliability can analyze epistemic norms.

Chapter 4 deals with the problem of singular terms and predicates. Since Brandom's theoretical primitive is the assertion (plus norms), Brandom must explain singular terms and predicates in terms of assertions, rather than vice



versa; this he attempts to do by deriving singular terms and predicates from the patterns of substitution which exist in practices of assertion.

Chapter 5 gives Brandom's treatment of belief-attributing utterances, and makes several interesting suggestions about the usual puzzles surrounding *de re* and *de dicto* readings of belief-attributions. The chapter does not, unfortunately, sketch out Brandom's theory of propositional attitudes themselves; again, the interested reader must refer to *MIE*.

Chapter 6 addresses worries about objectivity. The fact that the content of thought and talk is determined (according to Brandom) by social practice suggests that objective reality has no say in whether our statements are true or false. Brandom responds by showing that, within his system, the inferential commitments following an assertion 'P' are not equivalent to those following from asserting 'I am committed/entitled to P' or 'People are committed/entitled to P'.

There are a number of things to like about *AR*. If one is antecedently committed to something like Brandom's program this is no surprise, but there are also various fascinating ideas for the skeptic to entertain. To pick just one: Brandom finds a symmetry between belief- and utterance-ascription and scare quotes (179-80). When one makes a *de re* attitude-ascription one accepts responsibility for the singular term one utters while trying to express someone else's commitments; when one makes a statement using scare-quotes one disclaims responsibility for the singular term one utters while trying to express one's own commitments. (I say of you, 'You think that fiend is a kind man.' In response to you, I say, 'That "kind man" is a fiend.') Whether or not one accepts Brandom's analysis, its elegance is charming and suggestive. Insightful, thought-provoking ideas like this are scattered through *AR* from one end to the other. Unfortunately, so are frustrations. Brandom rarely argues for his positions; he is sketching out a vast system, and does not often pause to explain why this system might be preferable to others. There are also recurrent problems with the notion of objectivity. For example, Brandom writes: 'Epistemology is usually thought of as the theory of knowledge. But epistemological theories in fact typically offer accounts of when it is proper to *attribute* knowledge: for instance, where there is justified true belief, or where true beliefs have resulted from reliable belief-forming processes' (117-18). But as Brandom realizes, and makes explicit in Chapter 6, a sharp distinction must be drawn between knowledge itself and attributions of knowledge.

*AR* can be strongly recommended to those interested in Brandom's research program, those working on related research programs (those inclined to Davidson or Dennett, for example), and those who simply want to keep up with important developments in the philosophy of mind. The philosopher who should not read *AR* is the one who cannot read a behaviorist who sees no need to defend his behaviorism. For when all is said and done, Brandom is a behaviorist, and an unapologetic one. He may be interested in the rules for specific sorts of verbal behavior ('the game of giving and asking for reasons'), and he may not have a behavioristic theory of phenomenal con-

sciousness, but this just shows that he is a sophisticated behaviorist. It still remains the case that, on Brandom's account, if people did not argue, there would be no desire, belief, or intentionality of any sort; and skills such as being able to state the color of a door one passed through yesterday cannot be given causal explanation in terms of psychological elements. Brandom says nothing to make such consequences plausible to those of us disinclined to behaviorism. Still, ever since Ryle and Wittgenstein, philosophical behaviorism in all its guises has been interesting and influential, and under Brandom's leadership looks to remain so.

**Timothy Schroeder**

University of Manitoba

**Tad Brennan**

*Ethics and Epistemology in Sextus Empiricus.*

New York: Garland 1999. Pp. xiv + 115.

US\$50.00. ISBN 0-8153-3659-4.

Jane is a sceptic, and refuses to dogmatize. If this means that she has no beliefs, how is she able even to pick up a pen in order to write down her act of abnegation? This is Hume's criticism of 'excessive scepticism' (*Enquiry* II 128), but Sextus seems to have a defence: 'Adhering, then, to appearances we live in accordance with the normal rules of life, undogmatically' (*Outlines*, I 23, tr. Bury). Is this consistent with abjuring all belief? This is Tad Brennan's problem in this revision of his Princeton doctoral thesis. This is an erudite and challenging work, cogently argued, sensitive to the text, fun to read, and rewarding of the reader's effort. Here's the bottom line. I learned a lot from the interpretation, but strongly reject the philosophy that emerges from its portrait of Sextus. It is clear that in the distinction between *assenting* to appearance and *dogmatically believing*, Sextus has wiggle room within which to fit normal living. Now, since '*dogma*' derives from '*dok(e)o*' meaning 'to believe', one might think that 'dogmatic belief' is pleonastic. If so, assent cannot very well be belief, and one would conclude that Sextus thought he had found a way to live without belief. But this is not so clear: '*dogma*' has for the Sceptic some of the negative connotations of the English word, and Sextus defines it as 'assent to one of the non-evident objects of scientific inquiry' (*Outlines* I 13). We all seem to have beliefs that fall short of dogma in this special sense; so it seems possible that Sextus *might* have allowed us room for some beliefs.

Brennan argues that, though the sceptic eschews dogmatic belief, he admits a kind of belief all of us have. The novelty of Brennan's position is



that in identifying this kind of belief, he does not water down content — his Sextus does not believe what we believe *minus* something — and he does not weaken the propositional attitude — assent is not belief *minus*. Brennan's sceptical (i.e., non-dogmatic) belief is belief arrived at without ad hoc theorizing. Thus he feels able to say that the sceptic 'lives exactly as everyone else does'. Brennan displays some anxiety about the degree to which this reinterpretation breaks new ground; this leads him to make some apologetic remarks about the nature of interpretation. He basis these apparently on the notion that 'any two consistent interpretations of the same set of sentences [are] isomorphic' (3, n. 3). Because the implications of this assertion are so depressing for the historian of philosophy, it is worth pointing out that it is false: *some* sets of sentences (in higher order logic) have this property — logicians call it 'categoricity' — but not all do. There is, in any case, no interesting sense in which Brennan's interpretation of Sextus is 'isomorphic' to that of Burnyeat, say (though he is much closer to Frede). (There are interesting questions here about the nature of interpretation, but no space to pursue them.)

Brennan insists that the sceptic is not undertaking 'an extreme and exotic epistemological project' (19), but simply refusing to take on the theoretical investigation of matters outside the ken of untutored folk. The sceptic aligns himself with ordinary folk against philosophers, and does not carve out a philosophically novel position for himself. 'Most modern historians of ancient philosophy — myself and my readers thus among them — are themselves Sextan skeptics' (16). This strains credulity. It may well be that all of us have some non-dogmatic beliefs, in Brennan's sense. But I doubt that any of us makes a policy of eschewing all dogmatic belief; some theorizing leaks into just about all of our beliefs. In fact, we would be reactionaries if this were not so. Brennan cites Euthyphro as an individual who exceeded sceptical passivity by condemning his father for his careless and callous treatment of a slave. Good for Euthyphro! Pompous as he appears in Plato's portrayal, at least he didn't participate passively in the brutal mores of his time. Brennan's sceptic allows unquestioning belief of even the most dogmatic positions once they have 'fossilized into convention and ordinary usage' (61). Most of us would find this position repellant. One should recall how the Catholic Church revived Pyrrhonism in order to persuade people to stick with their fossilized adherence to the Church instead of undertaking a risky re-evaluation on dogmatic grounds. Even if you are Catholic, you can't be proud of this. Similarly, it is hard to be impressed by the idea that in a land where everybody cheats on their taxes, the native (accustomed as he is to this culture) should just relax and enjoy his illicit loot. Yet, this is the implication of Brennan's account of sceptical ethics. 'Don't worry, be happy,' or at least be tranquil. (Interestingly, Brennan allows the sceptic to have a positively characterized end; see chapter 5.)

The most intriguing things about Scepticism are its denial of *reason* as an epistemic instrument and its insistence on downgrading belief. (In both of these propositions, it anticipates Hume, as Hume well knew.) Both positions



seem to commit the Sceptic, pragmatically, to an inconsistency: just by taking the position, she does something the position forbids. A lot of hermeneutic energy goes into making this apparent contradiction disappear. Many down-play anti-rationality so that it will sit with scepticism; they refrain from exploring motivations lest they should intimate that the sceptic had a position after all, and a reasoned (or even reasonable) one at that. This is a weakness of Frede's treatment, just as it is a strength of Burnyeat's that he really tries to crack the insight behind Sextus's scepticism, not worrying so much whether it reduces to negative dogmatism in the end. Brennan is closer to Frede on this. He insists that sceptics have everyday beliefs — in the standard sense, no reinterpretation required or supplied — and thus he saves them from inconsistency. But he does not probe the force and the basis of their objection to reason and dogma. A pity because in the light not only of Hume, but also of contemporary critics of human rationality, this is a live issue today.

**Mohan Matthen**

University of British Columbia

**Andrew Brook and Robert Stainton**

*Knowledge and Mind:*

*A Philosophical Introduction.*

Bradford Books. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press

2000. Pp. xiv + 253.

US\$27.95. ISBN 0-262-02475-6.

Introductory books are a curious genre, halfway between car manuals and op-ed pieces. Like the former, they are written primarily for people who have no idea about the complexity of the subject-matter and need to be guided with extreme clarity and caution. Like the latter, they are written by people with an agenda to influence those who make things happen. Accordingly, by writing an introductory philosophy book, one may set out to do two things: to help students to see the interest or importance of certain philosophical problems, or to help their teachers see these problems in a different light. Brook and Stainton are definitely in the business of doing both.

This is a very ambitious book. Its primary aim is to provide an integrated introduction to epistemology and the philosophy of mind. Its secondary aim is to reflect on the primary discussion in order to give students a sense of the methodology of philosophy. And its tertiary aim is to reflect on the primary and secondary discussions in order to promote naturalism as a better way to

think about philosophical problems. The book achieves its primary and secondary aims admirably. It is written in a precise but unpretentious style, it is organized sensibly, it contains a good set of study questions, informed suggestions for further readings, a reliable glossary, and a number of extremely funny quotes from Jack Handey to brighten things up. As far as its third aim is concerned, the results are mixed. Although the discussion of naturalism in the last chapter ties some of the earlier topics nicely together, I found it much less convincing than the rest of the book. I will say a little more about my concerns towards the end of this review.

In addition to the topics that everyone would expect to find in such a book — skepticism, the mind-body problem, other minds, self-knowledge — each of the authors has included a topic particularly close to his heart. So there is a chapter on knowledge of language with a special emphasis on the controversies surrounding innatism and the language of thought. And there is a chapter dedicated to free choice, shifting the focus from the usual question ‘Is free choice compatible with causal determinism?’ to the conceptually prior ‘What is free choice?’ These are probably the best parts of the book.

Although the chapters on epistemology and philosophy of mind are of equally high quality, there is a serious imbalance in the depth of presentation. Chapters 4 and 5 of the book yield a thorough survey of the mind-body problem — they contain in condensed form what any good recent introductory text wholly devoted to the philosophy of mind would go through. The suggested further readings bring students all the way to contemporary debates. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of the discussion of skepticism in Chapter 2. External-world skepticism is treated as a somewhat antiquated quibble, without any gesture towards the large literature that followed Hilary Putnam’s argument that we could not be brains-in-vats. (Some of this material is collected in Keith DeRose and Ted A. Warfield eds., *Skepticism: A Contemporary Reader*. Oxford: Oxford University Press 1998.) Furthermore, skepticism does not play the same central role in epistemology as the mind-body problem does in the philosophy of mind. So students who work their way through this book will have a clear and reasonably sophisticated idea of what dualism, functionalism or eliminativism are, but they will not be helped — not even by the glossary — if they want to know about foundationalism, coherentism, or contextualism.

The discussion throughout the book is refreshingly nonpartisan, even though the authors make no effort to hide where their preferences lie. The careful reader may even extract a general pattern. Brook and Stainton present a variety of views on each topic, but the ones they are most sympathetic to are arranged in triads of a more or less traditional view, an extreme modern reaction to it, and a promising synthesis of the underlying intuitions. Regarding the relation between mind and body, the traditional view is dualism, which involves the denial of the physical nature of the mental; the extreme modern reaction is neurophilosophy, which holds on to materialism by denying the existence of the mind; and the synthesis is functionalism, a materialist position that nevertheless embraces the explanatory dualism of



psychological and mechanistic explanations. The trio in the free choice debate is libertarianism, hard determinism and Frankfurt-style compatibilism, in the other minds debate 'Wittgensteinianism' (this is the authors' label for the view that our knowledge of other minds is non-inferential), behaviorism, and the view that our justification for ascribing mental states to others is inference to the best explanation. The authors even hint at connections among members of these triads (cf. especially p. 158 and p. 182). Such regimentation necessarily involves simplification, but the simplification is not a crude one. It may well help students to see how these big issues hang together.

The authors' strong affinity towards the natural sciences is obvious throughout the book. In the last chapter, they make their commitments even more explicit. They distinguish between *moderate* and *radical naturalism* in the study of knowledge and mind. (Actually, they distinguish four kinds of naturalism, but these two are the important ones.) According to moderate naturalism, philosophical theories about knowledge and mind should be consistent with and informed by scientific results about cognition. According to radical naturalism, the problems these philosophical theories are addressing are actually scientific, and the proper approach to them is neuroscience. Commitment to moderate naturalism is taken for granted; the issue the authors explore is whether radical naturalism has a chance of being true. Their conclusion is that radical naturalism needs caveats (e.g., philosophical problems of normativity are not likely to turn out to be straightforward scientific problems) and that the exclusive commitment to a neurological perspective should be replaced by some combination of cognitive science and neuroscience. All this is in perfect accord with the authors' earlier criticisms of eliminative materialism.

My main concern with this chapter is that, despite the clarificatory remarks and definitions, I remain uncertain about what the philosophical issue concerning naturalism is supposed to be. I suspect many philosophers accept that it is not up to them (qua philosophers) to decide whether a scientific theory is to be accepted. But this falls short of a substantive philosophical view for two reasons. First, we need to know what we are committed to when we accept a scientific theory. This would be relatively easy if such theories were presented in a formalized language and if it were beyond doubt that accepting a theory is the same as believing it to be literally true. But neither of these is the case. Second, the overwhelming majority of questions philosophers are interested in don't have scientific answers at the moment, so it is unclear what it is to display proper respect for science regarding these issues. Whether philosophy has something useful to say about that nature of consciousness is an open question. But it is quite clear that philosophy has nothing interesting to say about whether science will eventually say something interesting about this topic.

What is best about naturalism in epistemology and the philosophy of mind is not the worldview it represents, but the attitude it encourages. Naturalists are supposed to take science seriously, to engage with its results, and to try



to bridge the enormous gulf between what we wish we knew and what we actually do know. This book will help educate philosophers and the public to embrace this attitude.

**Zoltán Gendler Szabó**

Cornell University

**Peter Brooks and Alex Woloch, eds.**

*Whose Freud? The Place of Psychoanalysis  
in Contemporary Culture.*

New Haven, CT: Yale University Press 2000.

Pp. 342.

US\$40.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-300-08116-2);

US\$19.95 (paper: ISBN 0-300-08745-4).

*Whose Freud?* is the proceedings of a symposium held under the same title at Yale University in 3-4 April 1998, and much like a symposium suffers from the same problems and enjoys the same advantages as such an event. Its immediacy and liveliness, the sense of authentic interaction with ideas and problems, and the creative space opened up in the discussions are some of its strong points. On the other hand, the broadness of the topics discussed and the hurried terseness which characterises some of the discussions sometimes make it hard to follow the main ideas and points made by the participants.

The book is designed to remain faithful to the spirit of the symposium. The papers are grouped into themed parts, and each part ends with a transcript of the discussion, with a structure similar to that of a session in a conference. The majority of the papers are very short, and some read almost like extended comments. The shortest paper is only three pages long, and the average paper does not exceed five or six pages. This leaves the reader with a desire to know more about the ideas presented in the papers — some highly specialised, some too general — and with a slight dissatisfaction about the sometimes hasty presentation, which can make the reader feel that they joined a conversation in the middle. Some ideas and problems are clarified in the discussions, but for the most part they seem to open up more questions and directions of enquiry. On the other hand, the transcripts do give a sense of the different directions that the various speakers wish to take and provide a valuable glimpse into the issues and positions each speaker occupies.

As to the participants, these are indeed the most prominent figures in their fields, ranging from Judith Butler and Juliet Mitchell discussing the family in psychoanalysis to John Forrester, Jonathan Lear, Donald Davidson and Richard Wollheim, discussing the notion of truth in psychoanalysis. Toril

Moi, Hubert Damisch and others discuss hermeneutics, and these names alone are enough to spark an interest in any reader who is familiar with at least some of their work. There is no doubt that these scholars are not only qualified to give an account of Freud's place in contemporary culture, but are also the ones who produce and influence this culture. In this sense following their comments on each other's work and tracing the disagreements and points of debate within each discussion is highly enlightening. Examples include the clashing of swords between Butler, Mitchell and Fredrick Crews over the status of psychoanalysis as an empirical science, or the disagreement between Peter Loewenberg and Damisch about whether hermeneutics deals solely with texts, or can be expanded to include symbols and images.

The topics raised and discussed in this book begin with a general question about the validity of psychoanalysis, hotly contested by Crews, whom one of the participants, Mary Jacobus, calls 'the Kenneth Starr as it were, the independent prosecutor of Freud' (60). He raises the usual external criticisms against psychoanalysis — that it is not verifiable, that it does not comply with the principles of empirical science, that it is no more effective than other forms of therapy etc. These are given the usual responses in a slightly tedious discussion, which takes on a somewhat self-righteous tone, since all of the other participants are convinced of the importance and validity of psychoanalysis, and most of them work within a psychoanalytic context. The second part, on hermeneutics, is much more interesting, in particular Moi's fresh interpretation of Freud's notorious expression 'anatomy is destiny', and Loewenberg's detailed scrutiny of psychoanalysis as a hermeneutic science, using the architecture of Auschwitz as a case study.

The third part, on sexual identity, deals with homosexuality, the Oedipal complex, desire and fantasy, and is unfortunately short, given the immense importance of sexual identity to discussions in politics and feminism, and the tremendous impact of Freud's thought on popular conceptions of sexuality and gender. The fourth part is dedicated to the relationship between psychoanalysis and historiography and exposes some of the problems inherent to the attempt to transport a discipline dedicated to the study and transformation of the individual to groups of people and historical eras so diverse and distant from our own. The penultimate section reviews the relationship between psychoanalysis and theories of the mind, revolving around the idea that Freudian models of the mind can be usefully applied to contemporary neuro-scientific research.

The final section addresses the weighty question of truth in psychoanalysis. The gap between the notion of truth as a set of claims that are in principle open to verification and refutation, and between the notion of truth as subjective, fragile, monadic and, most importantly, in the service of therapeutic aims (i.e., functional) is thoroughly explored, discussed and accounted for in four absorbing papers. Lear's emphasis on fantasy and resistance and Forrester's emphasis on transference create a notion of truth that is transference and dialogic, and therefore fundamentally different from the scientific notion based on objectivity and universality.

I would not recommend this book as an introduction to psychoanalysis, or even as a critical or detailed mapping of Freud's place in contemporary culture; the broad brush-strokes of this symposium are too general for this and were intended to put forward a bold statement about the relevance and impact of psychoanalysis on culture as a whole. I do, however, think it worthwhile for those who are already familiar with psychoanalysis and its various influences and interactions with other disciplines and cultural spheres, and wish to hear the views of the important figures who participated in the conference.

**Havi Carel**

University of Essex

**Cheshire Calhoun**

*Feminism, the Family, and the Politics of the Closet: Lesbian and Gay Displacement.*

Don Mills, ON and New York: Oxford

University Press 2000. Pp. vi + 172.

Cdn\$54.95: US\$29.95. ISBN 0-19-829559-6.

In this book Cheshire Calhoun makes an exciting contribution to gay and lesbian political theory and constructs a philosophical argument that will prove controversial to readers on all sides of debate about sexual orientation and liberal citizenship. Calhoun asserts the importance of considering heterosexual dominance as a system of social oppression separate from gender, race, and class, and maintains that queer politics ought center on the displacement of gay and lesbians from family life. Despite the somewhat innocuous appearance of these claims, she ultimately unfolds an argument that challenges conservative ideas as well as feminist and queer theories, and promises to redraw current political alliances.

Calhoun explores the political implications of the pervasive cultural beliefs about homosexuality found in psychological theory and U.S. legal history. She specifically addresses the idea that there are only two natural and normal sex/genders, and that lesbians and gay men are unfit for marital and family relations. The most serious upshot of these ideas for Calhoun is that gays and lesbians have been and continue to be systematically displaced from public and private spheres of civic society.

Calhoun holds that gay and lesbian subordination cannot be reduced to mere sexism, and suggests that a serious departure is needed between feminist and lesbian politics. She chides feminist theory for treating lesbian-



ism as 'an applied issue' and for closeting lesbians even when claiming to treat them as primary feminist subjects (26). She shows that unique features of lesbian sexual relations persistently fall from view within lesbian feminist theory, including the 'woman-identified-women' and 'lesbian continuum' used by Adrienne Rich to represent the feminist spectrum of women centered activities. Drawing upon the image and activism inspired by butch feminism, Calhoun makes one of the most interesting and thought-provoking points of the book when she contends that because lesbians are 'not-women', feminist political goals and those of lesbians must inevitably part (34). Calhoun predicts that as long as 'woman' conceptually unites feminist thought, lesbians will continue to be displaced from feminist theory. Although Calhoun leaves open the possibility that lesbians can be theorized within a feminism sensitive to spaces between and beyond the categories of 'man' and 'woman', she notes that this opens the door to more controversial feminist subjects, including gay men, male transvestites, transsexuals, etc. (62).

Calhoun also cautions against overestimating the feminist potential of lesbian relationships. She observes that heterosexism might persist in a world where men and women were more equal, as misogyny might continue in a world absent heterosexism. Calhoun therefore refutes the assumption that lesbian politics are necessarily feminist politics, or vice versa. The absence of men from lesbian intimate relationships means that heterosexism is a more formidable problem for most lesbians than patriarchy. Calhoun speculates that lesbians may have frequent occasion to choose gay politics over feminist goals (39).

