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Joseph Adamson and **Hilary Clark, eds.**
Scenes of Shame: Psychoanalysis, Shame and Writing.
Albany: SUNY Press 1998. Pp. 288.
US$65.50 (cloth: ISBN 0-7914-3975-5);
US$21.95 (paper: ISBN 0-7914-3976-3).

Scenes of Shame is a collection of essays which are aimed at an exploration of 'the role of shame as an important affect in the complex psychodynamics of literary works' (1). With material ranging from Kierkegaard to Toni Morrison, the collection attempts to cover an ambitious amount of literary and philosophical terrain, at once its greatest virtue and vice.

In the introduction, the editors delineate some of the theoretical leitmotifs under which the essays were assembled. They describe crucial landmarks that mark this critical terrain, supplying the reader with a legend for the cartography ahead. As well as providing links between the essays, they supply a demarcation of theoretical terminology, which traces the connections between the psychoanalytic and the literary. Perhaps most important in the introduction, however, is the space devoted to Silvan Tomkins and his theory of affects, which supply the collection's working definition of shame, 'its function being specifically to interrupt states of interest and enjoyment that have captured the organism' (13).

The detailed analysis of the Kierkegaardian text undertaken by Kilborne is a promising first essay. He draws out some of the philosophical implications of shame in the construction of self and self-consciousness, examined through the thematic of 'being seen': 'without a standard of measurement, a self cannot recognize itself' (48). This lack of recognition manifests itself in shame and dread.

Adamson's close reading of Hawthorne in his essay 'Guardian of "Inmost Me" ' also draws on 'the connection between searing shame and exposure of a visual nature ... ' (59). He sees Hawthorne's texts as representing 'one of the most psychologically profound bodies of work in literature [which] has deepened our knowledge of the emotions and of the role of shame in particular, in shaping the human personality' (79). The two subsequent essays by Hirsch and Lichtenberg treat George Eliot's texts from a similar angle, exposing the permutations of the shame motif in *Middelmarch* and *The Mill on the Floss*. Lichtenberg's essay unravels some of the complexities of gendered subject formation in Eliot, drawing attention to the disciplinary deployment of shame in parental attempts to 'prevent lapses in gender-based responses' (109).

Wurmser's ' "Man of the Most Dangerous Curiosity" ' is set apart from the other texts due to the heavy use of narrative voice that borders on the fragmentary. Though it slips into an almost hagiographical position at times ['his errors honor his genius as much as his discoveries' (145)], it is a trenchant analysis of Nietzsche's critique of shame and bad conscience. The

psychological applications of the Nietzschean war against self-deception are eloquently engaged.

The articles by Schapiro and Collington move us into twentieth-century literature. Schapiro's article offers a psychobiographical approach to Lawrence's texts, confronting Lawrence's own agency and experience of shame. Schapiro suggests that the split between the lurid sexuality of Lawrence's novels and the asceticism of his life mark his confrontations with the traumas associated with 'his depressed, affectively nonattuned mother' (163), and the shame that was thereby produced. Collington's analysis of Faulkner as a profound cross-cultural psychologist of shame demonstrates Faulkner's intuitive sensitivity to contextual manifestations of shame.

Taking a Freudian approach supplemented with theoretical constructs borrowed from Klein and Kristeva, Clark tackles the issue of poetic creation and depression in the life of Anne Sexton. Clark suggests that poetry, and artistic creation, are weapons against the dispersion of meaning brought on by depression, used by Sexton as a means of making 'sense of loss and shame' (204). Creativity is thus seen as a mechanism of restoration and reparation. J. Brooks Bouson reads Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* as a dense interweaving of 'shame drama and trauma narrative' (207). The trope of visibility is again at the forefront, where somatic perception forms the basis of the shame mechanism. The painful embodiment of self in Morrison's text provides a disturbing corporeality of shame that Bouson's essay keenly analyzes.

Jeffrey Bernam's essay, 'Unmasking Shame in an Expository Writing Course', provides an interesting, practical epilogue to the collection. He discusses his own experiences teaching a personal writing course that dealt with the issues of shame and self-disclosure. The findings of this project are both frightening and fascinating, as the carefully defined roles of teacher and class are disrupted, and the issue of personal expression in the academic setting is problematized.

Other than the seemingly arbitrary selection of essays included in this collection, its other major fault lies in its almost exclusive analysis of texts written in English. Given the apparent universality of the theme of shame, this is an important consideration. Despite these criticisms, *Scenes of Shame* is an engaging collection, presenting a series of penetrating and accessible confrontations of a complex subject from a wide range of perspectives.