With painstaking clarity Calhoun sketches the general structures of lesbian and gay subordination, and asks which liberties most centrally figure in ending it. Distinguishing herself from other gay and lesbian thinkers, she judges the most pressing concern to be displacement of homosexuals from family norms, and not sexual regulation or material discrimination. Pointing to current military policies and The Defense of Marriage Act, Calhoun demonstrates that gay and lesbian exclusion from the public sphere is not identical to that of women and minorities, because it is gay and lesbian representations, not persons, which are excluded (87).

Calhoun concludes by arguing that gays and lesbians have been wrongly denied a place within 'legitimate' family structures, and that this has stymied their ability to claim the political status enjoyed by heterosexuals. Because homosexual desire is viewed as excessive, compulsive, and disconnected from romantic love, gays and lesbians are frequently construed as 'familial out-laws', unfit for marriage or parenting. Specifically, they are denied the many benefits associated with marriage, opportunities to influence future generations of people, and the authority to define marriage and family (132). So, Calhoun contends, motherhood and marriage may be politically liberating for lesbians in a way it is not for heterosexual women.

Although Calhoun's proposals will no doubt invoke staunch disagreement from conservative thinkers, Calhoun devotes most of her response to gay and lesbian critics who might object that family and marriage are contemptible

concepts worthy only of being abolished, or might accuse her of assimilating a conservative and essentialist account of family (110). Although Calhoun gives convincing responses to these charges, other critics might object that her argument is incomplete and pragmatically strained. To begin, Calhoun's arguments seem highly dependent upon the contentious premise that a wide range of homosexual behaviors and relationships are ethical. Because Calhoun devotes only one section to the question of homosexuality and morality, and dodges many of the hard questions, her arguments will sound hollow to anyone predisposed towards viewing homosexuality as unethical. Of readers not predisposed towards such a judgment, Calhoun alienates a great many from her ultimate political project. Is it fair that Calhoun's suggestions would seem more caustic were they coming from heterosexual women who wished to distance themselves from lesbians? Should gay men also emphasize the ways in which they differ from lesbians? Can we use Calhoun's distinctions to create and maintain political alliances, rather than splinter them?

Finally, although it may be strategic for lesbians to establish themselves as a third sex of 'not-woman', this obscures how lesbians are regularly affected by patriarchy whether they self-identify as women or not. Lesbian women are often treated (or mistreated) as women by others around them, whether they are in or out of the closet. Lesbians are not immune to rape and domestic violence inflicted upon them by strangers, friends, brothers, fathers, would-be- boyfriends and even lesbian partners. And much of the current distinctiveness of lesbian subordination might decrease were the primary goals identified by Calhoun to be achieved, such as legalizing same-sex marriage. Although Calhoun admonishes lesbians to avoid the pitfalls of patriarchal marriages, this is less likely to occur when lesbians are discouraged from fully identifying as feminists. Ultimately, though, Calhoun raises perplexing and important questions about the possibility for political alliance and integrated personality in a post-modern age.

**Maureen Sander-Staudt**

University of Colorado-Boulder

**Jeremy R. Carrette**

*Foucault and Religion:*

*Spiritual Corporality and Political Spirituality.*

New York: Routledge 2000. Pp. xvi + 215.

Cdn\$113.00: US\$75.00

(cloth: ISBN 0-415-20259-2);

Cdn\$38.99: US\$25.99

(paper: ISBN 0-415-20260-4).

Clever philosophers will some day soon make a living designing warning labels for academic presses: 'Warning: post-modern content!'; 'Warning: material not suitable for continental readers!'; 'Warning: another book on Foucault!'

Jeremy R. Carrette's *Foucault and Religion: Spiritual Corporality and Political Spirituality* finds itself among a long list of recent books and essays that seek to understand and appropriate the mass of literature (books, both published and unpublished, lectures, essays and interviews) left by the renowned French archaeologist/genealogist Michel Foucault. Although we find the word 'political' in the subtitle, a quick glance at the book's contents offers an immediate solace: at least it's not about power/knowledge! In fact, the book's main focus, religion in Foucault's work, is one that has been only moderately engaged, and so Carrette seems to stand on fairly new and interesting ground. Perhaps a warning is not in order.

This business about warnings is more than a pretentious philosophical joke. In fact, it echoes Carrette's own warnings in his preface. Carrette hopes to read Foucault 'unplugged', to avoid the disciplinary appropriation of a thinker who himself hoped not to be so appropriated. 'The style and structure of my work,' writes Carrette, 'is often meant to be provocative and suggestive as a strategy to thinking differently about religion as it is developed in Foucault's work' (xii). He goes on to warn that his reading of Foucault may be offensive to those who are less radically minded, reminding his reader that 'there are too many thinkers who want to neatly package religious knowledge into comfortable academic straightjackets' (xii). Rather than constraining our reading of Foucault to fit the intellectual spaces left by modern academic institutions, we should read Foucault in his own, non/anti-disciplinary, spirit. This is what Carrette proposes to do.

To Carrette, religion forms part of Foucault's 'unthought'. Much like Foucault sought to *uncover* the unarticulated conditions which make truth, untruth, power and resistance possible, Carrette seeks to show how religion functions in that outside which makes possible the inside of Foucault's texts; Carrette wants to *uncover* the religious subtext, the unarticulated religious question, in Foucault's *œuvre*. Although Foucault only ostensibly deals with religion during his *History of Sexuality* years, Carrette's aim is to show that religion functions behind the scenes throughout Foucault's career. Rather than taking Foucault's work on confession as forming the whole of his critique



of religion, Carrette readers a longer, spanning concern with religion with two critical edges: a spiritual corporality and a political spirituality.

The concept of spiritual corporality comes out through an examination of Foucault's analyses of avant-garde literature and art and his interest in the death of God/Man. During this stage, Foucault can be seen developing a spirituality of the body, a new spirituality without the traditional dichotomy of spirit (reality) and body (appearance). Although he engages seemingly God-less writers like de Sade, Foucault has not completely neglected religion. According to Carrette, religion continues to function underneath Foucault's discourse, motivating and influencing his choice of topics and the analyses that ensue. With his work on the history of sexuality and confessions, however, Foucault shifts towards a political spirituality. In this stage, where religion takes on a more explicit role, the focus is on the political dimensions of religious belief and practice. Now Foucault recognizes the power of the unsaid, the power that religion holds in shaping people's bodies and conceptual frameworks; he problematizes religion, seeking the power relations and ethical relations it makes possible. Foucault examines the forms of subjection, the ways that people are made subjects in and through their relationships with religion. In this period, Foucault makes explicit the political dimension (the political spirituality) of his earlier spiritual corporality. In short, 'what Foucault is *doing* is questioning religion from his own ideological value of the body and his politicisation of knowledge' (132).

Carrette ends his text with a consideration of the state of 'Religion' after Foucault. 'The idea,' writes Carrette, 'that there is a single "religious question" arising from Foucault's work has principally been a hermeneutical tool to explore the variegated religious content in his writing. ... what he is *doing* is breaking down the "spiritual" into a new politics of human experience' (151). This project enables us to better understand religion, both ours and others'; with Foucaultian analyses we are able to see the religious strands underneath even our secular existence. These analyses enable us to see that there is no absolute religious truth, that religious space is occupied by religious practices, and from this realization we can begin to forge a new religious space. Carrette, however, does not provide a clear enough indication of what this space would be. In fact, it appears that this new space will be no more than a critical space in which the study of religion can take place, without the disciplinary straightjacketing that Carrette hopes to avoid.

Carrette's insightful work is indispensable for anyone considering the religious dimension not only in Foucault's work, but in contemporary literature, philosophy and culture. Carrette's concern with religion after Foucault is a thoughtful reflection for a hyper-critical world that has increasingly neglected and parodied religious practice. These reflections, however, seem to lie strictly in religious-studies after Foucault rather than religion proper, neglecting some vital questions at the interstices of philosophy and religion: how can we *practice* religion post-Foucault?; is religion at all possible?; since Foucault was so concerned in his later work with self-making, can we (and *how* can we) make a new religion?; how can we 'be' or 'act' religiously? Such

questions, neglected in Carrette's work, are essential for those who are sympathetic to Foucault's work yet who are not satisfied with the mere study of religion. For philosophers sympathetic to Foucault's writings who are interested in the practice of religion, Carrette's work is a helpful first step, but it falls short of what they might hope for.

**Edvard Lorkovic**

University of Alberta

**Lorraine Daston, ed.**

*Biographies of Scientific Objects.*

Chicago: University of Chicago Press 2000.

Pp. ix + 307.

US\$55.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-226-613670-1);

US\$19.00 (paper: ISBN 0-226-13672-8).

The idea behind this collection of essays is highly interesting and quite provocative — that research in science studies can effectively navigate a middle road between the Scylla and Charybdis of realism and constructionism. Whereas for realists, scientific objects are consistent, historically stable, unchanging targets for scientific inquiry, constructionists view 'scientific objects [as] inventions, forged in specific historical contexts and molded by local circumstances' (3). How can realists and constructionists find common ground? The conciliatory path, as envisioned by Daston in her introductory essay, is to view scientific objects as partly persisting, partly changing. They retain their identity over time but during the course of time their features change. As such, scientific objects have biographies, histories, just as people do. Daston's name for the study of scientific objects, so conceived, is 'applied metaphysics', and, after reading her brief description of this project in the first few pages of the book, my interest was sharply piqued. So I began exploring the essays that followed, all of which purportedly addressed the topic of applied metaphysics from a variety of disciplinary perspectives.

The scope of these essays is large, and the authors are well-established in their specific areas of disciplinary expertise. Here are the authors and their special scientific objects about which they write: Lorraine Daston on preternatural objects, Rivka Felday on mathematical entities, Doris Kaufmann on dreams, Jan Goldstein on the (Cousinian) self, Gerhard Jorland on economic value, Peter Wagner on society, Marshall Sahlins on culture, Jed Buchwald on microphysical objects, Theodore Porter on mortality rates, Bruno Latour on Koch's bacillus and spontaneous generation and Hans-Jorg Rheinberger on cytoplasmic particles (ribosomes). I have listed the authors and their topics so that potential readers, if they already have an interest in these



authors or topics, may be motivated to follow up. Clearly the scope of topics is immense, and those without prior interest or prior knowledge in these authors or their topics should be forewarned that the essays are specialist pieces, scholarly-rich but accessibility-poor. Let me comment on what I mean by this poverty.

As mentioned above, Daston in her introduction projects a study of applied metaphysics, and she provides a rough categorization of themes to keep an eye on when reading the essays, themes of (objectual) salience, emergence, productivity and embeddedness. What exactly these themes amount to isn't entirely clear. Productivity, for instance, seems to mean nothing much more than that some scientific objects produce results (e.g., economic value produces results that render such value otiose in economic modeling — see p. 11); salience seems to mean nothing much more than that some scientific objects make some pre-scientific objects 'salient' (e.g., mortality tables make death scientifically salient — see pp. 7-8). Nonetheless, however valuable these categories might be for understanding scientific work, they make no explicit appearance in the collected readings — the authors seem ignorant of them. Thus, we're pretty well left to our own resources in comprehending the application of Daston's thematic scheme to the readings.

This wouldn't be such an arduous task if the readings had some threads to connect them. But they are largely stand-alone pieces in intellectual history, recounting the changing attitudes of scientific practitioners to their objects of inquiry. For example, views of the self, as Goldstein relates, have changed over time, as have views on economic value, as Jorland recounts. But what is the connection between these historical facts? Maybe there are connections, metaphysical principles appearing in each history, but neither Goldstein nor Jorland say anything about this. Their two papers, like all the papers in the collection, share no discipline (as I shall say) and hardly belong in the same volume. The papers don't speak to one each other; they speak to their respective (sub-) disciplines and only those who share their scholarship can express an informed opinion on their work.

Consequently, despite my piqued interest upon reading Daston's introduction, my zeal eventually faded. It's as though one were to read specialist articles from physics, biology, chemistry, geology, etc., deep in their disciplinary rigour, and packaged them in a collection, as though they had some metaphysical connections between them.

Nevertheless, in case one *is* interested in any of the authors or topics listed above, I heartily recommend that she examine the article of concern. Indeed, this book could stand as a useful reference text if one wished to *start* an inquiry into applied (cross-disciplinary) metaphysics. Some might find this task interesting.

One last point: it's an interesting notion that scientific objects have biographies, have histories, as well as being real. One need only have a modicum of constructionist impulse to find this view intriguing. But after reading the articles, it seemed to me that what the authors are doing (leaving aside Latour) is describing how people's *views* about scientific objects



changed, not how the objects themselves changed. And, overall, I think this is a more natural way of thinking about biographies of scientific objects — as histories of *ideas about* scientific objects, objects that people normally assume to be constant in their nature and fundamental composition and also independent of their state of knowledge. I suspect the essays themselves, largely (except, for sure, for Latour), are to be read and were probably written from this perspective. Occasionally, I even had the sense that an author was trying to force his or her work into Daston's applied metaphysical agenda (though, again, in ignorance of her thematic categories). Indeed, on at least one occasion, an author explicitly breaks free from the agenda: Theodore Porter bravely exclaims that 'the "coming into being" of quantitative entities [such as mortality tables] ... should ... be understood in terms of a selection among alternative ways of knowing' (246). More often, the authors avoid such metaphysical issues altogether, or pay passing lip-service to them, sticking rather to more straightforward historical issues. This again underpins my overall judgement that, despite the fascinating theme, the collection doesn't hang together either with regards to theme or to discipline.

**Robert G. Hudson**

University of Saskatchewan

**Dennis Des Chene**

*Spirits and Clocks.*

*Machine and Organism in Descartes.*

Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press 2001.

Pp. xiii + 181.

US\$39.95. ISBN 0-88014-3764-4.

In reducing the roster of kinds of substances to three: one infinite mind, finite minds and finite bodies — which themselves are just pieces of extension —, Descartes seems to have eliminated the category of the living. This impoverishment in the traditional vision of nature has often been noted. Yet despite that metaphysical move — or perhaps because of it — Descartes spent a great deal of time, and ink, on questions about the structure and functioning of those pieces of extension we call animals. Most commentators have ignored this material, focusing instead on more plainly 'philosophical' issues, like the mind-body problem, or on the foundations of Cartesian physics.

In the present work Dennis Des Chene amply remedies that neglect. Part I, 'Tales of the *bête-machine*', describes Descartes' attempts to explain, without reference to ends, the self-moving operations of animals and their parts, their generation, and their ways of functioning. Part II, 'Machines, Mechanisms, Bodies, Organs', considers Descartes' project of mechanistic

explanation in the light of seventeenth-century accounts of machines, and at the same time elicits from Descartes' own texts the insurmountable difficulties he faced in constructing his new physiological system. While his project was deeply influential, serving as the impetus to numerous attempts at a mechanized biology, it was also impossible to execute in unadulterated form.

The scholastic context for Descartes' work in physiology has been supplied, in large part, by the companion volume to this one, *Life's Form* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press 2000). There is enough overlap that *Spirits and Clocks* can be read separately. In his discussion of machines as instruments, for example, Des Chene includes a detailed (and rather difficult) account of Suarez' view of primary versus instrumental causes (89-92), and he frequently refers, more generally, to the 'Aristotelian' reading of this or that vital phenomenon. Still, the two works should be read together; it may be difficult for the uninformed reader (no pun intended!) to recognize that for Descartes' contemporaries and predecessors 'soul' meant the form, or operating principle(s), of a substance, not some little quasi-Cartesian extra something added to an otherwise inert though self-subsistent matter. Aristotelian matter does not exist on its own, and (except for active reason) soul does not wander into it from elsewhere.

What Des Chene chiefly stresses in Descartes' reform of the scholastic approach to life is his abolition of the vegetative soul: growth and reproduction now have to be explained on a new basis. Generation, in particular, proves too much for the conceptual, or experimental, approaches Descartes has at his disposal. That's true; Descartes himself seems to have recognized as abortive his attempts to explain how two bits of extension conjoin to produce a third one that strikingly resembles them. However, the emphasis on vegetative soul does suggest two problems, one more general and one a question of detail. First, the abolition of sensitive, as well as of vegetative, soul seems equally radical; indeed, that is what still strikes us as strangest about the interpretation of life as no more than a set of geometrical relations. (In Descartes' own time it seems to have been animals' alleged cognitive powers that the *bête-machine* most strikingly neglected.) In short, it is the reduction of 'soul' to mind that makes things difficult: it may, as Descartes boasted, make personal immortality easier to fathom, but it makes life extremely puzzling. Second, in the letter to Pollot on which Des Chene rightly draws to illustrate Descartes' use of simulation in his attempts to turn animals into machines, Descartes in fact allows his mythical man (who has lived among artefacts that imitate animals, but has never seen any 'real' ones) to live contentedly among plants — which therefore seem to present no puzzle for the happy mechanist (109). Did or did not those plants have vegetative souls, as Aristotelians would want them to do? It is only vegetative souls in animals that appear to pose a problem.

Apart from the scholastic context, further, Des Chene provides insight into a more immediate context: the fashion for, and discussion of, machines in Descartes' time. Descartes himself, of course, was happy to provide some engineering designs for his friend Huygens, and he was enthusiastic about



the automata one could observe in action in the gardens of Versailles. But to see his interests in their contemporary setting sheds vivid new light on his fascination with machinery. Two aspects of Des Chene's account here deserve special mention. First, with the help of numerous illustrations, he elucidates the role of 'exhibits' in the fashion for machines. Draw a machine, and people will accept its possibility: Des Chene calls this a 'proof of concept'. You don't actually have to build the thing — if you can make a nice picture, or diagram of it, it will look real. Second, as many commentators have failed to do, he takes seriously the ambiguity inherent in the concept of mechanism or mechanical explanation. There is what we call mechanical explanation, there are machines, and there are the mechanisms of which they consist. All of these meanings are used to play on one another in defense of Descartes' 'mechanistic' vision.

If Des Chene illuminates Cartesian physiology by setting it into its contemporary context, he displays with equal brilliance and originality the difficulties that arise for that ambitious project from the very terms in which it is proposed, and from the presuppositions it needs but wishes to deny. The fable of *L'Homme* supposes manufactured human bodies perfectly simulating ours. Why should they simulate normal, not deformed or decayed or inoperative, bodies? What, in Cartesian terms, can 'normal' mean? What is organization, what is function when rendered in the language of pure *res extensa*? Des Chene pursues a number of such questions, with careful attention to Cartesian texts as well as to alternative approaches. We are left with a new and vivid sense of the daring, if not the desperate, nature of Descartes' venture, not, unhistorically, in relation to *our* pet problems, but in relation to his own conceptual repertoire and that of his contemporaries, of mechanizing as well as scholastic persuasion.

In short, this is a superb book. It does present a few relatively trivial irritations. The title is less than illuminating. Clocks if you like, as paradigmatic machines; but spirits? In the seventeenth century that still meant those subtle fluids coursing through the body, but these do not figure largely in Des Chene's argument. The title of his first book, *Physiologia*, was equally puzzling, and now especially so, since there we had an older meaning of that term, and here we have physiology in the modern sense. Also, here, as in *Life's Form*, the style of the bibliography, with each author's name doubled at each mention, is annoying. And when Des Chene moves from contemporary context to what are now more current themes, like supervenience, for example, his references appear unfortunate in contrast to the wide-ranging knowledge and scrupulous argument he displays in the major themes of the work. However, these, as well as occasional typos, are minutiae. Des Chene has here again shown himself in the forefront of contemporary Cartesian scholars.

**Marjorie Grene**

Virginia Tech University



**Phil Dowe**

*Physical Causation.*

New York: Cambridge University Press 2000.

Cambridge Studies in Probability, Induction,  
and Decision Theory. Pp. ix + 224.

US\$54.95. ISBN 0-521-78049-7.

Our intuitions about causation seem to be pulling in at least two different directions. There are strong feelings that the causal connection between events *c* and *e* (or whatever the causal relata may be) should be a *local* affair, that is, the causal activity between *c* and *e* should not depend on what goes on elsewhere in the world. But we often also think that causation has to do with the increase of probabilities (*c* causes *e* if *c* raises the probability of *e* to happen) or with counterfactual conditionals (*c* causes *e* means: if *c* had not happened, then *e* would not have occurred). In these cases the causal activity between *c* and *e* becomes dependent on *global* features of the world, like the relative frequencies of certain facts or even on what goes on in other possible worlds.

Process theories of causation have developed the localist intuition into accounts of causation while the globalist view finds expression in counterfactual theories like David Lewis' and probabilistic accounts like Reichenbach's. Wesley Salmon's early process theory of 1984 characterized the causal relation of *c* and *e* in terms of physical processes connecting *c* and *e* which propagate 'causal influence' from *c* to *e* by transmitting certain physical properties (or 'structure') between the events. Processes which do not satisfy this characterization are 'pseudo processes', like the motion of a shadow on a wall, connecting *c* and *e* but incapable of transmitting causal influence. By choosing the 'possession of a conserved quantity' (like momentum, energy, charge) as the relevant physical characteristic of causal processes, Phil Dowe, in the early 1990s, gave, so to speak, new momentum to process theories when Salmon's original theory, for various reasons, was languishing. He now has collected and modified some of his work in the volume under review, providing a comprehensive presentation of his version of the process theory.