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Paula Allman
Revolutionary Social Transformation: Democratic Hopes, Political Possibilities and Critical Education.
Foreword by Peter McLaren.
Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey 1999.
Pp. xxii + 155.
US$49.95. ISBN 0-89789-667-X.

That *Revolutionary Social Transformation* is a markedly anachronistic text is, arguably, its most promising strength and its most damning weakness. Allman mobilizes classical Marxist theory — augmented only by Freire's discussion of education and Gramsci's discussion of hegemony — to advance the thesis that 'authentic social change' (2) requires an educational practice aimed at a fundamental transformation of consciousness, and that the social determinants of consciousness are nowhere better explained than in Marx's original analysis of capitalism. In contrast to subjectivist idealism and objectivist determinism, Allman stresses Marx's understanding of the '*inner* connection between social existence and thought' (7). This insight, that social relations take a conceptual as well as a material form, informs Allman's own understanding of the political importance of engaging in what Gramsci might call a 'counter-hegemonic' educational practice characterized by Freirean 'conscientization' or 'humanization'.

Marx's economic theory and its relation to education is elucidated in six chapters. Following a brief introduction, Chapters 2 to 4 explain, respectively, Marx's ethico-political vision of humanity's potential as a 'species-being' characterized by consciousness and self-determination (16), his understanding of consciousness, and his dialectical mode of inquiry. Chapter 5 highlights the theories of Freire and Gramsci — drawing as they do on both Marx's ethical vision and his scientific critique of bourgeois ideology — and focuses on the role of transformed educational relations in preparing for revolution by instilling a capacity for 'dialectical thinking' (85-125, esp. 115). Allman concludes by reflecting on the meaning of 'democracy,' 'truth,' and 'equality' in light of Marx's oft-cited vision of equality through inequality: 'from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs' (139).

Given economic globalization on the one hand, and theoretical tendencies to stress issues of representation and cultural determinants of consciousness on the other, Allman's return to Marx's political economy is well placed. However, the approach is profoundly flawed by the absence of any discussion of the *ideological* limitations of a strictly class-based analysis of barriers to social justice. As Himani Bannerji writes, 'that racism and sexism are *necessary* social relations for the organization of colonial or modern imperialist capitalism in the West seems to figure as an afterthought in recent writings' ('But who speaks for us? Experience and Agency in Conventional Feminist Paradigms', in Bannerji et al. *Unsettling Relations: The University as a Site of Feminist Struggles* [Toronto: Women's Press 1991], 87; my

emphasis). Based on the work of Audre Lorde, Frantz Fanon, Dorothy Smith, Angela Davis and D.T. Goldberg, for example, Allman might have widened the Marxist gaze to issues of colonialism, imperialism, sexism, and racism, and so paid more than lip service to the political significance of social relations whose, 'origins ... do not lie solely in capitalist history' (20). In directing her view to other relations of domination, moreover, Allman might have been prompted to think further about whether 'ideology' is most usefully understood solely in terms of a bourgeois 'distortion' of reality's 'actual nature' (67, 38-9, 90, 112). It is doubly unfortunate, therefore, that issues of race, gender, and colonialism are absent from Allman's account.

Except for the incorrect definition of 'commodity fetishism' as a 'desire for or lust after commodities' (49, 55, 69), the text may be useful to those not yet familiar with the power, breadth and vision of Marx's analysis. But for a more nuanced grasp of Marxist political and educational theory, and for an appreciation of the ways in which relations of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and colonialism cut across, and oppress in conjunction with, class relations in late modernity, one should look elsewhere.

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Paul J. Bagley, ed.
Piety, Peace, and the Freedom to Philosophize.
New Synthese Historical Library, v. 47.
Dordrecht: Kluwer 1999. Pp. xiv + 293.
US$128.00. ISBN 0-7923-5984-4.

This is a meaty collection of eleven essays on Spinoza's *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*. The contributors are all members of the North American Spinoza Society, some well-established scholars, others just beginning their careers. Their most interesting discussions concern the interplay among religion, politics, and ethics.

In the first section, 'Piety', Richard Mason compares Spinoza and Pascal on the issue of faith vs. philosophy, Lee C. Rice considers Spinoza's account of miracles with reference to both scripture and Hume, and Charles Huenemann argues that Spinoza holds scripture to be a disaster for metaphysics but a boon for ethics.

The second section, 'Peace', contains the essays of Idit Dobbs-Weinstein on Spinoza and Walter Benjamin, Steven Barbone on Spinoza's concept of natural or ontological power as manifest within the civil state, Michael A.

Rosenthal on the relationship between religious toleration and religious resistance to political realities, Douglas J. Den Uyl on Spinoza's ambiguous account of religion as a political force *de facto* and an ethical force *de jure*, and Martin D. Yaffe on Spinoza's emphasis of corporeality over spirituality.

In the third and final section, 'The Freedom to Philosophize', Steven B. Smith asks what effect Spinoza's Jewishness may have had on subsequent Jewish thought, J. Thomas Cook dissects an apparently commendatory but possibly cagey remark about Christianity that Spinoza made to a Lutheran woman toward the end of his life, and Bagley contrasts esoteric and exoteric aspects of Spinoza's religious thought.

One general tenor of Spinoza scholarship affirms his willingness, for the sake of promoting ethical attitudes and actions, to tolerate the various doctrinal absurdities of what Hegel later called 'positive religion'. Most of these essays uphold that view. Cook, especially, is quite eloquent about it. He concludes that Spinoza was lying when he assured Mrs. van der Spyck that her Christian religion would grant her salvation, but did so only to encourage her toward a more pious, quiescent life. In the best of all possible worlds, one supposes, Spinoza would reduce religion to ethics, almost as Tolstoi *avant la lettre*.

Rosenthal underscores Spinoza's criticisms of religious specialists like Jesus's disciples who opportunistically use miracles with the masses and philosophy with the intelligentsia, all for the socio-political purpose of instilling devotion and obedience to their own point of view. Distinguishing between the external, collective, politically motivated religion of Moses and the internal, rational, ethically motivated religion of Jesus, Spinoza, in Rosenthal's interpretation, sees Jesus's disciples as more in keeping with Moses than with Jesus. That is, their superstitious use of the supernatural and the esoteric promotes political (or ecclesiastical) order more effectively than it promotes ethical spirit. Their lip service favors ethical spirit, but their actions support political order. Rosenthal accurately portrays Spinoza's ultimate ambivalence on the ethical and political questions of tolerating sectarian religions within the state, but suggests that Spinoza would reluctantly allow any state, secular or theocratic, to suppress any religious sect that raised doubts about the legitimacy of the current political authority. In other words, for Spinoza, political subversion is not a proper part of religious activity.

Both Barbone (explicitly) and Den Uyl (implicitly) analyse Spinoza's juxtaposition between power (*potentia*) and authority (*potestas*) as these two concepts relate to the human possibility of ethical and/or religious action. According to Barbone, *potentia* is the individual's natural and inalienable ability to be a moral agent, while *potestas* is the state's transient, earthly, political sovereignty. The former may initiate ethical action; the latter may only compel it. Yet it is within the province of *potentia* to submit willingly to *potestas*.

In both Barbone's and Den Uyl's interpretations, right is always involved with power. When right is co-extensive with *potentia*, the corresponding virtue is piety; when co-extensive with *potestas*, the virtue is obedience. In

the best ethical Spinozistic state, religious piety and political obedience would never be in conflict. The pious, ethical citizen would always be inclined to obey the state; and the state, likewise, would always use its *potestas* in the interest of justice, charity, peace, and freedom. But the real world is not like that. Den Uyl suggests that Spinoza would accept neither a marketplace of sects, a constitutional separation of church and state, nor a repressive state, but admits that Spinoza's actual recommendation remains unclear. Den Uyl quotes from Spinoza's posthumous *Tractatus Politicus*: 'A commonwealth whose subjects are restrained from revolting by fear must be said to be free from war rather than to enjoy peace. For peace is not the mere absence of war, but a virtue based on strength of mind' (146-7). Peace requires pious serenity, freedom requires restraint, and good government requires uncoerced compliance. These are all virtues that can be fostered by religion. Spinoza affirms the inseparability of religious life from political life, so that the main question left to him and his interpreters is not how to separate them, but how, in Den Uyl's words, 'to find the appropriate form of accommodation' (138).

The ten-page bibliography of selected secondary sources is a very helpful guide for newcomers to Spinoza, ranging from classic works such as David Bidney's *Psychology and Ethics of Spinoza* to recent studies such as Rosenthal's 1998 article on Spinoza's social contract theory.

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Joshua Cohen, Matthew Howard, Martha Nussbaum, and **Susan M. Okin, eds.**
Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?
Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press
1999. Pp. vi + 146.
US$29.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-691-00431-5);
US$12.95 (paper: ISBN 0-691-00432-3).

Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women? is a collection of articles addressing implications that cultural minority group rights and arrangements might hold for women in liberal democratic states. Originally published as an exchange in the *Boston Review* (October/November 1997), the book presents the lightly revised essays in the form of a debate between proponents of rights for cultural minorities and those who fear that such rights may reinforce traditional norms and practices, especially those that undermine women's equality.