Dowe develops the process theory in eight chapters as an approach that is superior in solving the most notorious problems facing all extant theories of causation. (i) Approaches that focus on probability or chance-raising have to cope with cases where a bona-fide cause lowers the probability of its effect. (A golf ball is on its way to the cup, is kicked by a squirrel [*c*] and, after a series of unlikely collisions with trees, ultimately rolls into the cup [*e*].) Process theories can specify the kind of physical connection between cause and effect that probabilistic theories miss. (ii) Counterfactual theories have trouble with cases of causal preemption where an idle stand-by cause prevents the effect from standing in a relation of counterfactual dependence with the actual cause. Again, a process view easily excludes such idle 'causes' that are not physically connected with the effect. These well-known difficulties of global theories of causation are naturally handled by local process ap-

proaches. But the latter have to face problems of their own: (iii) Cause and effect will in general be physically connected not just by the process we intuitively judge to be transmitting the causal influence but also by a multitude of processes that qualify as causal on the process account but are irrelevant for the production of the effect. (When I throw a rock and thereby cause the window to break, not only does the trajectory of the rock connect my hand and the window but so do numerous other physical processes like the trajectories of dust particles or photons.) Such cases of 'misconnection' can be dealt with by supplementing a pure process theory by some counterfactual and probabilistic requirements. Dowe considers such a hybrid or 'integrated theory' in ch. 7 at some length only to dismiss it in the end as an unsuitable development. (iv) Increasing attention has recently been paid to cases of what Jonathan Schaffer called 'causation by disconnection' where a cause consists in the absence of an event or in the cutting-off of a process connecting some events. (Disconnecting the oxygen supply of the brain causes death.) Process theories seem naturally incapable of analyzing such cases but, again, a combination of counterfactual clauses and the pure process theory provides some relief from this type of problem (ch. 6).

In the end (ch. 7), Dowe abandons the attempt to synthesize local and global elements in one theory. One of the reasons for this turn is his suspicion that chance-raising cannot be an ingredient in a theory of causation because one should rather analyze chance in terms of causation. He therefore briefly returns to a version of the pure process theory without, however, claiming to having fully developed it yet. Given the suddenness of this change of view, the reader is left wondering whether abandoning the integrated approach has really been adequately motivated.

What distinguishes Dowe's approach from many others methodologically is the claim that the Conserved Quantity Theory of causation is not a philosophical theory of causation in the traditional sense of an analysis of the meaning of causation ('conceptual analysis') but rather an 'empirical analysis' of the causal relation (ch. 1). Dowe presents his view explicitly as an 'empirical hypothesis' about the nature of causation and as developing 'hints from science' rather than from common sense or ordinary language. The theory, therefore, does not aspire to identify what the causal relation is in all possible worlds but only what it amounts to in the actual world (and, presumably, other physically possible worlds).

This approach to analyzing causation will find the sympathy of many readers; others will find it inadequate to the philosophical task. If one applauds Dowe's general approach, however, one might also wish for some deeper attention to actual science. It has been pointed out, for instance, that according to our best theory of space and time, the General Theory of Relativity (GTR), there is no proper conservation of energy-momentum in the universe unless one requires very special conditions to be satisfied, most importantly, that spacetime is 'asymptotically flat'. We know that this condition is not fulfilled in our universe; at best, energy conservation can therefore hold in an approximate way — which would account for why we



seem to find it conserved empirically. The problem is not one of identifying the actual world as a solution of Einstein's field equations which allows for energy conservation (as Dowe argues in ch. 5); the problem rather is a conceptual one within the framework of GTR. If we take this framework seriously, we have to face the prospect that conservation of energy is likely to be false and that the very notion of energy may not be adapted to this framework. A theory of causation that characterizes causal processes as possessing conserved quantities would, at the very least, have to focus on quantities other than energy.

Such debatable aspects of Dowe's theory notwithstanding, *Physical Causation* is required reading for anybody interested in the current state of the art of theories of causation. In my view, it is precisely the fact that Dowe's account *can* be subjected to this kind of criticism that makes his theory especially exciting.

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**Daniel E. Flage and Clarence A. Bonnen**  
*Descartes and Method:  
A Search for a Method in 'Meditations'.*  
New York: Routledge 1999. Pp. xii + 306.  
Cdn\$135.00: US\$90.00. ISBN 0-415-19250-1.

An interpreter of Cartesian method confronts three main questions. (1) Does Descartes's methodology guide the method he actually employs? (2) Is there a common methodology in the three main writings on method — *the Rules for the Direction of the Mind* (1628), *The Discourse on Method* (1637) and the 'geometrical method' section of the *Second Replies* (1641)? (3) Is there a common method to be found in both the scientific and the philosophical writings? The most ambitious task, and the one most difficult to carry off, posits an affirmative answer to all three questions. This is the task undertaken by Flage and Bonnen, and to some degree they are successful. Employing bold interpretations of central Cartesian ideas, they ingeniously put together a reading of the *Meditations* showing how it might indeed embody Descartes's high aspirations. Along the way we get a novel treatment of some of the outstanding unresolved questions in the *Meditations*: the relationship between the two proofs for the existence of God, the Cartesian Circle, and others.



This book, divided into two main parts, is well organized, clearly written and argued, and contains useful summarizing and concluding passages at strategic points. In Part I, Flage and Bonnen establish the main elements of their interpretation; Part II shows how the interpretation fits with and illuminates the order of argument in the *Meditations*. If there is a weakness in the authors' overall approach it is in inadequately relating their work to that of the many interpreters of Cartesian method who have gone before, especially Dan Garber, whose original idea — since revised — that Cartesian method embodies inference to the best explanation, stakes out territory that overlaps to a considerable degree with that traversed by Flage and Bonnen.

Part I centers its discussion of Cartesian methodology on the four rules mentioned in the *Discourse on Method* (AT VI, 18; CSM I, 120), finding four main elements adumbrated there: (1) an analysis and clarification of concepts, including what is unknown in a problem; (2) the postulation of lawlike hypotheses to explain some observed or otherwise apprehended phenomena; (3) an enumeration and elimination of alternative possibilities; (4a) the confirming of the material truth of hypotheses by appeal to the natural light; (4b) the confirming of the laws by appeal to their explanatory power and coherence with other elements of the system. These elements are deployed in a sequence of inferences having the 'bottom up' and 'top down' characteristics of deductive-nomological reasoning.

Central to this account is the distinction between material and formal truth. Seizing on Descartes's remark in *Meditation* III (AT VII, 43; CSM II, 30) that ideas of heat and cold (and other 'sensations') are 'very confused and obscure ... to the extent that I do not even know whether the ideas I have of them are true or false, that is, whether the ideas I have of them are ideas of real things or chimerical things which cannot exist', Flage and Bonnen take it that materially false ideas are ideas of impossible objects and, correlatively, that materially true ideas are ideas of possibly existing objects. By contrast, formal truth, characterized by Descartes as applied to 'judgments', is a property of ideas entailing the (actual) existence of their objects. There are various types of objects that Cartesian ideas might take — individuals, propositions, properties, essences — and Flage and Bonnen take the objects of materially true and formally true ideas to be, respectively, possible essences (there possibly are such essences) and actual essences (there actually are such essences). If I understand the authors' position here, clear and distinct ideas are automatically materially true, known as such through the natural light, but not automatically formally true. Rather, the formal truth of clear and distinct ideas, although necessary, is guaranteed through the good will of a benevolent God and known through our knowledge of the existence of such a being. An advantage of the authors' reading is that it allows them a neat treatment of the — perhaps otherwise intractable — Cartesian Circle.

Other noteworthy innovations are (1) a reading of Cartesian causation as formal causation (in Aristotle's sense) and (2) a claim that the idea of God in *Meditation* III is a constructed (factitious) idea rather than an innate idea —

bold ideas both. The first helps show how the Ontological Argument can count as an explanation, thus fitting the four stage method, the second plays a role in showing how Descartes progressively clarifies the idea of God as he 'ascends' through the argument of the *Third Meditation*.

There are a couple of places where I think the argument runs into trouble. First, I found it difficult to see how the authors relate the material and formal truth of ideas to the necessary truth of propositions. If I understand their thesis it is that necessary truths are lawlike propositions not simply identical with materially or formally true ideas. This by itself would not be troublesome were it not, according to the authors, that the natural light (intuition) reveals only the material truth of ideas, thus leaving the determination of lawlike propositions to the hypothetico-deductive method. This means that Descartes must be denying that it is by the natural light (intuition) that we know that the sum of interior angles of a triangle is equal to two right angles. And what are we to make of the cogito? Is not the natural light responsible for our knowing that if we are thinking then necessarily we exist? Readers will want to pay close attention to the treatment of these issues in Chapters 1, 4 and 7.

One other problem. The authors argue (Chapter 6) that the idea of God in *Meditation III* is really classified by Descartes as 'constructed' ('factitious') rather than 'innate'. This proposal is in direct contradiction to Descartes's words in many places, e.g., in a letter to Mersenne (AT III, 383; CSM III, 183, quoted on p. 198), and in direct contradiction to the main premise of Descartes's Causal Argument — that the inference to the formal reality of the cause of the idea of God is valid if, but only if, the idea of God is a 'primary idea', that is, an idea whose representational content does not derive from any other ideas (AT VII, 41-42; CSM II 29, quoted on p. 179). This would not be the case if the idea of God were constructed from other ideas, even other innate ideas.

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**Gary Fuller, Robert Stecker and  
John P. Wright, eds.**

*John Locke: An Essay Concerning  
Human Understanding In Focus.*

New York: Routledge 2000. Pp. vi + 282.

Cdn\$128.00: US\$85.00

(cloth: ISBN 0-415-14190-7);

Cdn\$38.99: US\$25.99

(paper: ISBN 0-415-14191-5).

This volume belongs to a series of 'In Focus' texts published by Routledge under the general editorship of Stanley Tweyman. The goal of the series is to revive (or spark afresh) interest in classic texts in the history of philosophy by 'focussing' our attention on them at two levels: selected portions of the primary work itself, and a few previously printed essays on that primary material.

Locke's thinking in the *Essay* on morality, freedom, the 'ethics of belief', and even personal identity have been largely overshadowed by our excessive focus on his skeptical metaphysics and epistemology. This is so despite the well-established fact that problems in morality and revealed religion first led Locke to conceive the larger project of the *Essay*. This volume goes some way toward correcting that imbalance of critical attention. Here we have a good smattering of Locke himself and four essays discussing the issues I have mentioned.

The first essay, 'Locke and the Ethics of Belief' by John Passmore, has already become a classic. The essay discusses Locke's attempts to ground 'belief' rationally. 'Belief', unlike 'knowledge', is never certain. However, belief is like knowledge in that it is involuntary: once we 'see' that the evidence favors a belief we cannot help believing it. The question Passmore then asks is, 'are there any circumstances under which we can be praised or blamed for our beliefs?' (187) If belief is involuntary, how can Locke be critical of those who appear to believe irrationally, the 'enthusiasts' for example?

Locke answers by holding that I *can* in fact deny my assent to what looks to be probable before a 'less than full examination' (198) of the relevant data. But how can I do this if my assent is compelled by what appears to me to be true? The Locke of the second edition of the *Essay* will respond by arguing that we do in fact have the power to 'suspend' belief until all the evidence has been gathered. We can be blamed for failing to do this. There remains the problem of the enthusiast, the person whose beliefs seem to 'cut clean across the evidence' (204). Passmore argues that this person's beliefs are structured entirely by reference to his loyalty to Party or Church. But precisely on account of his loyalty the enthusiast cannot properly be described as *believing* the dogmas of Party or Church. Passmore points out that Locke himself recognized the implausibility of this claim. Locke therefore moves from assimilating belief to knowledge to assimilating it to desire. The enthusiast



believes falsely, but not because of inadequate evidence; rather, as a result of 'being dominated by powerful inclinations' (208).

Harold W. Noonan tackles the problem of personal identity in 'Locke on Personal Identity'. He thinks there are three main lines of thought in Locke's effort to tie personal identity to consciousness. The first is 'metaphysical-theological' and relates to Locke's concern 'to provide an account of personal identity that is neutral as to the metaphysical issue between dualists and materialists' (225). The second is epistemic. Locke argues that whether or not consciousness resides in a substance is a moot question, since we have in principle no access to the real essences of substances. We can however 'be certain that we are the persons who performed our remembered actions' (224). Therefore, personal identity can only be revealed through consciousness. Finally, there is the pragmatic line of thought. Personal identity is of ultimate concern to us in a way that identity of substance clearly is not. This is what allows Locke to discuss personal identity as a purely 'forensic' term, i.e., one that makes essential reference to concepts of responsibility, reward, and punishment.

No philosopher has written more cogently and deeply about the problems of freedom and the will in early-modern thought than Vere Chappell. His contribution, 'Locke on the Suspension of Desire', therefore adds considerable weight to the volume. Seeing that he had ascribed sin and error to failures of understanding rather than of will, Locke introduces the concept of 'desire suspension' in the second edition of the *Essay*. We can, he now says, suspend our tendency to perform action *y*, and assess rationally the extent to which *y* really contributes to our long-term (read: 'other-worldly') happiness. Once our true happiness is in view, we will be motivated, i.e., will have the requisite desire, to act so as to secure that good. As Locke has it, no judgment of the understanding can move the will save by the mediation of desire. Chappell then addresses himself to two broad questions: (1) If the understanding lacks this power, how is it able to raise a desire? (2) How does an act of suspension come about?

In the course of answering these questions, Chappell argues provocatively that Locke's view of freedom does not in fact change from the first edition of the *Essay* to the second. The argument, which goes against the grain of a good deal of scholarship devoted to this problem, is that Locke does not become a libertarian in the revised version of Chapter 21 of the *Essay*. As Chappell has it, the power of suspension is the source 'not of our *liberty* but of the *proper use* of it' (247).

The final essay in the volume, 'Locke and Natural Law' by Daniel E. Flage, is a penetrating exploration of Locke's relation to, and divergence from, natural law theory as it existed in early modern Europe. In fact, there are two broad questions which arise here. (1) Can Locke provide us with substantive, prescriptive rules of conduct? (2) If such rules can be discovered, in what way are they related to the natural law? Flage argues, correctly, that humans for Locke are under a 'natural egoistic obligation' to maximize in the long run their own experiences of good (pleasure or happiness) and minimize their

own experiences of evil (pain or unhappiness) (259). This principle then gives us the basis for an answer to the first question, and a partial answer to the second. First, humans will maximize their good if and only if they engage in behaviour that benefits the group because anti-social behaviour as such will fail to maximize happiness (why this is so given the problem of Hobbes's fool, Flage does not consider). Second, the principle itself is a revision of a key concept of natural law, i.e., that there are 'universal and immutable moral properties expressed by natural law' (260).

Flage also argues that there is no in principle conflict between the natural law and that of God. Since God is both good and the creator of pleasure-maximizing entities like us, and this feature of our nature compels us to serve the group, God also commands us to serve the group.

It should be obvious from these summaries that there are very deep problems with Locke's way of dealing with the relevant issues. But though he is often frustrating, he is always challenging, and on the whole this volume does a fine job representing this underappreciated area of his thinking.

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### **Nancy C.M. Hartsock**

*The Feminist Standpoint*

*Revisited and Other Essays.*

Boulder, CO: Westview Press 1998. Pp. x + 262.

US\$45.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-8133-1557-3);

US\$18.00 (paper: ISBN 0-8133-1558-1).

The themes of socialist feminism and feminist psychoanalysis in political scientist Nancy Hartsock's famous essay, 'The Feminist Standpoint: Developing the Ground for a Specifically Feminist Historical Materialism', are typical of early-1980s feminist philosophy. Since then, many philosophical questions have been raised regarding both the very notion of a feminist standpoint and its epistemic advantage for which Hartsock argues. Her retrospective collection, *The Feminist Standpoint Revisited & Other Essays*, provides substantial context for interpreting the classic essay, and thus promises to shed light on the strengths and weaknesses of feminist standpoint theory and a great deal of related feminist philosophy.

Historical structure and content provide the collection's greatest virtue. Hartsock explains how her theory developed out of grassroots concerns, why she chose certain terms rather than others, and when she thinks other people



put the same points better. This allows the collection to double as an intellectual autobiography. The book is divided into three sections, the first of which contains essays that are theoretical and scholarly but were not intended for an academic audience, originally published in *Quest: a Feminist Quarterly*. Hartsock argues that because power is viewed as a commodity held by individuals that involves domination over others, change is viewed as a shift in power from one set of individuals to another, a mere switch in who dominates whom. She argues that a feminist view of change must involve 'redefining the self, building different kinds of political organizations, gaining economic power for women, and most important, a sense of how each of these arenas for change relates to the interlocking structures of patriarchy, white supremacy, and capitalism' (18). Hartsock maintains that change requires that our theorizing be closely informed by practical considerations. She argues against tendencies of socialist feminists to be led by the idealistic concerns of a vanguard and in favor of basing strategy on actual resources and needs. In particular, equalitarian strategies can backfire if they are simply imposed on people who have a variety of resources and concerns; separatist movements and the institutional recognition of different needs and talents are sometimes necessary to create environments in which social privilege is challenged, despite the danger of entrenching pernicious social differences.

The second section moves into the more academic essays, and Hartsock considers how Marx's epistemological framework suits feminism. The reality to which the oppressed are supposed to have better access is that which supports a less oppressive society. Moreover, Marx's view of the subject as transitional suggests that identity is not a given but can be strategic. Knowledge is understood in terms of the 'appropriation' that is possible when labor is not alienated; the results of labor are aspects of the laborer, and knowledge is not a commodity for exchange but the result of attempts to transform the world (100).

Desire for social change underpins her famous argument for the preferability of a feminist perspective. Just as, for Marx, involvement with 'material necessity' distinguishes the workers' perspective, all the more for the reproductive work done by women: literal reproduction of humans and the domestic labor women do in their own homes and outside them. Socialization for and working within in the institution of motherhood gives women's lives a distinctive grounding in the requirements for subsistence. Hartsock reinforces these claims using the feminist psychoanalytic theory of object-relations, that posits a gendered dichotomy between men's and women's senses of self based on their childhood relationships with their mothers (117).

In the third section, Hartsock judges structuralism, poststructuralism and postmodernism according to their adequacy for social transformation. Theorists such as Louis Althusser, Claude Lévi-Strauss and Gayle Rubin draw on Marx, but Hartsock argues that their theories provide no room for political change. Michel Foucault and Richard Rorty fair only slightly better: she argues that although they recognize the need for social change their



recommendations are impractical and inspire little confidence that they could be achieved or would be effective. Hartsock maintains the need for a concrete subject, rejects scepticism, insists knowledge is implicit to human practice and epistemology should account for the need to struggle against dominant material-social relations, and calls us to political action that will reveal the need and possibilities for change (240-1).

Given the emerging theme of resistance to postmodernism, it is curious that Hartsock is not critical of Sandra Harding. Hartsock explicitly recognizes Harding as one of her best interpreters, and she endorses Harding's position that a feminist standpoint does not assume an essential sameness among women but brings into question general characterizations of women and women's co-operation in classist, racist and homophobic social relations. However, as Hartsock argues elsewhere (*Women & Politics* 17.3), the means for developing knowledge from a standpoint remains undertheorized. Harding suggests postmodern analysis and democratic politics, but, as critics such as Kathleen Okruhlik and Helen Longino have charged, this leaves feminist standpoint theory without the sense of clear direction that should be its strength; it leaves behind the notion that the feminist standpoint is preferable over others. Unqualified pluralism eliminates standards for judging among perspectives and risks the postmodern scepticism Hartsock resists.

Important issues remain to be addressed about the relation of Hartsock's theory to postmodernism, and to feminist empiricists such as Okruhlik and Longino. Hartsock resists empiricism on the basis that individual agents need consideration in terms of social situation which she maintains empiricist theory cannot provide. She is right that some versions of empiricism depend on a givenness of individual experience that divorces it from social context and political influence. But this is not true of many versions, especially recently, and particularly of feminist versions of empiricism.

Nevertheless, Hartsock's motivating concerns and central precepts deserve consideration by anyone interested in the intersection of political theory and epistemology. Having left behind the support from psychoanalytic object-relations theory that attracted a great deal of criticism, feminist standpoint theory gains historical support from Hartsock's early nonacademic essays. Her analysis of the strategies in the second-wave women's movement backs up her arguments on the basis of socialization and the gendered division of labor for the advantage of the feminist standpoint. Hartsock's evaluation of feminist political tactics demonstrates in a concrete way that the epistemological value of feminism lies in attention to material needs and resources.

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**Sara Lucia Hoagland and  
Marilyn Frye, eds.**

*Feminist Interpretations of Mary Daly.*

University Park: Pennsylvania State

University Press 2000. Pp. v + 452.

US\$70.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-271-02018-0);

US\$25.00 (paper: ISBN 0-271-02019-9).

*Feminist Interpretations of Mary Daly* provides a thought-provoking collection of writings on one of the most influential and controversial radical feminist thinkers. The contributors to this anthology discuss a wide range of topics considering Daly as theologian, linguist, ontologist, (meta)ethicist, and epistemologist.

For Daly, language in large part determines who we are, how others relate to us, and what we can know. Women are constituted through male-controlled language practices. Women, universally situated in patriarchy, are dependent on male symbols, language, and meaning, and as a result have been lost in their objectification. Daly is concerned with establishing female agency and subjectivity to counter this erasure and support women's self-realization. She accomplishes this by deconstructing patriarchal religion, myth, and imagery, reclaiming women's lost religious heritage, and owning and transforming language.

Readers familiar with Daly's work will benefit from this eclectic collection of challenging, insightful writings; new students will find it quite accessible. The contributors are careful to make Daly's work understandable, applicable to contemporary issues (for example, Molly Dragiewicz uses Daly to help us understand acquaintance rape discourse), and relevant to other important feminist thinkers (such as de Beauvoir, Kristeva, and Irigaray).

This collection provides a refreshing revisiting of familiar criticisms of Daly's work, such as her not recognizing difference with respect to women's oppression (for example, readers reconsider Daly's reaction to Audre Lorde's 'An Open Letter to Mary Daly'), and for understanding women's oppression from a strictly Western perspective (in, for example, Renuka Sharma and Purushottama Bilimoria's article discussing Daly's treatment of suttee). Readers also discover new approaches to and applications of Daly's work (such as understanding Daly as existentialist; analyzing Margaret Atwood's frightening futuristic novel, *The Handmaid's Tale*, by applying Daly's sado-ritual framework; etc.). Finally, the authors try to clear up common misreadings of Daly (as an essentialist, for example).