Representing the latter position is political theorist Susan Moller Okin, whose lead article (from which the book takes its title) expresses serious misgivings about the recent trend in liberal democratic theory toward endorsing forms of group recognition and accommodation, and the apparent willingness of some liberal states to introduce special arrangements for cultural minorities. While acknowledging that minority groups will continue to be bound by liberal democratic laws in the public sphere, Okin worries about discrimination and oppression in the private realm, which she believes may be reinforced by policies that protect more traditional cultural minorities. Okin's primary concern here seems to be group rights, which she argues may make it all too easy for groups to engage in private forms of discrimination. She urges proponents of multiculturalism to think long and hard about the implications of special cultural rights for women's equality, and not to be fooled into accepting the reassurances of elders in cultural communities, who often have a vested interest in perpetuating social power relations that subordinate women. Okin's argument is for the most part a familiar liberal one — Martha Nussbaum characterizes Okin's as a 'comprehensive liberal' view, a description that Okin rejects — stressing the importance of norms of equality and protection for individual rights and personal autonomy. But in a nod to deliberative democracy theory, Okin urges that young women be included in deliberation about the legitimacy and desirability of particular customs and practices.

Okin's essay prompts a range of reactions from the fifteen respondents, many of whom endorse and elaborate upon her concerns. Katha Pollit suggests that a progressive-left-feminist perspective necessarily questions cultural justifications of hierarchy and inequality. Yael Tamir also voices her support for Okin, and adds that proponents of multiculturalism are often too quick to assume that cultures cannot adapt and change ways of life that were once seen as central to their group identity. Kymlicka hastens to reassure Okin that a liberal defense of cultural pluralism need not entail a broad endorsement of any and all cultural practices, and indeed that liberals should take a dim view of rights and arrangements that restrict members' freedom. Group rights, on his view, are permissible only if they foster justice within or between groups, but not if they exacerbate inequality. However, Kymlicka concedes Okin's criticism that his notion of 'internal restrictions' is too narrow and must be extended to include not only civil and political liberties, but also arrangements in the private sphere.

While Okin's cautionary message about the dangers that attend cultural rights is timely and at times insightful, many of the specific examples she cites, and her unqualified appeal to liberal norms, ultimately leave her vulnerable to charges of ethnocentrism. Bikhu Parekh notes that Okin 'takes liberalism as self-evidently true' without offering a satisfactory defense of liberal norms and practices (which have frequently been all too compatible with egregious inequalities). Several authors (Bonnie Honig, Azizah al-Hibri, Homi Bhabba, Sander Gilman, and Parekh) take exception to Okin's tendency to generalize about 'other' cultures without reflecting critically on

western cultures. Some articulate this concern less well than others, and unwittingly appear as naïve in their benign appraisal of cultures. Honig, for instance, comments that veiling might be seen as in part an 'empowering practice' for some women (37), and Gilman likens Okin's condemnation of female genital mutilation to dismissive 19th century attitudes towards male circumcision practiced by Jews.

The charge of ethnocentrism is one that Okin attempts to address in her response to her critics, where she concedes that 'majority' cultures must not ignore their own poor track record with respect to oppression and marginalization (121). Ultimately Okin remains unpersuaded by claims and counter-examples from her critics that are meant to demonstrate the apparently empowering aspects of such problematic practices as polygamy and female genital mutilation. Yet it is far from clear, as Joseph Raz notes in his essay, that liberal states should reject policies of multiculturalism as a whole on the basis of a handful of pernicious practices; this is simply a false choice. Sadly, there is a tendency in this collection to frame the issue of tensions between sex equality and cultural group rights as one necessitating *either* the unqualified acceptance or rejection of special rights and accommodation for cultural minorities. Nonetheless, the book represents a much-needed and overdue conversation among political philosophers and others about the effects of cultural minority rights on women in those communities.

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John Cooper
Reason and Emotion.
Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press
1999. Pp. xvi + 588.
US$75.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-691-05874-1);
US$26.95 (paper: ISBN 0-691-05875-X).

This book is divided into three parts. Part I (on Socrates and Plato) includes the following essays (all essay titles to follow listed in order): 'Notes on Xenophon's Socrates'; 'Socrates and Plato on Plato's *Gorgias*'; 'The Unity of Virtue'; 'Plato's Theory of Human Motivation'; 'The Psychology of Justice in Plato'; 'Plato's Theory of Human Good in the *Philebus*'; and 'Plato's *Statesman* and Politics.' Part II (on Aristotle) includes many of Cooper's most famous articles: 'The *Magna Moralia* and Aristotle's Moral Philosophy'; 'Contemplation and Happiness: A Reconsideration'; 'Some Remarks on Aristotle's Moral Psychology'; 'Reason, Moral Virtue, and Moral Value'; 'Aristotle

on the Authority of "Appearances"'; 'Aristotle on the Goods of Fortune'; 'Aristotle on the Forms of Friendship'; 'Friendship and the Good in Aristotle'; 'Political Animals and Civic Friendship'; 'Justice and Rights in Aristotle's *Politics*'; 'Ethical and Political Theory in Aristotle's *Rhetoric*'; and 'An Aristotelian Theory of the Emotions.' Finally, Part III (on Hellenistic Philosophy) consists in: 'Eudaimonism, the Appeal to Nature, and "Moral Duty"'; 'Posidonius on Emotions'; 'Pleasure and Desire in Epicurus'; and 'Greek Philosophers on Euthanasia and Suicide.'

Chapters Two and Twelve are revisions of previously published materials; Chapters One and Twenty Two are new. Because the remaining essays were all published in well known journals or collections, I concentrate herein on the new and revised materials.

In 'Notes on Xenophon's Socrates', Cooper accounts for the differences between Plato and Xenophon in this way: 'It cannot be overemphasized that for Xenophon's declared purposes Socrates' philosophy lies off to one side. [...] In Plato, the focus is just the reverse of Xenophon's, as Xenophon explains his interests in the opening chapters of the *Memorabilia*: Socrates' philosophy is the center of attention, his moral character and moral influence lie off to one side' (5). This does not give sufficient credit to the drama and characterization in Plato's dialogues, which vividly portray the moral character of Socrates in disputes with those he intends always to improve. In any case, if Cooper is right about Xenophon's relative lack of engagement with Socratic philosophy is correct, it must only be those with historical, as opposed to philosophical, interests in Socrates who will 'gain greatly by reading and pondering Xenophon's Socrates,' as Cooper contends at the end of this essay (28).

'Socrates and Plato in Plato's *Gorgias*' is a revision of 'The *Gorgias* and Irwin's Socrates' (1982). The new version adds some sniping against Kahn's readings of the Socratic dialogues, but the main focus is still on Irwin's account. Cooper is rightly critical of Irwin's view that Plato's Socrates radically changes his moral psychology during his discussion with Callicles. Cooper argues that it is Callicles who introduces the novel idea that there are motivational forces in the soul other than desire for benefit (motivational forces such as appetites and emotions), whereas in the *Gorgias* and the other Socratic dialogues, Socrates denies this. Cooper concludes that Socrates does not speak for Plato, in the *Gorgias*, at least, since the moral psychology proposed by the antagonistic Callicles is more like that of the mature Plato. But in 1995, Daniel T. Devereux (in 'Socrates' Kantian Conception of Virtue,' *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 33, 381-408) showed that in many dialogues Socrates recognizes motivational forces other than the desire for benefit. (See, e.g., *Laches* 191e4-7; *Charmides* 167e1-5, and especially 155c4-e2, where Socrates describes himself 'burning with desire' for Charmides.) Cooper continues to miss this evidence, despite the publication of Devereux's paper (and of several articles by others responding to or exploring further implications of this evidence). The understanding of Socratic moral psychol-

ogy from which all of Cooper's main claims in this article derives, accordingly, had been proven false in the literature before Cooper revised this essay.

'Aristotle on the Authority of Appearances' originally appeared as Cooper's famous review of Martha Nussbaum's *The Fragility of Goodness*. The revisions for the present version consist mainly in eliminating those parts of the review that did not pertain to Aristotle.

Finally, in Chapter Twenty-two Cooper argues that Epicurus was not a psychological hedonist. Cooper interprets the passages in which Epicurus appears to argue for psychological hedonism as referring not to all human beings, but only to those 'Epicureans who live consistently with their principles' (489). Cooper goes on to provide an interesting and plausible analysis of Epicurean normative hedonism, and especially of the distinction Epicurus makes between the pleasure he characterizes as *katastēmatikos* and pleasure 'in movements'. Those interested in Epicurean ethics will surely want to read this essay.

The only other novelties in this book are the short lists of recommended readings Cooper has added to the chapters in which earlier essays are reprinted, 'as guidance to the reader who wishes to follow the discussion of these topics [...] in the *subsequent* literature' (xi; my emphasis). In other words, Cooper is confident that any important discussion of his topics in the literature *before* Cooper took them up is adequately cited and considered in his essays. His confidence is misplaced. (See, for example, my comment on his Chapter Two.) Cooper's suggestions of readings from the *subsequent* literature, moreover, contain noticeable failures to engage with his critics, or with much of the best known scholarship on his topics.