One essay in this collection that warrants particular mention is Sheilagh Mogford's 'The Murder of the Goddess in Everywoman: Mary Daly's Sado-Ritual Syndrome and Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*', first because Atwood's novel is an often-neglected, important commentary on the dangers of the Christian Right's 'family values' being pushed to the extreme, but also because Mogford does an exceptionally good job in creatively applying Daly's seven components of sado-ritualism — first to Atwood's Gileadean

society, and then to our own. *The Handmaid's Tale* is about religious fundamentalists taking over, by military coup, North America in the late twentieth century. Mogford suggests that Atwood chooses the late twentieth century for the setting of her book because feminists have made considerable gains during this time, and as a result those in power are reacting with fear in a backlash, accusing feminists of being responsible for various social ills from abortion to non-traditional families. In Mogford's essay, the reader, asked to see seemingly unrelated experiences (of rape, murder, beatings, and other forms of violence), in our and other societies, through the lens of Daly's sado-ritual framework, discovers that all are orchestrated by those in power to maintain male dominance and female subordination. Without Daly's 'pattern-detecting framework' (139), we might mistakenly understand these experiences to be random, isolated, or accidental. Mogford shows us how Daly's seven components permeate Gileadean and our societies. For example, Daly's first component is 'obsession with purity'. Atwood's handmaids keep themselves pure, in ritualized fashion, for their commanders; our society views women's bodies as naturally unclean. Women are bombarded with damaging messages that their bodies are naturally dirty, offensive, shameful, and need to be covered up. As a result, women douche themselves, perfume themselves, powder themselves, and so on, using products that are often not only physically harmful, but harmful to their spirits and minds.

Mogford points out the similarities between Gileadean society and our own in an insightful, convincing, and frightening way. She teaches us that by approaching Atwood's novel from Daly's framework, we can learn about women's place in society, and understanding it is the first step to our changing it. Mogford's essay, like others in this collection, is a must-read for any student of Daly's work — old and new.

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**Alison M. Jaggar and  
Iris Marion Young, eds.**

*A Companion to Feminist Philosophy.*

Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, Inc. 1998.

Pp. xvii + 702.

US\$125.00. ISBN 1-55786-659-7.

With this volume, the thirteenth in Blackwell's Companions to Philosophy series, the editors intend 'to make more easily and widely available the range of work included under the rubric of feminist philosophy' (2), and with fifty original articles written by perhaps the most distinguished group of feminist



theorists ever collected for one volume, as well as an exhaustive eighty-four-page bibliography, they have certainly achieved their aim. *A Companion to Feminist Philosophy* will serve as a valuable introduction to the depth and breadth of feminist philosophy for the novice and an indispensable reference for everyone else.

Each author provides both a comprehensive survey of her topic (all of the contributors are women) and, to varying degrees, a critical perspective on the themes and literature discussed. Except for assuming that feminism implies a commitment to ending women's subordination, the editors allowed the contributors to interpret 'feminism' and 'philosophy' in their own ways. The result is a volume which has avoided the mind-numbing uniformity and authoritarian tone which is a common failing of such encyclopedic endeavors. Instead, readers experience directly the richness and diversity of feminist thought.

The first section chronicles feminist engagement with 'The Western Canonical Tradition', from Ancient Greek philosophy, through empiricism, Kant, pragmatism, and postmodernism. The editors' openness to various interpretations of feminist philosophy and encouragement to take a critical perspective manifests itself in two very different ways even this early on. In her entry 'Existentialism and phenomenology', Sonia Kruks carefully explores differing feminist views on the value to feminism of major figures in those traditions, such as Kierkegaard, Merleau-Ponty, and Beauvoir. Merleau-Ponty, for example is criticized by Judith Butler and Luce Irigaray for his masculinist account of desire and his privileging of vision over flesh, but creatively appropriated by Iris Young for the purpose of exploring such feminist themes as the doubling and decentering of one's 'self in pregnancy.

A very different kind of critical approach is evident in the chapter on 'Modern moral and political philosophy' in which Herta Nagl-Docekal (translated by Kathleen Chapman) vigorously defends traditional modern concepts such as the individual, autonomy, the contract and the moral law against feminist criticisms, often by invoking arguments from nonfeminists such as Will Kymlicka, Ronald Dworkin, and Michael Walzer. Although Nagl-Docekal's claims are thought-provoking, the end result is a short-changing of the subtlety and diversity of feminist approaches to this large topic.

Part II explores global dimensions of feminist philosophy. The editors acknowledge that this gesture towards geographical inclusion is limited and inadequate, but contend that it at least foregrounds the ways in which the supposedly 'universal' themes of the other sections are in fact interpreted and defined from a Western, indeed mainly US, perspective. Moreover, the articles in this section serve as valuable introductions to emerging trends in feminism and women's studies in Latin America, Africa, China, the Indian Subcontinent, and Eastern Europe.

One standout in this section is the article on China, by Lin Chun, Liu Bohong, and Jin Yihong. The authors begin by outlining the practical and theoretical implications of the communist framework within which feminist endeavors in China inevitably take place. They point out that it is not always

easy to distinguish the concerns of Marxist feminists in China from official policies of a government which publicly endorses gender neutrality and equality and is deeply skeptical of 'bourgeois Western feminism'. Noting that the socialist revolution in China has not fully emancipated women, Marxist feminists have recently raised questions about the standard historical materialist claim that private property and class differences are the root causes of women's subordination. Although China's recent turn to a 'market Socialist economy' has complicated matters, Chinese feminists tend to be less interested in 'private' issues such as the family and sexuality (partly due to a lingering biological gender determinism), and more concerned with the relationship between women and the state, the nation, and the society.

Feminists in China currently experience a complex mixture of pride in a revolution in which they actively participated, loyalty to the Communist party which has historically been at the forefront of feminist concerns, dismay at the subtext of paternalism in a state-sponsored feminism which is fixated on women's 'natural' weaknesses, and concern about the growing disconnect between 'women's' and 'society's' needs (reflected, for example, in the one-child policy). Of special concern are the universalizing tendencies of a Chinese Marxist feminism which glosses over important differences in the lives of rural and urban women, and between the Hans and the national minorities. The authors conclude that while feminist theorizing in China is still in its earliest stages and still dominated by political concerns, movements on the one hand towards a reconceptualization of Marxism, and, on the other, towards new apoliticized theories of gender (such as Zhou Yi's proposal to rebuild a relationship of 'natural balance' between the genders) suggest very promising lines of inquiry and practice.

The eight other sections of the volume are divided mostly along traditional philosophical lines. Those areas in which feminist scholarship is more mature and diverse, such as ethics, politics, subjectivity and embodiment, and knowledge and nature, feature six to ten articles apiece, on topics including rationality, epistemology, biological sciences, psychoanalytic feminism, gender, disability, care, impartiality, justice, socialism, equal opportunity, and war and peace. The four remaining areas — language, religion, art and society — contain two to five articles apiece, on topics such as semantics, Christianity, film theory, and community.

The editors acknowledge that their table of contents is not definitive, and certainly no single volume could be truly exhaustive. However, some omissions are still surprising. The section on language, for example contains only two articles, one on language and power, by Lynne Tirrell, and one on semantics, by Andrea Nye. Tirrell ably ties together such diverse projects as Mary Daly and Jane Caputi's efforts in *The Wickedary* (1987) to resuscitate archaic, feminist meanings buried within phallographic discourse, Catharine MacKinnon's attempt in *Only Words* (1993) to demonstrate the erased distinction in pornography between semantics and pragmatics ('to say it is to do it'), and Marilyn Frye's identification of linguistic 'marking' practices which erase the lives of lesbian women and diminish and trivialize women



in general. Still, one wishes for the more detailed and nuanced account that might have been provided by two or more essays on these important topics. And in the section on society, which contains articles on education, work, privacy, community, and racism, there is no chapter on that institution the deconstruction and reconstruction of which has occupied the efforts of so many feminists — family.

Overall, however, *A Companion to Feminist Philosophy* admirably achieves its aims. It demonstrates not only the ways in which feminist philosophy has exposed male bias and female exclusion in traditional philosophy, but also the ways in which feminism has reconstructed philosophical theories, in part by reflecting on the embodied experiences of women. Perhaps most importantly, the articles in this volume make manifest the point, which has only recently begun to be appreciated, that feminist philosophy is not a parochial endeavor which finds contentment in ghettoization. Rather, it is a broad and sophisticated cultural critique which has much to add to (and gain from) other philosophical conversations. Jaggar and Young hope that this volume will stimulate a broader dialogue between feminists and nonfeminists, and have assembled a collection of essays and authors that virtually ensure that it will.

**Jessica Prata Miller**

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**Rosanna Keefe**

*Theories of Vagueness.*

New York: Cambridge University Press 2000.

Pp. x + 233.

US\$54.95. ISBN 0-521-65067-4.

Keefe's *Theories of Vagueness* is a clearly written introduction to the prominent theories of vagueness. The theories that she covers are the epistemic view, multi-valued logics (including degree theories), pragmatic accounts and supervaluationism. Each chapter provides a summary of the work of a leading proponent in each camp including Williamson's defense of the epistemic view (1992: 1994), Tye's three-valued logic (1990: 1994) and Fine's account of supervaluationism (1975). The generally lucid presentation of this challenging material is useful and a welcome addition to the burgeoning field of vagueness.

The real contribution Keefe makes, however, is her critical assessment of all rival theories to her expressed preference, supervaluationism. She offers



stinging criticisms of each theory that often focus on their technical shortcomings. Though this aspect of the book will be of interest to the more advanced student or researcher, it will prove outside the scope of many students as a thorough grasp of both classical logic and semantics is needed. Conversely, the one failing of the book is its obvious bias towards supervaluationism. Keefe does not turn the same critical eye towards the technical weaknesses of this theory, and consequently her defense lacks the same punch as her criticisms.

An example of the type of philosophical criticism Keefe levels at theories is illustrated by her discussion of the epistemic view of vagueness. This position holds that all predicates have a precise meaning and any supposed 'vague objects' are precisely bounded though we are ignorant of their boundaries. Keefe's counterargument to this position focuses on the explanation of this ignorance, in terms of the margin of error principle. First, it is quite often the case that more exact knowledge of something like the height of someone will not help alleviate the mystery surrounding the applicability the term 'tall'. Second, Williamson cannot explain the origins of the purported precise meanings.

The following two chapters focus on multi-valued logics. It is here that some of Keefe's most challenging and interesting work is found. Her critique of degree theories of vagueness is quite clever. Degree theorists maintain that the relative truth or falsity of a vague statement can be measured. They propose that there are an infinite number of truth values that can be assigned to a proposition. The real interval between zero and one is generally used to represent this scale. The two endpoints of the interval are reserved for propositions that are completely false or completely true. What is crucial about the ordinal scale is that it is ordered and therefore lends itself to the comparison of the truth of vague statements. Degree theorists forestall questions about how exact numbers are assigned to propositions by stating that it is the ordering that counts and not the exact numerical values.

Keefe argues that if the claim of the degree theorist were correct, then any two scales that respect the ordering of a series of assigned truth values but alters their numerical values should be functionally equivalent. Two functionally equivalent scales can be created by simply shifting all the values of one scale monotonically up but leaving the endpoints untouched. (It should be remembered that the scales are infinite and such a transformation is permissible in principle.) Let us say that the original values assigned to two propositions were '.5' and '.6'. The values assigned on the new scale are '.6' and '.7'. The ordering is respected. But, notes Keefe, there has been an unintended shift in the truth conditional content of the first proposition — because, according to the definition of negation, the value of  $\sim P$  is '1 - | p |'. Now, the original proposition was perfectly balanced between truth and falsity, but this is no longer the case on the new scale because the value of '.6' is not the midpoint of the zero to one interval. In brief, the difficulty that Keefe highlights is that the definition of negation and other connectives pose limits on the possible degree scales. She shows that the exact numerical

values assigned by the degree theorist are crucial after all — making the view as a whole quite implausible.

The final two chapters of the book are devoted to the explanation and championing of supervaluationism. It is here that Keefe's technical prowess is least in evidence. Her explanation of Fine's account of supervaluationism is difficult to follow in absence of the original article. She is also lax in her criticism of some of the formal commitments of supervaluationism. At the outset of the book, Keefe argues that the best method for assessing the merits of a theory is one that relies on 'reflective equilibrium'. A theory should be judged on the manner in which it balances both pre-theoretical and theoretical intuitions and simplicity. The theoretical judgments that need to be respected include those pertaining to the validity of inferences containing vague expressions and its departure from classical logic. Keefe defends the necessity of a 'vague metalanguage' in the supervaluationist theory to treat second-order vagueness. This compromise is justified by the methodology of 'reflective equilibrium' even though it is clear from her discussion of other accounts of vagueness that straying this far from the dictums of classical logic would be grounds for attack.

In sum, *Theories of Vagueness* is a book well worth owning. It provides good summaries of the major positions in the area of vagueness and will probably prove to be a favourite reference guide for anyone interested in this topic because of its excellent organization and breadth of coverage. Be forewarned, however, that the book is not always objective in its assessment of other views because of its obvious bias towards supervaluationism.

**Louise Vigeant**

Carleton University

**John Llewelyn**

*The HypoCritical Imagination:*

*Between Kant and Levinas.*

New York: Routledge 2000. Pp. xii + 274.

Cdn\$113.00: US\$75.00

(cloth: ISBN 0-415-21361-4);

Cdn\$38.99: US\$25.99

(paper: ISBN 0-415-21362-2).

John Llewelyn's latest book is a sweeping work of original philosophy that grapples with a wide array of thought from German Idealism to twentieth-century phenomenology on the subject of the imagination. Readers who are familiar with Llewelyn's earlier work (in particular his acclaimed *Emmanuel Levinas: The Genealogy of Ethics*, 1995) will not be surprised by his decon-



structive and rhapsodic writing style. However, those unfamiliar with Llewelyn's rhetorical flair should note that his derisive claims are often ironic, as when he says that: '... never to be ready to make nonsense is to shirk one of philosophy's chief tasks, the task that I may well be undertaking in this book' (13).

Far from 'making nonsense', Llewelyn's latest book explores the meaning and implications of Kant's claim in the *Critique of Pure Reason* that the imagination is the 'common root' of sensibility and understanding. Taking his cues from John Sallis' provocative question: 'Is imagination the meaning of being?' (106), Llewelyn maintains that the imagination is neither limited to its role in Kant's schematism, nor abandoned qua mediating root between sensibility and understanding (as Heidegger maintains of the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition). Instead, Llewelyn provocatively argues that the imagination mediates between both theory and practice, and Kant's first and second Critiques. This is a bold claim because it underscores the imagination as a critical 'go-between' for sense and understanding (determinant and reflective judgment) without limiting the interesting role of the imagination in Kant to that of producing (alongside reason) the feeling of the aesthetic sublime in the *Critique of Judgment*. Llewelyn aims to establish that the imagination is not only crucial for understanding Kant's Critical philosophy, but also that Kant's notion of the imagination enables us to understand why a radical Levinasian phenomenology pertains to our sensible experience of being together in the world.

Llewelyn's argument is dense and we will not do justice here to the philosophical backflips and maneuvers that he conducts in order to produce, for instance, an account of the similarities between Schelling's treatment of the imagination and Arendt's appeal to the role of the aesthetic in Kant in formulating her own critique of political judgment (chapter 8). However, we will narrate the key claims and moves in Llewelyn's argument so that we will be better positioned to evaluate his accomplishments in this book.

Early in *The HypoCritical Imagination* Llewelyn clarifies precisely what he means by 'imagination'. Contrary to its use in ordinary language, 'imagination' is not a noun but what Llewelyn calls a 'work'. As a work, the imagination functions verbally (literally and figuratively) and adverbially in a deponent sense. Just what Llewelyn intends by 'deponent' deserves remark because he imports the Greek notion of 'middle voice' into his ad/verbal conception of imagination. This means that 'imagination' both enables a given subject to effect something and thereby affect themselves. Llewelyn gives us a useful example of how this operates: "He unties the horse and in doing so affects himself" (since the horse is now his). The active form says the subject effects something. The middle form says the subject effects something and so doing is affected himself' (46).

Llewelyn finds support for his deponent understanding of the 'imagination' in aesthetics, and he uses a sophisticated viewer response theory of art to read back into Kant a deponent function in the Critical imagination. How this leap gets made is key for understanding Llewelyn's project because the



deponent sense of the imagination which he expounds is directly related to his viewer response theory of art. Specifically, the ways in which a viewer is *a/effected* by a work of art — whether it be the poetry of Emily Dickinson or the paintings of Cézanne — reveals something important to us about the ways in which we imaginatively relate to both our environment and each other: '[from Baudelaire's *Correspondances*] From time to time in a forest, I have experienced the feeling that it was not I that was looking at the forest. I have sometimes had the feeling that it was rather the trees that were looking at me, speaking to me ... I was there listening' (174). On this *a/effective* basis, Llewelyn argues that the imagination functions deponently when it forms the 'common root' between sensibility and understanding in Kant. Moreover, he argues (leaning heavily on Schelling and acknowledging this debt) that the deponent function of the imagination in thinking leads us to conclude that philosophy is ancillary to art in the same spirit in which Schelling announced that 'philosophy is the handmaiden of art'.

Llewelyn wants to deepen the link between the deponent imagination and the phenomenology of experience through art, and he does so by leaning on the 'hypoCritical' character of Levinas' fundamental ethics. According to Llewelyn, Levinas's phenomenology is 'hypoCritical' because it simultaneously concerns (i) the phenomenality of the other, and (ii) the *ultra*-phenomenality of the other; what Levinas calls the ethical transcendence (or unknowability) of the other. Ultimately, Llewelyn relates this hypoCritical character of phenomenology to his deponent understanding of the imagination to produce a strong claim for a phenomenology of imagination that preserves the ethical import of Levinas's thinking: '... the hypoCritical imagination is the complex amphibological "root" of the distinctions that Criticism makes between the sensibility, understanding and reason, between the theoretical, the aesthetic, the practical and the religious, it is not cut off Critically from the Critical any more than the phenomenological is a pure layer of formality that subsists *an sich* independently of its concrete appearing' (202-3). In the end, Llewelyn maintains that Levinas's shortcoming is that his ethics concerns only human others while he makes a broader case for our deponent relationships to much broader environments under the phenomenological battle slogan, '*to the things themselves*', wherein we learn to both hear and see others and other things in a new effective, affective, and ethical manner. At this juncture, Llewelyn draws inspiration from the poetry of Emily Dickinson and her ability to make us hear and see the 'banality of daily existence' anew. His final vision of imaginative deponence is a hermeneutic account of our ethical comportment towards our world and each other that is guided by an aesthetic ideal and is phenomenologically accessible.

Llewelyn's innovative, complex and historical analysis of the imagination yields a pregnant understanding of the imagination which ultimately falls prey to a difficulty that he himself identifies; namely, '... can this programme avoid doing violent injustice to Kant or to Levinas, or to both?' (14). While Llewelyn's treatment of Kant is at least balanced by the exegetical supports he finds in Schelling and Heidegger (whatever we might think of Heidegger's

reading), I find his approach to Levinas disappointing. This is because Llewelyn gravely overemphasizes the dialogical role of the face to face relation in Levinas's early work, *Totality and Infinity*, and he does so at the expense of the expressly *non*-dialogical pre-relation of 'saying' and 'said' in Levinas's more mature work, *Otherwise than Being*. As a result, Llewelyn's presentation of Levinas is egregiously unbalanced for a scholar as familiar with Levinas's mature work as Llewelyn is (cf. *The Genealogy of Ethics*). Despite the perhaps necessary violence done to both Kant and Levinas in this text, Llewelyn's phenomenological argument for the hypoCritical imagination and its ethical and political consequences for our world and fellow inhabitants, is an engaging and scholarly contribution that will be of interest for anyone engaged in Modern and Continental European philosophy.

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**Noëlle McAfee**  
*Habermas, Kristeva, and Citizenship.*  
Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press 2000.  
Pp. xii + 219.  
US\$39.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-8014-3706-7);  
US\$17.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8014-8670-X).

The precise relation between metaphysical accounts of subjectivity and conceptions of ethical and political justification remains a matter of debate. This relation is at the heart of *Habermas, Kristeva, and Citizenship*, in which Noëlle McAfee argues that Jürgen Habermas's discourse ethics and his model of deliberative democracy can be defended without appeal to the Enlightenment notions of reason, autonomy, and universality that he assumes in his theory. Likewise, McAfee argues that Julia Kristeva's account of the subject as an ever unstable relational process need not issue in the politics of 'cosmopolitan individualism' that Kristeva endorses, but is well suited to a modified version of Habermas's model of citizen participation in a deliberative democracy. In developing her case, McAfee critically engages the work of a number of other continental theorists including Nancy Fraser, Hans-George Gadamer, Jacques Lacan, Emmanuel Levinas, Chantal Mouffe, and Jean-Luc Nancy.

McAfee begins by describing Habermas's theory of communicative reason, and its attempt to provide a critical theory of society. While not abandoning a model of rational autonomy, Habermas insists that the subject of communicative action is not a self-sufficient Cartesian substance but emerges linguistically and intersubjectively in a process of socialization. Although



McAfee lauds Habermas's recognition that subjectivity arises through historically contingent structures of language and culture, as well as his model of citizenship in a deliberative democracy, she takes issue with what she identifies as certain 'patently metaphysical ideas' in his account of subjectivity (38). McAfee charges that Habermas remains wedded to an ontology in which the ego is a 'substance', a structuralist account of language as a transparent tool, and a model of universality that relies upon the disinterested observer as the source of truth.

By contrast, she praises the Hegelian and Freudian inspired post-structuralist account of the subject developed in the writings of Julia Kristeva for laying 'bare the myth of the unitary, autonomous individual of modernity' (60). Moreover, McAfee argues that Kristeva's Lacanian-inspired 'subject-in-process', with its need for others in developing and gaining insight into its own identity, has a clear interest in engaging with others in political discourse and deliberation that Habermas's autonomous subjects lack. To develop her case, McAfee turns to other writers whom she sees as sharing a similar commitment to 'relational subjectivity', most notably Levinas, Gadamer, and Nancy. Combining elements of Levinas's ethics of embracing alterity, Gadamer's fusion of horizons, and Nancy's community of finitude, McAfee sketches a model of public deliberation for citizens who are less concerned to argue for or universalize their claims than to 'release [their] own view and adopt another' (190).

In defending Kristeva's approach to subjectivity, McAfee briefly discusses the work of some of her critics. She challenges Nancy Fraser's argument that Kristeva's 'split subject' cannot be an effective political agent, claiming that an unstable subject can be effective in undermining oppressive social identities (108-17). McAfee also criticizes Chantal Mouffe's poststructuralist anti-essentialism for its negative assessment of feminist theories of sexual difference such as that of Kristeva. In contrast to Mouffe's conception of a citizenship in which sexual difference would be 'effectively nonpertinent', McAfee stresses the political efficacy of asserting a specifically feminine subjectivity that is not based upon 'the negation of its other' (120-3).

Despite McAfee's claims to be supporting elements of both theorists, defenders of Habermas are likely to detect an imbalance in her unquestioning acceptance of a range of controversial psychoanalytic assumptions in Kristeva's developmental account, and her highly critical attribution of a 'metaphysics of substance' to Habermas. More importantly, McAfee's charge here may well seem misdirected to the extent that the metaphysical appeals to autonomy and universality that she finds objectionable arise in the context of Habermas's description of the ideal speech situation. As McAfee herself notes, however, this situation is not intended only, or even primarily, as an actual description of human subjects and their mutual interaction, but as a regulative ideal that can pick out instances of domination, coercion, and manipulation (81, 85). To the extent that Habermas's central concern is to describe the hypothetical conditions for free and uncoerced communication, he need not dispute McAfee's claim that subjects who are actually fragmen-



tary, decentered, and mutually indebted will be the effective participants in public deliberation. Instead, Habermas is likely to question how, in the absence of at least a hypothetical appeal to autonomy and universality, we can be certain that McAfee's relational subject's willingness to give up her own views and adopt those of others is truly free and not the result of a subjectivity structured by oppressive practices. (This was a key issue that drove the debates between Habermas and Gadamer.) A truly interesting issue that McAfee's account raises, but that she never directly addresses, is whether or not the developmental theory of relational subjectivity in Kristeva has the resources to develop a justificatory theory of communication without appeal to the categories that she finds suspect.

If McAfee's book fails to answer some important questions concerning the relation between political justification and postmodern theories of subjectivity, it does demonstrate that Kristeva's account of subjectivity need not issue in the conservative politics of cosmopolitan individualism. McAfee's writing is generally clear, and her explanations of Kristeva's often dense and difficult prose are particularly lucid. Generally, the book serves as a useful primer for understanding poststructuralist concerns in the debates on the politics of the self in contemporary continental philosophy.

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**Graham McFee**

*Free Will.*

Montreal & Kingston, ON: McGill-Queen's University Press 2000. Pp. viii + 184.

Cdn/US\$55.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-7735-2132-1);

Cdn/US\$24.95 (paper: ISBN 0-7735-2133-X).

This is one of a new series of introductory books on Central Problems in Philosophy. Seventeen other titles are promised. McFee is professor of philosophy at the University of Brighton, and has published a book on *Understanding Dance* (1992). He proceeds by setting out and then assessing what he calls 'the determinist argument' (21) which he presents in six steps:

1. Every event has a cause (as science tends to show).
2. Actions are a kind of event.
3. Therefore every action has a cause (from 1 and 2 above).

4. Therefore every action which actually is performed has to be performed, given the antecedent state of the world (the 'cause' in premise 3): that is, there is causal necessity.
5. Therefore it makes no sense to talk of 'choosing' to do this or that. For, given the causal antecedents (that is, the antecedent state of the world), we could not do otherwise than we do. We are governed by causal necessity.
6. Therefore explaining events in terms of reasons, which depends on the notion of people choosing to do this or that, can be discarded as empty.

Evidently, McFee's determinist is not only a hard determinist but an eliminative materialist as well (B.F. Skinner, perhaps, though McFee does not mention him). By using 'determinist' to mean 'hard determinist' McFee is unable to give an accurate formulation of libertarianism and compatibilism. He defines the former as denying premise 1. But libertarians have often gone to great lengths to argue that what they deny is determinism in the usual sense, the thesis that every event is causally necessitated in a lawlike fashion by antecedent events, i.e., they deny premise 4, not premise 1. It turns out in Chapter 8 that McFee himself affirms universal causality but denies the causal necessity of actions. G.E.M. Anscombe advanced a similar view in her Cambridge inaugural lecture *Causality and Determination* (1971), which McFee does not refer to. Anscombe there says that she would 'explain indeterminism as the thesis that not all physical effects are necessitated by their causes.' Compatibilism, then, is the view that free will does not require indeterminism so defined. McFee repeatedly voices dissatisfaction with the standard labels; he says that the label 'hard determinism' has 'a strong potential to confuse the beginner' and that, since 'soft determinism' defends free will, 'it is neater to think of it as no kind of determinism!' (160, n.2)

After three introductory chapters, McFee discusses the libertarianism of C.A. Campbell in Chapter 4. He correctly discerns the Kantian strains in Campbell's thought, but misunderstands Campbell as saying that we are free only when we *do* act contra-causally (57), whereas Campbell surely meant that we are free because we *can* act contra-causally, even when following our inclinations we do not. In the second part of this chapter, McFee discusses and dismisses Heisenberg's uncertainty principle. It will become clear later on (in Chapter 8 and an appendix on Chaos Theory) that he regards determinism (causal necessity) as a commitment of all natural science.

In Chapters 5 and 6 McFee distinguishes two varieties of compatibilism, which he terms the 'utilitarian' and the 'two-language' views. Strangely, he regards these as denying step 2 of the determinist argument, whereas most compatibilists regard themselves as denying step 5. (McFee seems to regard step 5 as self-evident; it is 'just an amplification of this picture of causal necessity from premise 4' [26].) It is true that some compatibilists have denied that 'reasons are causes' and have inferred that causal explanation

does not apply to actions; but this is of course denied by, e.g., Donald Davidson, whom McFee classifies as a two-language theorist (see 164, n.4).

The 'utilitarian' is supposed to deny premise 2 because he holds that events are caused or uncaused, while actions are constrained or free (70); but this in no way implies the falsity of premise 2: soft determinists standardly hold that free actions are caused as well as unconstrained. The two-level theorist seeks to insulate the language of choice and action from determinism about events, so as to preclude any inferences (such as the determinist argument makes) from the latter to the former. McFee's objection to this is that actions do consist of bodily movements and, if the latter are causally necessitated, our actions can scarcely be free (93-7).

In Chapter 7 McFee discusses the views of Strawson and Frankfurt. He argues that the impossibility of giving up our interpersonal reactive attitudes (Strawson) does not show that we have free will, and that the sense in which we cannot act otherwise in Frankfurt-type examples is crucially different from the sense in which we cannot act otherwise if determinism is true.

In Chapter 8 McFee proposes his own solution to the free will problem, viz. that the supposition of causal necessity rests on certain assumptions which are warranted in natural science but not in the sphere of human action. Since causality does not imply causal necessity, step 4 of the determinist argument can be rejected. McFee does not do justice to the view that causal 'necessity' is simply the universality of 'same cause, same effect' which is implied by the universality of causation (premise 1, which McFee accepts). And he does not make clear how he escapes his own objection to the two-language theory. If causal necessity does apply in the natural sciences, then it applies to one's bodily movements; so how can our actions be free? As McFee himself says, 'the determinist might still derive the substance of his or her conclusions by focusing on (bodily) movements only, including omissions' (139). But he apparently thinks that, once the determinist argument has been rejected, our commonsense beliefs in choice and action are validated (143).

Despite the endorsement on the back cover, I would not use this as a text.

**Mark Thornton**

University of Toronto



**David E. Mercer**

*Kierkegaard's Living-Room: Between Faith and History in Philosophical Fragments.*

Montreal and Kingston, ON: McGill-Queen's University Press 2001. Pp. 207.

Cdn/US\$60.00. ISBN 0-7735-2101-1.

David Mercer finds an elephant in Kierkegaard's living room. He is right. One of the great issues that Kierkegaard makes central to his authorship and that thinkers and scholars continue to neglect is the relationship between faith and history (and thus the relationship between the Bible and modernity). It is true that this problem has not been ignored by theologians for whom the Incarnation (Kierkegaard's God-man) and the historical (or mythical) Jesus are fundamental concerns. (Although Mercer does not deal with this side of the issue, he does mention philosophers of history who show that evidentiary and narrative truth presuppose nonempirical concepts such as freedom, agency, and meaning that are central to biblical faith). But Mercer makes a timely, scholarly contribution by showing how central the relationship of faith and history is to the thought of Kierkegaard and, by implication, to the whole of modern thought. He focuses his analysis on *Philosophical Fragments*, in which Kierkegaard argues for the importance of distinguishing the historical moment of coming into existence from the Socratic (Platonic) occasion in which temporality plays no critical role. (Other works of Kierkegaard upon which Mercer calls are *Either/Or*, *Postscript*, and *Practice in Christianity*.)

That faith is historical and that history involves faithfulness, that the subject of faith is historical and that history involves faith in the subject raises issues that should obtrude themselves, Mercer rightfully argues, like an elephant in our scholarly study. The radical (paradoxical) formulation that Kierkegaard gives of this issue in *Fear and Trembling* is that, if faith has always existed (if God has always existed), then faith has never existed (then God has never existed). His simple, but profound, point is that faith (and the subject of faith: God) is not an eternal (ethical or universal) truth to which individuals are necessarily (teleologically) subordinate. But he also holds that history is not simply aesthetic: it does not reflect a notion of time that is merely relative to the self-interest of the individual. Rather, as Mercer points out, Kierkegaard holds in *Fragments* that history is the absolute paradox, the dialectic of temporality and eternity: the time of coming freely into existence, the time of choosing, of choosing not between this and that but of making choice, freedom, the very basis of existence (as this idea is expressed in *Either/Or*, Part II). Thus Kierkegaard argues for the inextricable interrelationship of history, faith, freedom, and existence, what he formulates in *Fear and Trembling* as the absolute relationship to the absolute. The paradox here is that, while natural (aesthetic) time is purely relative and the time of eternity is merely necessary, the time of historical

relationship is absolute: the time in which we — both faithfully and freely — choose our existence.

Mercer claims, however, that Kierkegaard, in staunchly upholding the Incarnation (the God-man) as the central truth of Christianity, is a conservative rather than a liberal thinker. But this dichotomy merely serves to obscure the truly radical features of Kierkegaard's thought. For it is precisely in remaining true to the fundamental truths of Christianity that Kierkegaard reveals with unique insight how radically paradoxical (modern) they are. Mercer is right that Kierkegaard, while emphasizing faith and the self (the single individual), is neither an irrationalist nor a subjectivist. He is also correct that Kierkegaard makes history (the historical moment of freely coming into existence) fundamental to faith. But it does not then follow, as Mercer claims, that Kierkegaard views truth as existing objectively outside the individual or that he differs fundamentally from either Kant or Hegel in making faith (and grace) superior to reason. Mercer is correct in showing that Kierkegaard distinguishes knowledge (which he formulates in *Fragments* as the empiricism of immediate sensation and the rationalism of immediate cognition) from faith. But he fails to see that Kierkegaard's distinction between knowledge and faith is consistent with the distinction that Kant makes between empirical knowledge and rational thought (will) and that Hegel makes between understanding and reason (spirit). Kant famously states that he denies (overcomes and appropriates) knowledge in order to make room for faith, while Hegel infamously holds that reason presupposes the revealed truth of revelation.

Mercer does not see, in other words, that Kierkegaard is properly to be viewed as a thorn in the side not only of (philosophical) liberals — in making faith central to freedom, existence, and history — but also of (religious) conservatives — in making freedom, existence, and history central to faith. Outside of Hegel and Kierkegaard — who are at once philosophical and theological — philosophers and theologians both have enormous difficulty in seeing that secular history is not empirical (relativistic). Rather, as the rational, willed, thoughtful practice of freely coming into existence (to combine Kant and Hegel with Kierkegaard), history embodies the same metaphysical, epistemological, and ethical relationships as faith. The concepts of faith, existence, history, and freedom all bear the paradox of the absolute relation to the absolute. It may be Kierkegaard's intention, as Mercer says, to subordinate secular history to sacred history. Yet this binary opposition is not true to the paradox that relationship is the central concept structuring faith, existence, history, and freedom — the relationship of self and other (love of neighbor) in its secular and of human being and divine being (love of God) in its religious manifestations.

In his study Mercer astutely shows us that we cannot truly account for the thought of Kierkegaard without understanding why and how it rests on the paradoxical relationship of faith and history. But then the absolute paradox, like an unaccountable elephant, obtrudes itself upon us. The relationship of faith and history undermines all hierarchies (dualisms) between



faith and reason, God and human being, theology and philosophy, and the religious and the secular. Faith is no less historical than history is faithful.

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**John Muller and Joseph Brent, eds.**

*Peirce, Semiotics, and Psychoanalysis.*

Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press

2000. Pp. xii + 184.

US\$38.00. ISBN 0-8018-6288-4.

Over the course of the last few decades the importance and incredible scope of Charles S. Peirce's philosophy has slowly come to light. The various elements making up his architectonic system of thought have been found to have fruitful applications to a large number of fields ranging from logic to literary criticism. One of Peirce's many achievements, and some would argue his greatest, was initiating the study of semiotics. The ten essays collected in this volume, which are the product of the Forum on Psychiatry and the Humanities, attempt to show that Peirce's theory of signs, in addition to some of his more distinctly philosophical ideas, 'can provide a fruitful basis for the development of psychoanalytic theory' (7).

The title of this collection is in fact slightly misleading. Although each of the essays make use of semiotic concepts and are concerned with issues in contemporary psychoanalysis (such as conscious and unconscious processes, conceptions of the self, the nature of therapeutic discourse, and psychosis), the essay by John E. Gedo, 'Protolinguistic Phenomena in Psychoanalysis', makes no reference to Peirce while several of the other essays spend equal time discussing figures such as Freud, Lacan, and Derrida. For example, Joseph H. Smith's 'Feeling and Firstness in Freud and Peirce' examines Freud's notion of 'affect' (loosely defined as feeling or emotion) and compares it to Peirce's ontological category of Firstness; the contribution by David Pettigrew, 'Peirce and Derrida: From Sign to Sign', takes up the problem of signification and reference in the work of Peirce and Derrida; and Wilfried Ver Eecke's 'Peirce and Freud: The Role of Telling the Truth in Therapeutic Speech' draws not only from Freud and Peirce but also from Lacan's structuralist interpretation of language.

Occasionally the multiple theoretical perspectives present problems. For instance, Angela Moorjani's 'Peirce and Psychopragmatics: Semiosis and Performativity' attempts, amongst other things, to show how Peirce's semiotic concept of the interpretant can provide us with a basis for knowledge



about the human psyche. This is an intriguing line of semiotic-psychoanalytic inquiry to pursue, perhaps one that could shed light on Peirce's provocative idea that the person is a sign. However, in the course of discussing Judith Butler's claim that the body is known only as an effect of semiosis, Moorjani writes that: 'Butler's performativity — via Derrida's semiotic critique — would appear to be a more appropriate interpretant of Peirce's interpretant than of Austin's performative' (110). Conceptions of the self are difficult when seen through such a prism of theories.

Other essays are more straightforward. James Phillips, in 'Peircean Reflections on Psychotic Discourse', offers what might be thought of as applied semiosis. Taking as his point of departure Peirce's claim that all thought is in the (triadic) nature of signs, he then asks how this idea might help us understand the thought processes involved in psychotic disorders. Phillips suggests that in psychosis the semiotic process breaks down in a number of ways. For the schizophrenic, for example, signs (such as words or gestures) might suddenly reveal themselves *as signs*. 'The patient becomes stuck in them. They no longer transport him or her to the object or the other person' (19). In other cases, the psychotic patient turns simple indexes, such as the rustling of trees, into signs full of symbolic meaning. Phillips makes the analysis that when this happens 'there is an improper shuffling of the positions of sign, object, and interpretant' since the psychotic subject thinks of him or herself as the object of some anonymous agency and not a 'neutral observer' of an indexical sign (30).

In 'Hierarchical Models in Semiotics and Psychoanalysis', John Muller argues that Peirce's ontological categories of Firstness, Secondness, and Thirdness provide not only the conceptual framework for his theory of signs, but also a 'hierarchical model that can usefully organize the emergent data of psychoanalysis' (54). Muller offers a substantive, detailed case for the idea that Peirce's triadic ontology and account of signs provides a powerful tool for organizing psychoanalytic theory and practice. It must be said, however, that Peirce's ontological categories, when wrapped around psychoanalytic models, are to a certain extent stretched beyond recognition. A follower of Peirce might question, for instance, whether Peirce's ontological category of Firstness can be faithfully identified with 'severe fragmentation anxiety' (56).

In his introductory essay, Joseph Brent provides a brief account of the fascinating but tortured life of Peirce and an overview of some of Peirce's major philosophical ideas, such as his claim that abduction is a third type of inference. This material will be familiar to those who have read Brent's biography on Peirce. Vincent Colapietro's essay, 'Further Consequences of a Singular Capacity', compliments his earlier work on a Peircean theory of the unconscious; and Teresa de Lauretis's 'Gender, Body, and Habit Change' continues her exploration of Peirce's notion of habit.

Several of the essays provide helpful explanations of Peirce's concept of the interpretant, his account of consciousness, his theory of signs, and various other aspects of his philosophy. Although the authors are not exclusively concerned with Peirce's philosophy and semiotic, one finds that many of

Peirce's ideas gain body when put in the context of psychoanalysis. For example, Ver Eecke briefly discusses how Peirce's account of truth and his theory of inquiry might impact on our understanding of the therapeutic process. Ver Eecke states that Freud's demand for honesty in therapy makes sense only if one first supposes truth about particulars is possible. The argument is then made that Peirce's account of truth and theory of inquiry, both of which are firmly set against the sceptical tradition, are able to underwrite the demand for honesty. Here one is presented with insights into not only the therapeutic process, but into Peirce's epistemology as well.

**Glenn Tiller**

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**Joel Pust**

*Intuitions as Evidence.*

New York: Garland Publishing 2000.

Pp. xiv + 123.

US\$45.00. ISBN 0-8153-3763-9.

Joel Pust's compact and sharply-focused study of philosophical intuitions aims to map out the extent to which intuitions are used as evidence in contemporary analytic philosophy and then to defend the philosophical use of intuitions against recent sceptical challenges, largely by arguing that the sceptical challengers are no less philosophically dependent on intuitions than the philosophers they criticize.

His first chapter offers a broad survey of some areas in philosophy where intuitions are taken seriously: for topics as diverse as knowledge, moral rightness, personal identity and explanation, Pust claims, we typically aim to come up with analyses that accord with our intuitive judgments, and we argue against rival analyses by showing that they have counter-intuitive results. Although we can justify philosophical theories that override particular intuitions — so intuitions are fallible — we can do so only when there is a more significant body of intuitions supporting the resultant theory — so intuitions are the ultimate source of warrant in philosophy. In his examination of apparently divergent accounts of philosophical method Pust aims to show that his apparent rivals also end up (perhaps unwittingly) giving intuitions this decisive role. The exhaustive power of intuition is made slightly less surprising when we see how broadly Pust intends to use the term. 'Intuition-driven philosophy' is for him not just the method of testing analyses against particular cases, like Gettier examples (this he dubs 'particularist intuitionism'), it is also the method of accepting abstract or general principles, like closure under logical implication in a theory of knowledge, on the basis of intuition ('generalist intuitionism'), and also, by combining these,



what seems to Pust the best method — the method of global intuitionism, in which we accept both particular and general intuitions as *prima facie* basic evidence. Pust sees intuitionism in Rawls's method of balancing considered moral judgments and principles in reflective equilibrium, and in Goodman's vision of deduction as a mutual fitting of particular inferences and general rules. Both of these methods indisputably involve judgments about particular cases and general principles, but it is another question whether Rawls and Goodman mean us to rely on intuitions in Pust's sense of the word, a sense he makes clear in his chapter two.

In his account of the nature of intuition, Pust offers us a modified version of George Bealer's definition, 'At  $t$ ,  $S$  [rationally] intuit that  $p$  if and only if at  $t$ , it intellectually seems to  $S$  that necessarily  $p$ '. Reflecting on the phenomenology of Gettier examples, Pust decides to drop Bealer's requirement of the occurrent semblance of necessity in favour of a disposition: 'S has a rational intuition that  $p$  if and only if (a) S has a purely intellectual experience, when considering the question of whether  $p$ , that  $p$ , and (b) at  $t$ , if S were to consider whether  $p$  is necessarily true, then S would have a purely intellectual experience that necessarily  $p$ ' (39). When I ask myself whether someone in a Gettier case knows that  $q$ , Pust argues that I enjoy a non-perceptual seeming that they do not, and when I reflect on the question of whether this is necessarily so it will seem to me that it is, but this is not to say that the original seeming, in which I considered only the question and not its modality, involved the appearance of necessity. Here it might have helped to have more of a characterization of what could count as 'a purely intellectual experience' without any semblance of necessity, especially given that Pust has already excluded hunches about contingent matters like houses falling when their foundations are undermined as not being intuitions in his sense of the word. Indeed, a more developed explanation of the nature of a 'purely intellectual experience' would also help to allay the worry that one mystery is being explained in terms of another.