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A.H. Coxon
The Philosophy of Forms: An Analytical and Historical Commentary on Plato's ***Parmenides***.
Assen: Van Gorcum 1999. Pp. viii + 174.
US$32.50. ISBN 90-232-3460-X.

Coxon notes that this book is intended as a sequel to his *The Fragments of Parmenides* (1986). Like his earlier book, this one is the result of Coxon's years of engagement with the text, and is full of scholarly discussions of the dialogue and the philosophical traditions both before and after Plato. The thirty-four-page introduction clarifies both the theory of Forms that is introduced in the *Parmenides* as a response to Zeno, and the historical background of Plato's theory. There is a short but helpful survey of the notion

of form in earlier Greek thinkers, and a longer discussion of 'the philosophy of Socrates.' A discussion of the proper understanding of 'is' in Plato's theory is designed to help the reader avoid mistakes in understanding just what Plato takes a form to be and how the theory works. This introductory material is followed by the English translation of the dialogue and eighty pages of commentary. The book concludes with two appendices: one a listing (in Greek only) of all the texts in which the idiom *ho esti* appears and the second a short discussion of 'Socrates' philosophy in the theatre' in which Coxon claims that Aristophanes' and Amipsias' comic pictures of Socrates were merely 'entertainment and furnish no documentary evidence of his thought' (171).

The short introductory discussion of links between the Theory of Forms and earlier Greek philosophy is very good. Coxon presents a line of thought about form or forms running from the historical Parmenides through Empedocles and Anaxagoras (with counter-arguments from Zeno and Melissus), to the Atomists, Socrates, and Plato: 'the theory ascribed ... to Socrates differs ... in concerning itself with the predicates of propositions and in considering these as the names of non-spatial substances. It resembles Anaxagoras' theory ... in deriving sensible appearances from like-named realities accessible only to reason, and in ascribing to each of the latter an unequivocal Eleatic being' (6). This is surely correct, although the brevity of the discussion means that there is more assertion than argument. The last sentence is provocative: '... Plato need not be considered as violating historical perspective in placing a theory of non-sensible forms on the lips of Socrates in his early youth' (6).

Coxon takes seriously the pictures of Socrates presented in Plato and in Xenophon, arguing that the interests of the Xenophanic and Platonic Socrates are consistent. In both the introduction and the commentary Coxon seems to take the Platonic dialogues as reports. The views of the character 'Socrates' are usually presented as though they are those of the historical figure and not claims put into the character's mouth by Plato. Coxon takes the claim (at *Prm* 126b-c) that Antiphon heard the story of the conversation between Parmenides and Socrates many times from Pythodorus and practiced it assiduously as evidence that Plato was concerned to present a true portrait of Socrates and his philosophical positions. He suggests that Aristotle's accounts of Socrates are inaccurate and particularly questions Aristotle's assertion that 'universals were first considered as substances by Plato, whom he believed to have been the first philosopher to conceive of a non-sensible reality' (23-4). Similar historical claims are made about Parmenides himself on the basis of the dialogue; for instance, on p. 115 Coxon says that 'Plato clearly implies' that the exercise Parmenides prescribes for the young Socrates at 135c-137b is 'authentically Parmenidean.' Rather more caution (and more argument) would be appropriate here, both with respect to the historical Socrates and the historical Parmenides.

The translation is clear and readable. Although there are occasional passages where one might argue that interpretation has led to some over-translation, this can hardly be avoided in some of the stickier texts of Part

II of the dialogue. The translation has the virtue of making clear just where Plato uses forms of the verb 'to be' and where various idioms for participation appear. The commentary is clear and careful, noting where, in Coxon's view, the assumptions and arguments diverge from or are consistent with genuine Parmenidean and Platonic doctrine. It is not until the end of the commentary that Coxon presents an overview of the argument, but he does not see the deductions of the second part as directed toward solving the problems with the theory presented by Socrates and criticized by Parmenides in the first part, even though 'more than once [the argument] exploits, in order to establish an antinomy, the [Eleatic] conception of predication as identification which Socrates was concerned to supersede' in the first part of the dialogue (165). Coxon sees the *Parmenides* as raising a number of issues that will be discussed or taken over in later dialogues: the First deduction considers 'Eleatic monism,' 'the Second, Third and Fourth [give] analysis of the temporal world conceived in a temporal manner' to be exploited in the *Timaeus*, the Fifth denies perfect being to the temporal world, the Sixth and Eighth foreshadow the *Sophist's* treatment of not-being, and the Seventh, in exploring the vagaries of pluralities divorced from the One, sets the stage for 'discussion of the philosophies of Protagoras and Heraclitus' in the *Theaetetus* (164-5). On Coxon's account, one is left wondering how Plato saw the connection between the two parts of the dialogue. After all, Parmenides suggests that the exercise will help Socrates with his problems, and claims that Socrates has run into the difficulties of Part I because he was 'attempting to define noble and just and good and each one of the forms as something too soon, before [he has] been exercised' (135d-3; Coxon's translation). This seems to suggest that the arguments of Part II will help somehow — even if Parmenides' 'serious game' gives us only an example of what Socrates needs, and not the required exercise itself. Coxon portrays the arguments as characteristically Eleatic, connecting their structure with both Zeno and Gorgias. This seems right. But it would have been helpful had he discussed more fully the question of how the exercise connects with the problems of Part I or why Plato intended that it should not.