If any purely intellectual experience of a particular truth or general rule could count as an intuition, as long as further reflection on its modality could show it to be necessary, one might wonder what kind of philosophical thinking could fail to count as intuitive. Here Pust's strongest constraint on an intuition is 'that it not be the result of conscious inference' (44). Pust claims that this constraint is supported by introspection and by the normative requirement that intuitions must be non-inferential if they are to serve as 'the ultimate premises in philosophical argumentation and analysis'. Indeed, not only are intuitions not the product of actual reasoning, they are treated (and Pust seems to think, properly treated) as 'not *admitting* of further inferential support' (44, my emphasis). This foundationalist constraint does not seem to follow from Pust's definition of intuition. Indeed, one might have thought that coming to believe something on the basis of a proof could provide a paradigmatic example of an intellectual experience of something being necessarily so. And now it is now unclear that Rawls and Goodman are working with intuitions in Pust's sense. Rawls's reflective equilibrium is not



a matter of being pushed back and forth by brute intellectual seemings, each occurring to us independent of the others, and none arrived at, or even supportable by, any process of conscious inference. Goodman quite clearly rejects the idea that we have 'ultimate premises' to rely on in characterizing the justification of deductive rules and particular deductions as an ongoing back-and-forth negotiation (Pust's quotation from Goodman on page 18 is somewhat selective, giving the impression that Goodman intends intuitions about particular deductions to have primacy here). Furthermore, when we examine the question of whether a given principle is necessarily true — take the rule of *modus ponens*, for example — surely the natural thing to do is not just to sit back and wait for a non-inferential purely intellectual seeming that it is so, but to attempt to reason about the matter, to examine whether this rule can be shown to be truth-preserving, to consider the broader structure of classical logic, and so on.

Fortunately, the argument of the next chapter is largely independent of this foundationalism. Here Pust examines the sceptical worries of Harman, Goldman, and Stich about the reliability of moral, metaphysical and semantic intuitions. He sees all three authors as raising similar concerns about whether a good explanation of the occurrence of intuitions would have to require the truth of what is intuited, assuming a background epistemology in which we are only justified in believing observations (including observations about the occurrence of our intuitions) and propositions necessary for causal explanations of our observations. As these concerns are clearly motivated by a sense that we have no adequate positive epistemology of our philosophical intuitions, one might expect Pust to respond by supplying such a positive account; rather, for reasons revealed later, he goes negative and attacks the empiricist sceptics for inconsistency, arguing that the sceptics' own claims about explanation are dependent on non-observational tenets whose support could only be intuitive, and indeed that any plausible epistemology will require the support of intuition.

How is intuitive support so indispensable? Pust thinks it is only fair to ask the sceptics to justify their 'explanationism', and that they can either claim that it is just evident (which would be an appeal to intuition) or they can try to offer arguments for it. Pust has already claimed that all non-inferential judgments of necessity are intuitive; in this chapter inferential judgments invoke intuition too. Any philosopher who wants you to accept his position on the basis of a deductively valid argument is committed to admission of intuition, Pust claims, because 'grasp of an argument's validity, "seeing that" the conclusion must be true if the premises are true, requires an exercise of intuition' (87); likewise any use of *reductio* forms of argument (89) and any appeal to the principle of non-contradiction (113). But surely there are various ways the empiricist sceptics about intuition might also be sceptics about necessity here: they can argue that it is enough for you to accept their conclusions as true without seeing the *necessary* connection of those conclusions to the premises. Indeed these sceptics might see logical principles as sentences like any other, distinguished only by their location

near the heart of the web of belief, or their low likelihood in practice of being chosen for revision. Whatever the merits of that view of logic, it could have received more discussion here, together with the larger question of whether it makes sense to see the empiricists, especially those who elsewhere identify themselves as naturalists, as assigning their own position the status of a necessary truth.

If we are still concerned by the apparent absence of a positive epistemology of philosophical intuition, Pust's last chapter is supposed to offer some reassurance. If we look for a mechanical or naturalistic justification of intuition we are sure to be disappointed, Pust argues, because causal reasoning will always be insufficient to provide the right sort of link between what is necessarily the case and what we believe about it. Pust doubts that we can come up with any way of independently testing or calibrating the deliverances of intuition, but, drawing on Alston's arguments that there is no non-circular justification of sense-perception, he argues that the failure of any independent calibration is not a problem unique to intuition. It is possible to become a complete sceptic about sense perception and intuition, but if we admit the legitimacy of sense perception only an undue partiality could stop us from admitting the legitimacy of intuition. Pust may be right that our powers of rational insight are not subject to any independent check, but one might hope that epistemology could still reinforce our confidence in intuition by supplying some analysis of the ways in which it functions, and the ways in which we correct false intuitive impressions. If the intuitively appealing axioms of naïve set theory lead to paradox, the epistemologist who wants to defend intuition could do well to examine the rational means by which we extricate ourselves and figure out what is really (as opposed to just apparently) necessarily the case. But it is not clear that Pust has left himself much room for such a project, given that he is taking intuitions to be non-inferential deliverances of what is necessarily so, brute seemings that come to us independently of one another and all seem to stand on an equal footing. Given his sensitivity to the question of whether we are showing undue partiality to perception, it is surprising in the end that the problem may be (surprisingly) that he is to some extent modelling his account of intuition on perception here: as perceptions come to us occurrently, unbidden, (more or less) independently and on equal footing, so also intuitions. A careful examination of Pust's own conclusions in the last chapter makes one wonder whether this is the right model to be using.

*Intuitions as Evidence* is in Garland's Dissertations in Philosophy series, a series that has brought us a number of promising early works from authors who have gone on to make influential contributions to philosophy. Although written with professional clarity, it is clearly a preliminary work, but the kind of preliminary work that makes one look forward to the author's future discussions of this worthy subject.

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**Peter B. Raabe**

*Philosophical Counseling: Theory and Practice.*  
Westport, CT: Praeger 2001. Pp. xxii + 303.  
US\$64.95. ISBN 0-275-97056-6.

Philosophical counseling needs its William James or Sigmund Freud. Although it has formidable champions like Louis Marinoff and Gerd Achenbach, they have yet to confer on it the legitimacy enjoyed by psychology and psychotherapy. Despite the oft-repeated claim by supporters that New York may soon license philosophical counselors, such counselling is still technically illegal in California, and claims that Socrates and Epicurus were really just early philosophical counselors have fallen on skeptical ears.

In lieu of a champion like Freud or James, or a convincing argument about Socrates's real intentions, providing a coherent model for philosophical counseling sessions might move the field toward popular acceptance. Peter Raabe attempts to do this in his book *Philosophical Counseling* by uniting under a four-stage process of his own design the disparate approaches to the activities that call themselves philosophical counseling. He attempts to establish a need for his model by demonstrating that there is some consensus in conceptions on what such counseling is not, but little agreement on what it is. The more than two hundred footnotes in this thirty-four-page section alert one to the book's first major weakness; it has that dissertation feel of a document with more data than argument. A line from *Macbeth* about overprotestation leaps to mind.

One of the problems with excess data emerges in the first half-page of the discussion on the phenomenological approach to philosophical counseling, where Raabe's analysis creaks under the weight of six quotes from Thevanaz, Merleau-Ponty, Husserl, Heidegger, and van Manen piled on top of each other in what might unkindly be called 'freshman-essay style'. The cursory reflection that unites them makes a straw man fallacy about the limitations of a phenomenological approach inevitable. This apparent limitation moves smoothly into a discussion of hermeneutics, but a similar limitation on similar grounds soon emerges. Even if one agrees that there is a need for a consensual conception of philosophical counseling, one is left uneasy about use of a mountain of superficially analyzed information to reach the conclusion that this is currently lacking.

The next section continues in the same vein. After a laundry list of different approaches to philosophical counseling, Raabe describes methodologies with the clear intention of demonstrating their lack of coherence. The argument seems rigged. If one sufficiently limits the analysis of almost any collection of similar objects, they will appear to have irreconcilable distinctions. So it is for philosophical counseling methodologies. Besides, if Raabe really wanted to find the unifying nature of philosophical counseling, why did he not approach the question philosophically rather than inductively? A phenomenological reduction, for example, may have saved both Raabe and his readers considerable time.

At this point a subtle intellectual fratricide begins to emerge. Despite an otherwise neutral attitude towards disparate conceptions of philosophical counseling, Raabe begins to undermine the open-ended approach pioneered by the father of modern philosophical counseling, Gerd Achenbach. Since Achenbach's approach is built on the rejection of method, and Raabe is attempting to legitimize philosophical counseling by establishing a uniform method, it becomes unclear whether the problem is in Achenbach's or in Raabe's project.

Other arguments Raabe uses to justify the need for his model and the legitimacy of philosophical counseling are equally questionable. For example, he supports his claim that psychiatrists and psychologists have no privileged ability to identify abnormality by pointing out how Russian Communists used to designate political prisoners as having 'reform-seeking schizophrenia'. Using this communist card seems an extreme way to suggest that there may be some cultural bias lurking in the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*.

Similarly, Raabe attempts to validate the effort to make philosophy more accessible by admonishing philosophers who write in technical terms. Predictably, Raabe quotes one of Heidegger's more obscure reflections on the relationship of being to understanding out of context and without explanation, and then holds it up as an example of intentional obscurity. It is hermeneutically naive of Raabe to suggest that philosophers like Heidegger could have been more accessible if they really wanted to, and this argument detracts from the more important issue of how philosophy can be made accessible to non-philosophers without losing the distinctions that a technical language makes possible.

Fortunately, Raabe's model of philosophical counseling can stand alone, without the questionable preliminaries. It is a model based on Raabe's trenchant insight that counseling sessions are not static, that the clients' needs tend to progress over time, and any model that limits itself to a single stage or objective is likely to fail at meeting those needs as they change. Raabe argues convincingly for a model of counseling that acknowledges four stages. The first is a free-floating dialogue, where the client thoroughly describes their situation. The second stage is immediate problem resolution, where the counselor helps the client resolve a particular issue. The third stage involves teaching the client the philosophical skills they will need to resolve future problems on their own: this stage in particular distinguishes philosophical counseling from traditional psychotherapy. The final stage is transcendence, where the client moves on to the larger issues of their life and their world view.

The model is theoretically sound, and Raabe demonstrates its practice with a series of brief case studies from his experience as a counselor. These do as much to clarify the nature of philosophical counseling as the entire first section on theories and methods. Unlike the earlier sections of the book, this part gives future philosophical counselors direction in their search for an effective and productive approach to making philosophy accessible and useful



to non-philosophers, and it also does much to legitimize this particular brand of helping people live satisfying lives.

*Philosophical Counseling* is a thorough catalogue of current approaches and methods. But one wishes that it were a little less so, and that more space was devoted to the original and provocative model Raabe has developed and his case-history illustration of it. With a bit of work, he might even be able to accommodate Achenbach.

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**Arthur Ripstein**

*Equality, Responsibility, and the Law.*

New York: Cambridge University Press 1998.

Pp. ix + 307.

US\$64.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-521-58452-3);

US\$22.95 (paper: ISBN 0-521-00307-5).

Where should risks fall? Who is responsible when bad things happen? Arthur Ripstein sets out to show that issues of luck and misfortune can only be resolved from within the framework of a general theory of justice. Ripstein examines the problem of luck as it arises in three contexts: tort law, criminal law, and distributive justice. On Ripstein's picture, problems of luck are central to our understanding of justice. He argues that there is a set of principles that govern cases of risk and responsibility attribution. For Ripstein, the legal answer to 'Whose bad luck was it?' when something goes wrong divides risks according to equality; in turn, reasonableness gives expression to equality, e.g., the reasonable person interacts with others on terms of equality. In this way Ripstein reconciles equality and responsibility: those outcomes are my responsibility that fall within the scope of the risk that I must answer for, where that scope is set by dividing risks on equal terms.

Traditional debates in political philosophy have seen the notions of individual responsibility and social equality as opposed. Liberals, for example, are described as giving pride of place in their theories to the value of equality. Conservatives in return charge that liberals neglect to pay sufficient attention to the role of individual responsibility in determining who deserves to get what. Conservative critics of Rawls, for example, argue that he has no principled way to sort out those who make costly choices from those who are disadvantaged through no fault of their own. Conservatives therefore think the question of allocating responsibility takes precedence over equality. This way of understanding these values is mistaken, according to Ripstein. For

him, equality and responsibility need to be understood together. He writes: 'A society of equals — a just society, if you like — is also a society that supposes people are responsible for their choices' (1). Both equality and responsibility, he argues, need to be understood 'in light of the idea of reciprocity' (21). 'The root idea, fundamental to both fair terms of interaction and the idea of responsibility, is one of reciprocity, the idea that one person may not unilaterally set the terms of his interactions with others' (2).

In addition to uniting the ideals of equality and responsibility, Ripstein also sets out to bring together three different areas of the law, which are often treated separately: distributive justice, criminal law, and tort law. Chapters 2 through 4 deal primarily with tort law. Chapters 5 through 7 deal with the criminal law. Chapter 8 is an interesting response to left-wing critics of responsibility. Chapter 9's topic is reciprocity and responsibility in distributive justice. Ripstein recognizes that the reader is likely to find the distributive justice material repetitive. This is because he is setting out to show that different areas of the law merit parallel treatment. Given the thesis, some repetition is inevitable.

Ripstein's is a grand project in the manner of Rawls' *A Theory of Justice*. However, the comparison between the projects of Rawls and Ripstein doesn't end on the subject of scope. They also share a commitment to the role of the reasonable in moral and political philosophy. In law reasonableness standards set the limit of acceptable behavior (11). Reasonableness plays a role in tort law in terms of standards of care. In the criminal law, what's protected are reasonable terms of co-operation. Ripstein writes: 'Crime consists in the pursuit of private rationality in the face of the rights of others, of the wrongdoer's substitution of his private rationality for public standards of reasonableness' (10). As with T.M. Scanlon's *What We Owe to Each Other* (Harvard University Press 1998), the idea of reasonableness is at the heart of Ripstein's work. And again, as with the work of Rawls and Scanlon, readers will either find this is to be an immensely powerful justificatory tool or they'll complain it's the argumentative void in the theory.

What makes room for Ripstein's political morality approach to matters of responsibility is the rejection of metaphysical conceptions of responsibility. Metaphysical conceptions of responsibility sever questions of responsibility from questions of what people owe each other (17). According to the metaphysical accounts, questions about whether a person is responsible for some act are prior to questions about the moral status of that act. Ripstein dubs these general views views of responsibility the voluntarist and the causalist account. The causalist account focuses on whether a person A caused some event *x* to happen. The voluntarist cares less about causation and more about what *x* intended to happen. I can't here detail Ripstein's reasons for rejecting these metaphysical theories of responsibility. For Ripstein, the allocation of risk isn't to be answered in the metaphysics of action. Instead, understanding risk and its allocation is central to substantive political morality (45). Assigning risk is part of a general theory of distributive justice, on Ripstein's account.



How are we to assess Ripstein's thesis? Is there a vulnerable thread in this finely woven set of arguments? I found the whole project very engaging but I realized at the end that I balked at giving up on the significance of some of the metaphysics of action that gird traditional accounts of responsibility. One route would be to retrench and try to defend the substantive metaphysical conceptions of responsibility which Ripstein rejects as failing on their own terms. One could try to defend, against Ripstein's criticisms, the causalist or voluntarist conception of responsibility. Whether Ripstein is too hasty in his rejection of these views will no doubt be the focus of one kind of critical response to Ripstein's thesis. But another possibility is to agree with Ripstein that the question of luck as posed in all three contexts deserves a symmetrical treatment but to disagree with Ripstein's Kantian take on what that treatment ought to be. For example, one might argue that what we should aim for is the most efficient allocation of risk as do advocates of the law and economics approach to these issues. Other critics may focus their attention of the role of reason or on Ripstein's understanding of reciprocity.

There is much to admire in Ripstein's work. The writing is clear and engaging. The philosophical analysis is first-rate. But I have to say what impresses me most is neither of these things. Rather, I admired Ripstein's ability to see the big picture, to connect arguments from political philosophy with issues in tort law and to fill in the lines between moral philosophy and the criminal law. This is an exciting book — a book that should be of general interest to anyone working in legal, moral, and political philosophy.

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**Robert I. Rotberg and  
Dennis Thompson, eds.**

*Truth v. Justice:*

*The Morality of Truth Commissions.*

Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press

2000. Pp. 309.

US\$55.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-691-05071);

US\$18.95 (paper: ISBN 0-691-05072).

This interdisciplinary anthology deals with ethical and political issues concerning the use of truth commissions by transitional societies struggling to come to terms with the past. Most papers were initially developed for a May, 1998 conference held at Somerset West, South Africa, under the joint auspices of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the World Peace Foundation.

South Africa's TRC stands out as the largest, most public, and most ambitious of the some twenty truth commissions that have been held in transitional states. Established by an act of Parliament, it received statements from 20,000 victims of severe human rights violations, heard testimony from 7000 of these, and received 7000 applications for amnesty. The TRC also held sector hearings about how business, law, medicine, the churches, and the media functioned under apartheid. Victim and sector hearings were unique in their public character, being well attended and widely covered by media. The TRC was also unique in its explicit mandate to work toward reconciliation and under the highly credible moral leadership of Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

Material in the TRC transcripts and its five-volume final report poses deep conceptual, ethical, political, and psychological questions. Decades of tragedy have left a rich vein of themes that should be taken very seriously. Among those of special interest to philosophers are the nature of individual and 'national' reconciliation and the connections between them; forgiveness and its bearing, if any, on political processes of transitional societies; the nature and forms of acknowledgement; due process in law; the compatibility, if any, of amnesty for offenders with the establishment of justice; and the relation between retributively understood penal justice and restorative justice.

In this book, background information about the TRC may be found in excellent descriptive articles by Alex Boraine (Deputy Chairperson of the TRC) and Dumisa Ntsebeza (a South African human rights lawyer who headed its Investigative Unit). Two U.S. scholars, Elizabeth Kiss and Martha Minow, also offer reflective appreciations. Charles Villa-Villencio and Wilhelm Verwoerd, who participated in writing the final report, describe some of the challenges faced when trying to offer a fair account, while at the same time contributing to the ever-elusive but legally mandated goal of 'national reconciliation' and remaining loyal to vast amounts of data. Writing the report was 'an anxiety-filled exercise,' rather like 'walking a tightrope in a very bad storm.'

Rajeev Bhargava of Nehru University in New Delhi understands truth commissions as helping societies to become minimally decent in the wake of evil, devices used in the wake of widespread violence and barbarism, directed toward establishing basic procedural justice. By conducting a fair process that provides for victims to tell their stories and be publicly acknowledged, a truth commission can help to restore trust and enable previously marginalized and exploited people to reclaim their dignity and self-esteem. Bhargava alludes to resistance to acknowledgement by perpetrators — although, in my estimation, he downplays its significance.

Andre Du Toit, a professor of politics at the University of Cape Town, reminds readers of the moral, historical, and political complexity of truth commissions. He warns against posing ethical questions that misunderstand the truth commission context by too closely assimilating it to that of inquiries and courts in established democracies. A truth commission is a way of dealing with the past so as to clear the path for a new beginning. Like Bhargava, Du



Toit regards acknowledgement, through the telling and hearing of victims' stories, as fundamental in the restoring of human and civic dignity. He suggests that justice be construed as admitting of a threefold division: justice as recognition, criminal justice, and social justice. The TRC was devoted to the former, he says, and this was an appropriate orientation. No one, least of all victimized individuals and groups, can take for granted that the formerly oppressed can readily recover respect in the changed society. The 'truth' of the TRC lies fundamentally in public acknowledgement. Those who focus their moral analysis on the amnesty issue (how can it be *just* to allow known perpetrators to go *unpunished*?) misunderstand the politics, pragmatics, and ethics of the TRC and are addressing the wrong question.

The TRC provided for selective, not blanket, amnesty; this means immunity from criminal and civil prosecution offered on a case-by-case basis to those who disclosed all relevant information about acts of severe human rights violation and acted with political motives, not personal gain. Ronald Slye takes up the amnesty issue. Slye is an American law professor who spent some years in South Africa and was a consultant on international legal issues to the TRC. He compares the truth commission process with the (apparent) alternative of legal trials, submitting that the quantity, and probably also the quality, of the information elicited from the amnesty hearings was substantially greater than that which would have emerged from criminal trials (177). Slye raises some questions about the impact of the TRC on reconciliation, but stops short of defining what reconciliation would mean in a national context.

Because it is impossible to do justice to such a substantial volume in a short review, I have had to be selective in my comments. Writers not mentioned are the editors, Amy Gutmann, David Crocker, Lisa Kois, Kent Greenawalt, Charles Maier, and Sanford Levinson; all offer substantial essays with much food for thought.

This book has its flaws. There is considerable repetition of background information about truth commissions in general and the TRC in particular. There are occasional silly remarks, as when it is said that forgiveness cancels wrongdoing. And I would have liked to see a deeper exploration of such fundamental and philosophically tricky concepts as 'reconciliation', and 'acknowledgement'. But I can heartily recommend this volume, which has much to offer to anyone interested in the ethics and politics of transitional societies, and South Africa in particular.

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**Michael Ruse**

*Can a Darwinian Be a Christian?*

*The Relationship Between Science and Religion.*

New York: Cambridge University Press 2001.

Pp. xii + 242.

US\$24.95. ISBN 0-521-63144-0.

Ruse reports that he had a lot of fun on this project; it shows. The book is thoughtful, engaging and very well written. Although the elliptical references and abbreviated arguments necessary in a short book covering so much ground make it true that only people already well versed in the debate (and therefore not in need of such a book) will understand everything without further reading, I recommend it to philosophers of science, philosophers of religion, biologists and anyone interested in the relation between science and religion. It would make a good text for a seminar course (supplemented with additional readings, perhaps taken from Ruse's extensive bibliography).

Ruse's answer to the question of the title is 'yes'. Now, in one sense it is entirely obvious that a Darwinian *can* be a Christian, in the same way that an astronomer can be an astrologer: humans have a marvellous capacity for ignoring or failing to see inconsistencies amongst their beliefs. Moreover, many Darwinians — including, for example, Baden Powell — *have* been Christians. Many others, however — Thomas Henry Huxley, for example — have held that Darwinism is antithetical to Christian belief. The question that Ruse attempts to answer, then, is *how* someone who takes it as given that Darwinism is correct can *consistently* be a Christian.

Given Ruse's prominence as a defender of Darwinism against Creationist fundamentalism, readers might expect to find some discussion of that debate. There is almost none, however, for Ruse's focus is simply to show that there is nothing in Darwinism or Christianity that makes the two necessarily incompatible, if one is willing to admit certain modifications. Of course, Darwinism *is* incompatible with literal readings of Genesis. But historically speaking almost all Christian sects have admitted that although the Bible is 'the Word of God' it must nevertheless sometimes be understood to be metaphorical. Ruse shows what sorts of positions a Christian must take on a series of key issues in order not to be in conflict with Darwinism.

After an excellent brief introduction to the fundamentals of Darwinism and the basic tenets of Christianity, Ruse examines a series of topics that have been seen as loci of tension between Christianity and Darwinism. Each of the following gets its own short chapter: the origin of life, the origin of humans, naturalism, design arguments, the problem of evil, and the possibility of extraterrestrial life. In each case Ruse's strategy is to outline the supposed incompatibility and to show that this conflict is illusory or eliminable — that is, that some reasonable and historically respectable version of Christianity is fully compatible with Darwinism. A recurring theme is that what at first appears to be a problem between Christianity and Darwinism on analysis turns out to really be a problem internal to Christian



theology, and therefore has no bearing on Ruse's question. The final four chapters sketch a sociobiological account of ethics that Ruse claims is fully in agreement with the Christian view of human nature. Ruse's attempt to incorporate into an evolutionary framework the ideas of freedom and original sin, which are required in order for a Christ to be necessary in the first place, demands *such* a metaphorical reading of the Genesis myths (in evolutionary theory there just cannot be a single first pair of humans, and so the origin and transmission of original sin becomes quite problematic) that many will not recognize the resulting view as Christian. Ruse is at least staking out a position here, although much more must be done in order to make it plausible.

Ruse's approach is slightly unsatisfying in that he leaves the impression that one can or should choose from among the many possible versions of Darwinism and Christianity purely on the basis of mutual compatibility. This is an extrinsic principle of choice; most people, I suspect, will want some intrinsic reason for preferring one version of Darwinism over its competitors, and likewise for Christianity. (A subsequent comparison of the winners will then determine whether they are compatible, and will force some sort of compromise if they are not.) In Ruse's defence, he clearly delimits his task in this book — which is not to assess the *reasonableness* of Darwinism or of Christianity, or of being a Darwinian Christian, but merely to show that it is *consistent* to be one — and he sticks to his task religiously, as it were. Readers will sometimes wish, though, that Ruse had permitted himself an occasional digression to more fundamental topics. The truly important issue, after all, is not whether it is possible to be a Darwinian Christian, but whether that is the *best* or even a *good* position, all things considered. Mutual compatibility is no argument for mutual acceptability; Darwinism is also consistent with astrology. This criticism aside, the project is a success. Ruse shows where the issues really are, offers creative solutions where he can, and admits when he cannot.

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**Richard Schacht, ed.**

*Nietzsche's Postmoralism: Essays on  
Nietzsche's Prelude to Philosophy's Future.*

New York: Cambridge University Press 2001.

Pp. xiv + 264.

US\$54.95. ISBN 0-521-64025-7.

A collection of nine articles, written by prominent Nietzsche interpreters, is a call for yet another rebirth of Nietzsche. Those who read him through the dominant interpretations of the twentieth century definitely will be surprised: here Nietzsche no longer emerges as the last metaphysician, the humanist existentialist, or a deconstructive thinker. Thus the collection is an effective reassessment of his contributions to philosophy. But what is more important, the collection does not carry only local significance and therefore is not just of interest of Nietzsche scholars. However, that does not mean that major wars in the contemporary philosophical arena merely echo in local battles of Nietzsche studies. On the contrary, the collection addresses Nietzsche's contribution to contemporary philosophical issues. Such is the major aim of *Nietzsche's Postmoralism*: to show Nietzsche as a provocatively *reconstructive* thinker. As far as contemporary Continental thought is accounted for through the tension between the deconstructive and reconstructive trends, *Nietzsche's Postmoralism* is both a landscape to current Nietzsche studies and a contribution to the debates in philosophy of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Almost every author in this collection reminds us that we oversimplify Nietzsche's writings sometimes up to the degree of misrepresenting his position if we claim that the traditional notions he has attacked lose all their possible meaning in his writings. Nietzsche's critique of traditional issues of philosophy is not aimed at getting rid of them altogether but at their (re-)interpretation and (re-)valuation. Nietzsche does not spell the death of philosophy but 'tries to reorient philosophical thinking about the way we understand ourselves.' Nietzsche has called himself an immoralist, but by doing so he contributed to his own future misinterpretations. Even though a closer look at his writings shows that he never denied moral thought as such, that he was attacking a *certain type* of morality, quite often Nietzsche has been misunderstood as if he were opposed to any possible kind of moral thought. Nearly each article in the present volume, while dealing with different themes, shows why such an oversimplifying approach (*reductio ad Californiam*, as Schacht has it) does not do justice to Nietzsche. Hence, not *Nietzsche's Immoralism*, but *Nietzsche's Postmoralism*.

The first three articles in the collection attempt to highlight the reconstructive character of Nietzsche's thought while asking such questions as: what does our experience amount to (I. Soll); what is the relationship between the critique of substance and the 'doctrine' of the will to power (R. Bittner); does Nietzschean *Übermensch* signify the death or the rebirth of the subject



(A.D. Schrift)? The rest of the articles take up the issue of postmoral Nietzsche directly.

R. Bittner deals with the issue of reconciling Nietzsche's denial of substance with his doctrine of the will to power. The issue persists, Bittner argues, because Nietzsche makes metaphysical claims, though in a negative way. The doctrine of the will to power cannot be accounted for in a serious way if, as Nietzsche tells us, 'the "doer" is merely a fiction added to the deed' (GM I:13). Only in the world of agents can power talk be meaningful. If this problem has been usually dealt with by renouncing the denial of substance and by keeping the doctrine of the will to power, Bittner offers an opposite strategy, which leads him to show essentially traditional myths still present within Nietzsche's writings (first and foremost, the myth of creativity). Hence, we witness that de(con)structive Nietzsche merely leaves us hanging in suspense.

All other contributions attempt to shed light not on Nietzsche's dependence upon traditional issues in philosophy but on his attempt to offer a reconsideration of them. I. Soll's article is directed at Nietzsche's departure from modern philosophy. Paying central attention to Nietzsche's early writings, Soll shows Nietzsche dealing with the traditional distinction between the experienced world and the real world in BT and how this particular problematic loses its meaning in TL and later writings. However, even if Nietzschean problematics bears close affinity to that of Kant and Schopenhauer, the essentially modern tension between the real and the distorted worlds is not analyzed by him in an epistemic context (hence one would be wrong to claim that here we are dealing with a modern Nietzsche). Furthermore, the later claim that the World-in-Itself is incoherent, that the 'True World' is nothing but a fable, does not indicate Nietzsche's denial of the distortion thesis (as it has been quite often claimed in Nietzsche Studies). Even though Nietzsche does not appeal to reality beyond experience, even though he does not offer a transcendent metaphysical hypothesis, the distortion thesis is still present in his later writings. Nietzsche does not offer a destruction of the distortion thesis, but its reinterpretation.

In a similar reconstructive strategy, A. Schrift offers a post-deconstructive glance at what Nietzsche has to add to contemporary debate about the rebirth of the subject, which however is nothing else but yet another rebirth of Nietzsche himself. 'Much of what has emerged in the recent rethinking on the subject', Schrift tells us, 'is prefigured in explicit ways within Nietzsche's texts' (53). *Übermensch* does not signify the death of the subject but its rebirth. We do not do justice to Nietzsche by interpreting *Übermensch* as a certain ideal model of human perfection. We are to follow a different path — see it as a 'representation of a particular attitude toward life.'

A similar reconstructive strategy of Soll's and Schrift's is employed by the remaining contributors as well. A. White offers a reconsideration of 'the youngest virtue' — *Redlichkeit* — and shows why we err in translating it as honesty. R. Pippin draws attention to the exceptional importance of love within Nietzsche's texts and shows Nietzsche's attempt to offer an alterna-

tive idea of love to that of traditional (first and foremost Platonic) interpretations. M. Clark's article is directed at the affinities between Nietzsche and B. Williams; she shows how these two thinkers attempt to step beyond classical normative thinking though by no means leaving 'anachronistic' issues behind. R. Solomon offers a list of what might be considered to be Nietzsche's virtues. R. Schacht attempts to show the shift in Nietzsche's general approach to normativity. Finally J. Conant takes up the issue of 'perfectionism' in Nietzsche's ethical thought and challenges the 'elitist' reading of Nietzsche paying central attention to SE.

Even though the collection marks the centenary of Nietzsche's death, to those who have heard Nietzsche speak through the writings of his most popular interpreters, the collection will signify yet another rebirth of Nietzsche. No longer is Nietzsche a proto-Nazi (Russell), the last metaphysician (Heidegger), or the humanist existentialist (Kaufmann), but first and foremost a philosopher to whom we turn while dealing with the current issues in Continental thought. And definitely, those who see contemporary continental philosophy as a struggle between the deconstructive and reconstructive trends, will see the collection as a radical reevaluation of Nietzsche and as a contribution to the major styles of current thought. What would Nietzsche say about contemporary philosophy? Where would Nietzsche stand in contemporary philosophy? How does contemporary philosophy relate to Nietzsche's philosophy of the future? What exactly does 'immoral' philosophy amount to? Those who are interested in these and similar questions will definitely find the collection as a provocative reconsideration of Nietzsche's texts.

**Saulius Geniusas**

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**Christine Sistare, Larry May, and  
Leslie Francis, eds.**

*Groups and Group Rights.*

Lawrence: University Press of Kansas 2001.

Pp. ix + 307.

US\$40.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-7006-1041-3);

US\$17.95 (paper: ISBN 0-7006-1042-1).

Ever since Michael Sandel's influential criticisms of Rawlsian liberalism, the question of groups and their rights has been at the centre of political philosophy. Communitarians have argued that the liberal state is not, as it claims to be, truly neutral between rival conceptions of the good. Rather than being neutral between all such conceptions, it promotes its own vision of the



good life, a life of autonomous self-rule. Liberals have energetically denied this claim, arguing that liberalism allows all rival groups the opportunity to pursue their own goals and vision, free from state interference. This debate, with figures such as Rawls, Dworkin and Barry ranged on one side, against Taylor, MacIntyre and Walzer on the other, has dominated recent political philosophy and provoked echoes far beyond it.

This collection of articles is the latest report from the front. To the credit of the editors and contributors, it does not simply rehash the communitarianism/liberalism debate, or rehearse the arguments for and against the social construction of the self. Instead, it offers a new set of perspectives on these topics.

The book is divided into three sections. The first focuses on foundational issues in this debate. Should social groups be analyzed as aggregates of individuals, or are some of them, at least, entities with an existence independent of their members? What justifications might there be for conferring rights upon them? Carl Wellman's introduction to this section explores both sets of issues. It is, it must be said, a little too ambitious for a volume of this kind. It attempts to cover most of the major theories of rights currently competing for our allegiance, and sketch the manner in which groups might be conceptualized as possible rights holders on each. This is a worthwhile project, but it deserves much more space than Wellman can give it here.

Carol Gould's contribution focuses on the ontology of social groups. It is, Gould argues, false to think that we have to choose between a reductive individualism and the metaphysically suspect idea that groups have a reality independent of the individuals who constitute them. Instead a group can be characterized as an entity composed of rights holders, yet the rights themselves could be justified with reference to the moral rights of the individuals who constitute them. Ann Cudd also seeks a midway between reductive and organicist notions of groups, finding it in the notion of shared, non-voluntary, social constraints. This approach seems to lend itself more easily to policies aimed at preventing group-based harms than to the affirmation of group rights, but that may be all to the good.

George Rainholt's contribution is most valuable for its careful analysis of the debate between individualists and collectivists. As he shows, some of the opposition to individualism stems from a misunderstanding of the individualist position. Rainholt thus makes the position more plausible than it often appears to be, before defending it from recent collectivist criticisms. Thomas Simon argues that we can avoid the controversies associated with talk of rights by instead attending to group harms. So doing would allow us to advance the political debate without entering into the vexed question of the ontology of social groups.

Whereas Part One of the collection focuses on foundational questions in group rights, Parts Two and Three of the collection are more concerned with the political implications of the debate. Part Two focuses on the relations between minority groups and democracy. Here the debate centres around ways in which the 'tyranny of the majority' can be avoided. Most of the

contributors are agreed that justice to social groups requires more than neutrality toward them. Instead, it requires respecting them as dialogue partners. But just what does such respect entail? Here the authors differ, with suggestions ranging from merely respecting their basic rights and liberties, to ensuring that their preferences are not persistently overridden by those of the majority.

The third section of the book focuses on yet more specific issues: the rightful place of indigenous groups within liberal democracy, the conflict between the kind of education which liberals commonly argue is required for autonomy and the seemingly legitimate desire of parents to bring their children up in their faith, the permissibility and desirability of affirmative action. This section presents us with the most diverse sets of views, ranging from Edmund Abegg's libertarian defense of group land rights to Rebecca Tsosie's argument that indigenous groups should be allowed to govern their own affairs, even when their decisions place internal restrictions on their numbers.

This is a useful set of essays, which advances the debate over the rights of groups within liberalism and between liberals, conservatives and communitarians. It suffers, however, from a failure ever adequately to address a central question concerning groups and their rights. Kymlicka, whose work provides a focus for many of the essays here, has distinguished usefully between external protections — protections of a minority group against the wider society — and internal restrictions, placed by the group on its members. The first are legitimate from a liberal viewpoint, Kymlicka argues, but the second are not. Yet this position does not seem adequate to satisfy the apparently legitimate demands of religious and ethnic minorities. They seek not merely the freedom to practice their culture and religion, but also the ability to perpetuate themselves — for example, by limiting their children's knowledge of alternative ways of life until they are mature enough to be able to make a truly informed decision as to the good life. This demand seems to run afoul of Kymlicka's strictures against internal restrictions, as do other measures which sometimes seem required to ensure group survival. Biting the bullet here, as for example Rebecca Tsosie does, potentially carries with it high costs: allowing groups to coerce their members, for example. Nowhere in this collection is the tension between these two strategies and the costs associated with adopting either of them, adequately tackled. Instead, contributors briefly argue one side or the other of the debate, without addressing the concerns of the other essays. If the contributors had been encouraged to exchange their articles and address themselves to each others' work, this limitation might have been avoided. Nevertheless, this is a collection from which teachers and advanced students of political philosophy will greatly benefit.

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**Fred Wilson**

*The Logic and Methodology of  
Science and Pseudoscience.*

Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press 2000.

Pp. xv + 364.

Cdn\$69.95. ISBN 1-55130-175-X.

What is so wrong about believing that our personalities and destinies are controlled by the positions of the stars and planets in the sky? What — if anything — is wrong with the idea that all the animals and plants alive now and in the past are the products of deliberate intelligent design and creation? Are the theories and practices of alternative medicine just 'magical hocus pocus', unworthy of acceptance by any sensible person, as some Canadian doctors say? Is it completely irrational for a scientist to spend a career — and for the rest of us to spend money — for scientific research on searching for contact with an extra-terrestrial intelligence?

A simple answer to all these questions is that believing in these marginal or pseudoscientific theories or ideas conflicts with easily obtainable and pretty straightforward facts. For example, astrology predicts that people born under the same sign should have a much higher chance of having the same character traits and important events in their lives than people born under different signs. But they don't have a higher chance of this; they have the same chance. So the theory that our fates are in the stars just doesn't fit the evidence available. The intelligent design or creation science hypothesis predicts that animals and plants alive now and in the past should be perfectly or optimally designed and created. But the biological facts say that they are not. The human eye, for example, could have been much better designed than it is. So it could hardly have been the product of the kind of deliberate and intelligent design or creation the theory says it is. As for the last example, according to many scientists biological and astronomical data are simply incompatible with the hypothesis that a technologically advanced extra-terrestrial intelligence exists somewhere near enough to Earth for us to be in contact with it. This makes it suicidal for a scientist to spend a career searching for a contact and silly for the rest of us to support this research.

Lots of philosophers of science are not satisfied with this simple answer. Famously, Karl Popper said in *Conjectures and Refutations* (1963) that the problem with astrology and other pseudoscientific theories is not so much that their predictions about the facts have been tested and proved false but that they are unfalsifiable or irrefutable or untestable by data. For instance, in an experiment done in France some years ago, many people with different personalities and lives were asked whether a particular typically-worded astrological horoscope correctly described them. Almost everyone said that it did, suggesting that horoscopes are never refuted by the facts because they are so vague or ambiguous that they will agree with them no matter what they are. Other philosophers and scientists have said the same thing about intelligent design or creation science. Believers deny that anything is imper-

fectly designed or created. Of course there are apparent imperfections like those in the human eye; but these are not really actual design flaws. In the bigger picture, one we are unable to see, of how all living things fit together, these apparent imperfections disappear. It has also been said that the same problem occurs with Freudian psychoanalytic theory and with homeopathic and other alternative medical theories. Since we should not accept theories about how the world is put together whose predictions are unfalsifiable or irrefutable or untestable in this way, Popper said, we should not believe in astrology or any of these other pseudoscientific hypotheses or theories.

A little more recently, (in 'Why astrology is a pseudoscience' [PSA 1978]), Canadian philosopher Paul Thagard said that the reason we should not believe in astrology is not that it has been proved false by disagreement with the facts or that it is unfalsifiable or untestable by data. The difficulty is that astrology is unprogressive. Despite all of the easily available data conflicting with its predictions, for instance, those who believe that our personalities and fates are governed by the stars have made no attempts to change or correct the theory to take these incompatible facts into account. Astrology is essentially the same theory as it was when it was codified by Ptolemy, almost 2000 years ago. Progressive theories make these changes and only they are worthy of acceptance. So, we should not believe that astrology tells us the truth about how any part of the world works. While Thagard did not say anything explicitly about intelligent design theory or about the hypothesis that a technologically advanced extra-terrestrial intelligence exists somewhere nearby or about alternative medical theories and practices, he did say that the problem with astrology also infects other fringe or pseudoscientific theories. For instance, despite the discoveries of biologists about how imperfectly designed parts of our bodies and those of other animals and plants are, creation science theory is today substantially the same intelligent design theory as the one Paley proposed 200 years ago in *Natural Theology*. Since creation science is as unprogressive as astrology, we should not accept it.

Most recently, University of Toronto philosopher Fred Wilson has continued this discussion in the volume under review here. He says astrology is proved false by incompatible evidence. He also notes that the untestability or irrefutability of some of its predictions has not lead believers to give up the theory. He says that astrology doesn't deal with incompatible evidence in a progressive manner. According to Wilson, yet another problem with astrology is that believers do not use any valid methods of reasoning to justify their acceptance of the theory. They use, for example, reasoning from tradition (Premise: Astrology has been believed in for many centuries. Conclusion: Astrology is true), invalid fantasy or wishful thinking (Premise: It would be nice if our fates could be predicted from the positions of the stars and planets in the sky. Conclusion: Our fates can be predicted this way), and illegitimate reasoning from resemblance (Premise: A person born under the sign of the ox must have oxlike character traits. Conclusion: Since she was born under the sign of the ox, she must be stubborn, just like oxen). The same or similar kinds of problems occur with homeopathic and other alternative medical



theories. Homeopathic medical theory, for example, disagrees with facts about the inability of very, very dilute solutions of chemicals to have any effects different from the solvents alone. Supporters of these theories only or typically use invalid reasoning from tradition (Premise: Alternative medical treatments have been used for centuries in non-Western countries. Conclusion: Alternative medical theories are true), or invalid fantasy or wishful thinking (Premise: It would be convenient if our illnesses could be treated with very, very dilute solutions of chemicals which caused symptoms similar to the illness in healthy people. Conclusion: Homeopathic medical theory is correct), and so on to justify their acceptance of the theories. And, although Wilson does not say anything about the hypothesis that a technologically advanced extra-terrestrial intelligence exists somewhere close enough for contact, others have certainly said that searchers and their supporters indulge in invalid wishful or fantasy reasoning (Premise: It would be nice if there were a benevolent highly advanced extra-terrestrial intelligence somewhere close enough for contact. Conclusion: Such an intelligence exists and wants to make contact with us).

Wilson's contribution is exhaustive in its catalog of problems with astrology, intelligent design and creation theory, some of the theories which accompany alternative medical practices, and many other examples of marginal or pseudoscientific theories. Anyone who wants a detailed summary of these problems could find no better place to look. The volume might therefore serve as a good reference source for undergraduates in courses in scientific reasoning or critical thinking.

But does this contribution advance our understanding of why it is wrong to believe in astrology or intelligent creation science theory or alternative medical theories or the idea that a technologically advanced extra-terrestrial intelligence is out there somewhere but close enough for contact to occur or other fringe or pseudoscientific theories? I don't think so. The failure of predictions from these marginal theories to agree with observable facts or data is not news; nor, of course, is it novel to claim that there are no predictions from these theories that would ever lead believers to give up the theory because all the predictions are unfalsifiable; nor, again, is it original to say that the theories don't deal in a progressive manner with incompatibilities with the data. It is perhaps news that believers in astrology or intelligent creation science theory or alternative medical theories or other marginal theories indulge in fallacious forms of reasoning to support their favored ideas. But this, of course, cannot tell us that the theories supported this way or conclusions of the fallacious reasoning are false or wrong to believe. Plenty of true ideas, ones worthy of our acceptance, have supporters who can provide nothing but unsound reasoning to justify their beliefs.

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**Elizabeth Rose Wingrove**

*Rousseau's Republican Romance.*

Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press  
2000.

US\$60.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-691-00996-1);

US\$19.95 (paper: ISBN 0-691-00997-X).

Rousseau writes in his *Letter to d'Alembert* that 'in a republic, men are needed'. As Elizabeth Wingrove shows, his political theory is also full of 'the blushing, adorned, voluptuous, malformed, and dismembered bodies of women' (239). Her close reading of the texts produces a different Rousseau from the familiar theorist of participatory democracy, economic equality, and the encounter with the individual who, when asked which was his country, replied that he was one of the rich. Wingrove builds on previous scholarship in political theory, but her interpretive approach draws on the techniques of literary criticism, focusing on narrative structure and Rousseau's rhetorical strategies. Reading his texts as a romance enables her to uncover very unsettling aspects of his writings.