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Michael Davis
Ethics and the University.
New York: Routledge 1999. Pp. xii + 267.
Cdn$120.00: US$75.00
(cloth: ISBN 0-415-18097-X);
Cdn$38.99: US$26.99
(paper: ISBN 0-415-18098-8).

This is an important addition to an important series in Professional Ethics. Davis, a Professor of Philosophy at Illinois Institute of Technology, finds considerable irony in the fact that academics are ready to discuss and debate the ethics of nearly every area of society except the academy. In this volume, he means to rectify that situation. He wants to link ethics in the university and the teaching of ethics.

The book is divided into three sections. The first is an extended introduction to the topic; the second examines issues in research ethics; the third discusses teaching professional ethics.

The introductory section develops a thoughtful and nuanced analysis of recent literature on higher education and shows why much of it, especially that of Bloom and his progeny, is irrelevant for this book. Davis also argues for what he calls a recent boom in ethics. Conclusive demonstration of that would take more thorough analysis than he presents, but there is enough to justify his project. He argues that taking ethics seriously is preferable to the imposition of more laws. From a sociological perspective, he may be right, but, if so, that sets up tension between ethics and the boom in professional ethics. For example, presumably, professors read student papers carefully because of an acceptance of professorial ethical responsibilities not because they fear present or future laws. Still further in the introduction, Davis discusses academic freedom. He cites interesting examples to show it is not as binary as many academics may think, and he argues we should accept that freedom with responsibility. We do not know the extent to which professors have overstepped the moral bounds of academic freedom, but a careful study might show more than many of us think. The fact that academics are in charge of the tools for such a study may explain why it has not been done. Davis concludes the introductory section saying the purpose of the book is to begin a discussion about the ethics of what we do. He more than achieves that objective.

The research ethics section discusses many issues that arise in that context. Davis argues, for example, scientists *qua* scientists do not have moral responsibilities except as might be provided conventionally. He uses the example of a scientist who knows his boss, while attempting to persuade prospective grantors, purposefully misstates scientific results. Davis argues the scientist does not have any special obligation to correct his boss. It is a curious example for this particular book because it involves research outside the university. As business employees, scientists may face such conflicts, but that should not hold for tenured academic scientists. The section on research

ethics concludes with a chapter on plagiarism which might have been very valuable. Unfortunately, Davis uses it to develop a lawyerly brief for a unique case of failure to attribute original discovery.

The section on teaching ethics starts with a promising chapter on 'ethics across the curriculum' which, nevertheless, suggests more than it delivers. It is primarily about workshops designed to help faculty in professional programs teach ethics. The chapter reads like a detailed report to a granting agency; philosophic issues are lost in minutia. By way of contrast, a chapter developing a taxonomy of cases for case method teaching is filled with valuable insight. This section of the book concludes with a chapter on sex and the university which deals with sexual equality, sexuality and sexual identity. He uses Jane Gallop's flamboyant claim that she initiated having sexual relations with her professors as partial justification for professorial participation in such activities. He does not explain why the professors' behavior should not be considered unprofessional as would such behavior on the part of their counterparts in other professions.

One frustration experienced in reading this book is that much of what Davis deals with is on the periphery rather than at the center of higher education. For example, research universities constitute a small, albeit important, portion of higher education. A more widespread ethical research problem is determining whether faculty are doing the research necessary for qualified instruction and what should be done about those that are not. Davis does not address that topic. In addition, he leaves the reader confused about whether he considers professors even to be professionals. Denotatively, he says they are (24, 61). However, his description of the conditions of a profession (121-7) leaves them out. That topic would seem to be centrally important to a discussion of professional ethics in the academy.

As he promised, Davis has provided us with a valuable beginning; let us hope his efforts will bear additional fruit.