The book is not always easy reading, although there are some amusing passages and well-turned phrases; it sometimes appears like a translation; an 'act of conventionality', 'spectacularity', or 'performativity', for instance. However, Wingrove provides ample food for thought, many insights, and a very illuminating and rather dark reading of Rousseau. She offers fascinating discussions of such topics as the role of imagination and reading in Rousseau's writing, his conception of *sensibilité*, and use of familial and bodily imagery.

Wingrove's argument is about consent. She does not ask the typical questions in political theory of what counts as consent or how it can be said to be given; rather, she is concerned with the logic and rhetoric that give meaning to consent, or, more specifically, 'consensual nonconsensuality'. Individuals consent to their own domination in Rousseau's writings. Consensual nonconsensuality is readily apparent in romantic sexual relations between men and women, but, Wingrove argues, sexual desires and relations are mutually constituted with political desires and relations. Coercion and consent require each other; sovereign and sexual authority have the same logic. Masculine and feminine bodies, heterosexual passion, romantic love, and consensual nonconsensuality, are bound up with, and have a structural correspondence with, the constitution and maintenance of a well-ordered republic.

Wingrove does not read the state of nature as a prior condition that tells us from whence we came; instead, it reveals how we got here. It could be argued that this is true of all the stories of states of nature. Theorists construct the natural state to provide what is required to reach their own political conclusions/assumptions. Wingrove argues that the emergence of self-conscious individuals and social life presupposes republican political institutions. The development of language is also the appearance of a people and nation.



Humans become individuated, conscious of themselves as masculine and feminine, and aware of others as their *semblables*, with whom they can identify and hence pity in their suffering. Their heterosexuality takes a republican form in which the love of country and the intoxication of romantic love are tied together. Their identity as men and women, as citizens, and their identification with the polity, is imaginative, emotional, and expressed through their bodies; it is fused with 'sublime ardor' and 'servile desire'.

Sexual desire, Wingrove shows, lies at the heart of Rousseau's political texts, not just his novels or confessions. The story of Emile and Sophie exemplifies the proper order of the sexes required for political stability. Wingrove argues that in sexual relations Rousseau's 'order of attack and defense' is preserved, but also transgressed; both sexes dominate and submit. Emile's desire is ruled by Sophie's careful allocation of her favors. Wives must also be 'imperious mistresses' to maintain marriages. Sophie's desire is ruled by modesty and the need to make it appear that she submits because Emile is the stronger. She cannot (as does Julie) speak of her desire or directly reveal her will — Sophie cannot say yes. Instead bodies speak, and consent must be deciphered and read from women's eyes. Republican consent to be ruled appears to say no.

Wingrove writes that, for Rousseau, 'feeling it makes it real, and it must be seen to be believed' (164). Thus Rousseau's citizens display themselves as masculine and feminine at festivals, and participate in a variety of orchestrated *spectacles*. Women are central to these performances, whether in Julie's household at Clarens, at balls, or the *cercles*. The displays reach into the hearts of individuals and reinforce sexual and republican identities.

Wingrove devotes attention to the unfamiliar *Le Lévitte d'Ephraïm*, a story based on the final three chapters of *Judges*. The tale includes the sacrifice of the Levite's lover, who is handed over to the Benjamites so that he can escape homosexual ravishment. The Benjamites are decimated, and to repopulate the clan the abducted maidens of the town of Shiloh agree to give themselves up. They follow Axa, who looking into her father's eyes understands her duty, and silently consents to her fate by, Rousseau states, falling 'half-dead' into a Benjamite's arms. Rousseau declared that this was his 'most cherished' work.

Wingrove argues that, in the *Lévitte* and throughout Rousseau's work, women have agency and autonomy. But agency as a human capacity and autonomy, in the political sense of the self-government required for consent, are not the same. Wingrove is too impressed by the mistaken view that to emphasize men's power is to deny women's agency. Consider the paradox of slavery. Slaves are mere property, but their masters have to acknowledge their humanity, i.e., human agency. Autonomy is hardly compatible with consensual nonconsensuality. Mary Wollstonecraft, Rousseau's critic, who Wingrove mentions only in passing, understood the political importance of romantic love in undercutting women's autonomy. Thus she argues for a radical transformation of (romantic) love, masculinity, femininity and sexual relations.

Are Rousseau's women citizens? Wingrove writes that Rousseau presents more accounts of citizenship as public gatherings and display than voting, which implies that citizenship encompasses women. Rousseau's women — even 'half dead' — certainly have a central political role, but that is insufficient for citizenship. Men alone assemble and make the laws that structure life in the polity and household. She suggests that men's relationship to the polity follows the logic of desire and submission, but she devotes much less attention to men as citizens than to women's pivotal role. It is not altogether clear how Wingrove relates deliberate self-assumption of obligation (not consent) by men in the assembly to consensual nonconsensuality.

For the most part, men in Rousseau's romances behave to women like gentlemen, allowing themselves only 'decent violence' (184) — but their laws give them a great deal more latitude. Is that why Hobbes pops up at intervals in Wingrove's argument? It does not follow from the fact that the practice of consent requires the laws of a social order that agreement and coercion must be irrevocably confused. Her final words are that modern men and women 'believe in love'. If this means romantic love, then, as she argues, Rousseau still has a great deal to say to us.

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**Mark Wrathall and Jeff Malpas, eds.**

*Essays in Honor of Hubert L. Dreyfus, Vol. I-II*  
(*Heidegger, Authenticity, and Modernity*;  
*Heidegger, Coping, and Cognitive Science*).

Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press 2000.

Pp. xv + 407, and xi + 415.

Vol. 1: \$65.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-262-23207-3);

US\$25.00 (paper: ISBN 0-262-73127-4).

Vol. 2: \$65.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-262-23208-1);

US\$25.00 (paper: ISBN 0-262-73128-2).

Most people know Hubert Dreyfus for his influential work on Heidegger and his criticism of artificial intelligence. Before reading this *Festschrift*, however, I did not think that publishing a couple of moderately significant books over three decades merited a two volume tribute. I am still not fully convinced that a second volume isn't slightly over the top. Yet one cannot read these texts without developing an admiration for both the unity of style and the sheer range of Dreyfus's philosophical contributions over the years. Publications aside, it is his portrait as intellectual, teacher and colleague that is



especially striking. Now past standard retirement age, he still has more energy than a seminar room full of graduate students. From the editors' biographical sketch to the contributors' anecdotes to Dreyfus's own selective responses, we see emerge a Zelig-like figure in post-war Continental philosophy — improbably connected to so many people, appearing in so many different contexts. One cannot help but smile reading Dreyfus's own recollection of his trip to Oxford in 1952 (or was it '54? — a different date is given in the Introduction) when Ryle, by then bored with phenomenology, passes him off to a young Charles Taylor for discussions about Merleau-Ponty and Heidegger.

But to the books themselves! While it is true one cannot judge a *Festschrift* by its cover, one can certainly be puzzled by MIT's rather bizarre selection in this case. On the cover of Volume 1, a smiling Dreyfus sits alone at the driver's seat of an old convertible; on the cover of Volume 2, a glowering Heidegger is inserted in the passenger seat. Given that Volume 2 deals mainly with issues of philosophy of mind and cognitive science before ending with a section on 'applied Heidegger', we can conclude that Heidegger himself, looking uncomfortable, is only really along for the ride. But maybe there is a deeper lesson in all of this. Despite the utter absence of any consideration of Heidegger's politics in these two volumes, perhaps we should conclude that, if only Heidegger had been the sort of person who enjoyed letting the top down and breezing around the Bay area with the technology-hip Dreyfus, then he wouldn't have gotten mixed up with those Nazi thugs in the first place.

The decision to bypass political themes in these volumes, of course, merely reflects Dreyfus's primary interest in Heidegger's earlier work in phenomenology and his later work on technology. The texts from Heidegger's more contentious 'middle period' and his readings of other philosophers (with the exception of Husserl) have never figured prominently in Dreyfus's scholarship, and consequently these sides of Heidegger are not addressed in the *Festschrift* either. Dreyfus takes Heidegger seriously as a philosopher who helps us to resolve real philosophical problems. He is not just a 'recontextualizer', a clever and original reader of the philosophical tradition, as Rorty suggests in his foreword. This means that Dreyfus's Heidegger can enter into contemporary debates with Searle, Davidson, Wittgenstein and Dewey about philosophy of mind and language, or more generally about the right way of being anti-Cartesian, even if that means Heidegger is increasingly exposed to criticism — not merely the subject of reverential exegesis.

There are at least two main consequences of treating Heidegger in this way. One generally positive result of this Dreyfus-led 'mainstreaming' is the growing number of scholars who adopt a more 'Anglo-American' or perhaps less 'Derridean' (I shrink back from the word 'analytic') approach to Heidegger's notoriously difficult texts. This approach is evident in virtually all of the contributions to these volumes, and is certainly characteristic of Dreyfus's philosophical style. Indeed, so many of the papers included here are responses to Dreyfus's own interpretations and frequently arise from quib-

bles over meaning or disagreements over technical issues, and Dreyfus's responses — at least the substantive ones — thus assume the task of clarification or the admission that he needs to think more about a particular issue. Dreyfus can be tough and even testy at times (in his exchanges with Randall Havas and Searle, for example), but one senses that being clear and getting the text right are goals he places well above his own intellectual pride.

The second consequence of treating Heidegger as a problem-solver is that it opens up the possibility of applying Heidegger's insights into various non-philosophical contexts. No doubt, the Heidegger purists will shudder at the very thought of using *Being and Time* to reform business practices, but former Dreyfus graduate student and Chilean finance minister, Fernando Flores (now president of Business Design Associates), mounts an interesting and persuasive case for replacing the business community's unwitting assumption of a Cartesian determination of the self as a desiring, calculating subject with a Heideggerian view of 'beings who cope skillfully with their environment and each other in a coordinated way' (2, 273). These same sorts of considerations enter into Robert Solomon's re-thinking of traditional philosophical approaches to the issue of trust. If we think of trust, for example, game-theoretically as a calculation of expectations or probabilities, we lose sight of how trusting relationships are embedded in social practices that are irreducible to individual psychologies. Once again, Heidegger's ontological description of *Dasein* steers us well clear of these all-too-Cartesian follies.

But excursions into cognitive science and boutique applications aside, there is also serious work done on Heidegger here that makes this *Festschrift* valuable regardless of one's attachments to Dreyfus's own work. Of the two books, Volume 1 will be of more interest to traditional Heidegger scholars, although the first section in Volume 2, 'Coping and Intentionality', is extremely rewarding too, especially for those who have kept up with Searle and Dreyfus bickering about the nature of the 'background' in recent years. Even Volume 1, however, is not without its non-Heideggerian detours. In fact, my favourite article of the collections is Beatrice Han's 'Nietzsche and the "Masters of Truth": The Pre-Socratics and Christ'. Han offers a novel way out of the ongoing debates about Nietzsche's theory of truth, arguing that Nietzsche is neither a closet correspondence theorist nor a muddled pragmatist. Instead, she claims Nietzsche bases truth 'on its link to the living singularity of the author' (1, 167). Therefore, 'a true claim is one that is asserted by someone truthful' (1, 167), which means that truth can never be objectively, impersonally accessed in isolation from ethical considerations. Although Han confesses that she has learned much from Dreyfus, Nietzsche is hardly Dreyfus's territory, and his 'response' basically amounts to a brief nod of appreciation before announcing a course on Foucault he is planning to teach with Judith Butler.

There are other fine papers here too. Far from being a philosophical issue killed off by French deconstruction, authenticity has its own section to lead off Volume 1, wherein another one of the best articles, by Taylor Carmen,



defends Heidegger's account of *inauthenticity* against Dreyfus's charge of incoherence. On Dreyfus's account, Heidegger has both a structural and a motivational account of inauthenticity. From a structural perspective, *Dasein* is continually pulled toward an inauthentic mode of existence, which suggests that inauthenticity is inevitable. Yet from the motivational perspective articulated in Division II of *Being and Time*, the 'unshakable joy' of authenticity, to invoke Heidegger's words, would make any return to the 'dictatorship' of *das Man* unthinkable. Carmen convincingly shows, however, that authentic resoluteness is not a free-standing mode of existence that *Dasein* could continue should it so choose; rather, it is 'a kind of internal resistance to the obfuscating tendencies inherent in the generic drift of discourse' (1, 28). It is thus comparable to jumping up despite the pull of gravitation. We may well get off the ground, but not permanently, for gravity cannot be constantly defied. This accounts for both the continual movement of falling into authenticity, the possibility of authenticity despite this falling, but also the impossibility of remaining authentic as if it could, like dangling in mid air, be a permanent modification of *Dasein*'s existence.

But the big question remains: who is Dreyfus's Heidegger? Why has his interpretation garnered such attention and been so influential in recent years? What is unique here? The short answer is nicely summarized at the beginning of David Stern's article: 'The importance of beginning with practices is a theme that runs through much of Hubert Dreyfus's work on Heidegger, cognitive science and artificial intelligence' (2, 53). Practices make up all those bodily and social skills that simply characterize what we do as human beings in our everyday world. Mark Wrathall further explains that we cannot theorize these practices explicitly; as such, they make up the background of pre-intentional, non-representational ways of coping, which additionally, make our intentional comportment possible in the first place. The background, as Dreyfus himself writes, provides 'the conditions necessary for people to pick out objects, to understand themselves as subjects, and, generally, to make sense of the world and of their lives' (2, 94). Without a background, consequently, the cognitivist model of the mind founders for it cannot make sense of how entities show up for us as already meaningful, already integrated into larger frameworks of meaning. The background thus accounts for how intentional states get their content.

On Dreyfus's reading, Division I of *Being and Time* lays out the structure of the background, which means that already in 1927, Heidegger was providing a thoroughgoing critique of Cartesian and Cartesian-inspired philosophies of mind. Many of the papers, accordingly, take up the task of assessing Heidegger's early phenomenological work in light of more recent rejoinders to the Cartesian project. The real flashpoint for these debates is the previously noted quarrel between Dreyfus and Searle. David Cerbone, Mark Wrathall, and Daniel Chandler are explicit participants in this discussion, and Charles Taylor also weighs in, offering up his own formulation of holism in opposition to less radical versions of antifoundationalism. Searle's contribution begins with a nitpicky critique of Dreyfus's tendency to misrepresent

his position by conflating it with Husserl's. But Searle is not Husserl, and he vigorously distances himself from phenomenology while attempting to demonstrate the absurdity of Dreyfus's own position: 'I believe that Dreyfus's account of skillful coping is inadequate and that the contrast he makes between intentional behavior and skillful coping is wrong, because skillful coping is intentional behavior right down to the ground' (2, 81). In his response, Dreyfus accuses Searle of doing both logical analysis *and* phenomenology. Although Searle claims only to be doing the former, he keeps backsliding, Dreyfus argues, into an inadequate phenomenology that he does not acknowledge and cannot defend. Clearly these are crucial issues that are far from being resolved here, but perhaps if all participants read each other a bit more carefully, or if Searle had read Husserl and Heidegger seriously at all, the dialogue would be more productive. Is this why Heidegger looks so glum?

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*Future Crossings: Literature Between*

*Philosophy and Cultural Studies.*

Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press

2000. Pp. 305.

US\$79.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-8101-1791-6);

US\$29.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8101-1792-4).

This collection of essays originally derived from a Comparative Literature conference entitled 'Literature Between Philosophy and Cultural Studies'. As with many books resulting from conference papers this is very much a 'mixed bag', both in range of subject matter, and in quality. Luckily the mix of quality tends to weigh more in favour of the worthwhile, interesting, and informative rather than the dubious and redundant.

The editors have obviously put a great deal of effort into trying to organise the wide array of interests and theories presented in the papers into a coherent structure with common themes. To this end they have divided the volume into three parts. The first is entitled 'Remembering the Future' and reflects the title of the book very accurately by presenting a highly philosophical essay (Grosz) alongside a more empirical cultural studies essay (Gambrell) and two essays that mix the theoretical and the literary (Kronick and Manners). The second part, 'Deconstruction and Culture: Community, Politics, Ethics' concentrates on the ethical and political implications of the area



between philosophy and literature that the editors identify as 'deconstruction'. The third part is probably the weakest in terms of thematic coherence as it contains two essays concerned with cultural representations of nationalism (Lloyd and Rapaport) and two essays that are primarily exegetical of other theorists (Chaitin and Michel). In their introduction the editors do not try to elide the dangers or difficulties of bringing philosophy and cultural studies together. However rather than trying to arbitrate between theory and cultural studies on the respective accusations of elitism and lack of 'philosophical depth' they find common ground in 'different forms of the critique of aesthetics' (2).

Grosz's opening essay sets out a highly theoretical questioning of the notion of futurity at stake in this whole collection. She uses the philosophical resources of Deleuze's reading of Bergson to produce a reading of novelty or the new which is based on emergence and an openness of and to the future. Grosz describes a radical and convincing ontology of becoming that also takes succour from the 'new sciences' of complexity and evolutionary biology. The following essay by Joseph Kronick is the first of many deconstructive essays in this volume. It is, along with Gasché's essay later in the collection, parasitic on Derrida's prolific re-formulations of deconstruction. While much of its content might be familiar to those already acquainted with Derrida's endlessly deferred deliberations it does serve as a clear exegesis of some of deconstruction's 'canonical' texts. Alice Gambrell's 'Remembering Women's Studies' tackles the question of the 'betweenness' that can be attributed to 'women's studies' as 'the interdisciplinary field of the study of women' (77). Indeed, she undertakes a fascinating historical tour of the very differences at work within academic-feminism itself, preferring to affirm the many 'betweennesses' rather than highlighting factions or divisions. Marilyn Manners then goes on to take an in-depth look at one particular feminist writer — Kathy Acker. Her essay attempts to trace the theoretical underpinning of Acker's writing. Acker is linked with theorists such as Cixous, Irigaray, Brennan, and Kristeva, to name but a few. Acker's work is not only treated as 'literary', but also connected with the popular culture in which she was so obviously steeped — parallels are also drawn with Madonna and Courtney Love.

Part 2 begins with Rodolphe Gasché's reading of Derrida's *The Other Heading*. While this is presented as part of Gasché's own meditations on the concept of Europe, it is really a commentary on Derrida's attempts to transform the idea of Europe into a 'feeling' of Europe (141). This feeling is presented as not only European but also as philosophical through Heidegger's appropriation of the Greek origins of philosophy. The problem of European identity, and identity in general, is seen to be determined through difference. Again the theme of betweenness emerges in order to try and think a Europe that will take on its responsibility to the Other. Derrida's presence between philosophy and literature/philosophy and cultural studies is further reinforced through Joan Brandt's investigations into the political implications of deconstruction. This essay is essential reading for all those concerned

with material political questions. The themes of responsibility, difference/différance, and relation to otherness are set out clearly and are given a concrete historical context by tracing their emergence from the events of May 1968. The history of Derrida's relationship with the *Tel Quel* group points up significant political and theoretical differences (with Kristeva in particular). After an examination of Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy's study of fascism Brandt suggests that Derridean différance has the ethical force to block such 'political acts of exclusion and intolerance'. However, by suggesting that the *Tel Quel* group somehow misunderstood this she comes dangerously close to aligning them with fascism. Dorota Glowacka also takes Nancy's deconstructive project as a much needed intervention in ethics. She considers Nancy's and Levinas's thinking of the gift as paradigmatic of recent ethical concerns. What makes it most interesting in the context of this book is that she also positions this thinking as traversing 'the borders between the philosophical categories of ethics and aesthetics' (169). By relating Nancy's thinking on the offering and Levinas's phenomenology of the Other to Kant's aesthetics of the sublime, Glowacka pushes the limits of the immanence/transcendence dichotomy which in turn disturbs the whole self/other structure leading to a more productive ethical encounter.

Part 3 begins with David Lloyd's reading of James Joyce in an examination of the masculinity at work in constructions of Irish nationalism. This is a more scholarly paper than some others in the collection, refreshing perhaps because of its lack of recourse to deconstruction. However it is sometimes difficult to find justification in the text itself for its assumptions of the 'feminization' of Irish culture. Indeed despite, or perhaps due to, its sophisticated analysis it is in danger of repeating the very stereotypes that it seeks to challenge. Its insistence on 'Irish drinking' appears to be impervious to any irony on Joyce's part. Indeed situating 'Irish drinking' as a form of 'countermodernity' may open Lloyd up to the well deserved ire of Irish drinkers. The question of fascism returns in Gilbert Chaitin's contribution. This essay returns to the debate about the role and responsibility of rationality in and for the Shoah through a reading of Lacan's and Adorno's confrontations with Kant. While it is true that Horkheimer and Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment* was deeply indebted to Freudian psychoanalysis, Chaitin is too eager to prove their closeness, if not identity with Lacan's psychoanalytic reading of fascism. The theme of betweenness in this book is betrayed by the conclusion that 'fascist ideology is the deceptive mask of the sadistic superego' (239). This elides important and productive differences between Lacan and Adorno, to the detriment of a proper understanding of Adorno. Herman Rapaport returns to the themes of both nationalism and German Idealism in an original and inspiring essay that takes the Fichtean notion of 'self-positing' as central to a poetic identity. Indeed the concerns of responsibility to the other on both a personal and national level, and the questions of difference and betweenness are also reworked. Through the examples of how Wordsworth and Hölderlin related to their female companions (Dorothy Wordsworth and Susette Gontard respectively) we are per-



suaded of the 'caesura of difference that preserves an alterity even as it denies separability' (252). The final chapter by Andreas Michel compares and contrasts the responses of Lyotard and Rorty to the question of postmodernism. Lyotard is portrayed as the more radical theorist through his rejection of the promise of emancipation given by the rationality of enlightenment. On the other hand Rorty, while pretending to political radicalism, is exposed as the liberal that he is. The problem with Rorty's liberalism is shown to be its apparent blindness to 'the question of power relations' (286).

Taken as a whole, this volume would suggest that what occurs in the literature between philosophy and cultural studies is mostly focused on deconstruction. Although other methods and interests are explored (Adorno, Deleuze, Lacan, Levinas, Irigaray, Kristeva), the various treatments of themes of political responsibility, otherness, difference, and betweenness make this an insightful and representative survey of the recent past as well as the open future of philosophy and cultural studies.

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