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Jacques Derrida
Adieu to Emmanuel Levinas.
Trans. Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas.
Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press 1999.
Pp. xii + 152.
US$34.50 (cloth: ISBN 0-8047-3267-1);
US$14.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8047-3275-2).

Adieu. Bienvenue. Good-bye. Hello. Only a philosopher will trouble over these words, and yet these words are the very extreme and demanding words of Jacques Derrida's third essay on Emmanuel Levinas. First as eulogy at Levinas' grave in 1995, and then as commemoration at the first-anniversary of his death (*Jahreszeit*), Derrida gives philosophical homage to his teacher by honoring the man and his thought. The profundity of these two events elevates the philosophical insight, drawing deeply on the pragmatics of their performance to move well beyond both the rhetoric such situations require and the normal expectation of philosophical engagement. To accentuate the homage, Derrida himself cites Levinas' own reflections on death in relation to Heidegger's: ' "It distinguishes itself from Heidegger's thought, and it does so in spite of the debt that every contemporary thinker owes to Heidegger — a debt that one often regrets." ' Derrida continues, 'The good fortune of our debt to Levinas is that we can, thanks to him, assume it and affirm it without regret, in a joyous innocence of admiration' (12-13). In his two previous essays, ('Violence and Metaphysics' [1964] and 'At this moment itself in this work here am I' [1980]), Derrida had expressed admiration, but also interrogation of a sharply critical sort. This third work, while still interrogatory, rises in its admiration.

What Derrida explores is the complex and often unthematised way that Levinas has changed our understanding of our most basic words. It is as if ordinary language philosophy became the most exacting and metaphysical ethics today. For Levinas' work, including both his philosophical writings and his Jewish writings, presents an ethics of infinite responsibility, where I am asymmetrically responsible for the other person. What Derrida does here is explore the way that such responsibility is performed in our basic greetings — how our good-bye is a responsibility, quoting Levinas, ' "we meet death in the face of the other" ' (5, 130). We are assigned responsibility for the other in the other person's mortality. 'Adieu' is a saying, a performative that produces a certain trace of God in assigning me responsibility for the other person. Levinas' ethics explored just this translation of theology into ethics, with all the risk that such translation must run.

Derrida here, in his own voice but in almost talmudic style, quoting extensively from Levinas' whole corpus, offers a generous and admiring account of Levinas' ethics, but he also explores the decisive gap between the ethics of infinite responsibility and the demands of justice and the state. His analysis discovers not only the complexity of this gap in Levinas' thought,

but also offers an account of why the lack of direct schematism from ethics to politics is a positive feature, a necessary feature for thought. Thus the two addresses here weave two vital philosophical themes together: the relation of theology and ethics, and the relation of politics and ethics.

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Stephen L. Elkin and
Karol Edward Soltan, eds.
Citizen Competence and Democratic Institutions.
University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press 1999. Pp. xii + 424.
US$55.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-271-01816-X;
US$19.95 (paper: ISBN 0-271-01817-8).

A book title that includes the term 'competence' might suggest to readers who happen to have experience of post-school education in the United Kingdom that it is inclined towards a behaviourist position. The choice of the word 'competence' might suggest that the book has a reductionist programme concerned with what citizens do rather than with what they know or do not know. In fact, this work concerns itself with citizen knowledge and the practice of democratic government: what can be done, it asks, to ensure that citizens have a sufficient stock of knowledge to be competent? It does not acquiesce in a recipe for Platonic philosopher kings, but offers interesting and impressive data on, and approaches to, citizen competence. This is a detailed and well-argued volume not to be missed, particularly by those who take an anti-behaviourist stance on citizen competence. I was impressed by the industry and efforts of the essayists.

Steiner goes to what is in many ways the nub of the issue when he points to the need for an agreed conception of democracy before it is possible to draw conclusions about the nature of the education that should be provided. Implicit in his position is an acknowledgement that democracy is an essentially contested concept, though one would have liked this point to be made explicit. The implications for education can then be spelt out. If, for example, democracy is primarily a matter of a choice between competing political parties there is a need to provide an education that fosters rational choosers and resists pressures to be employment-led. The latter would not only displace other material from the curriculum but remove one of the important

social institutions from rational criticism. It would turn work into the sacred cow of democracy and protect the economic system from the same scrutiny.

One of the merits of this book is that it does not shirk difficult issues. It faces the problem of the citizen having an adequate stock of knowledge in a democracy. Ingenious solutions, of interest and importance to scholars, are offered to this problem, some involving 'short cuts' in the accumulation of voter judgements. In this respect, though, the material could have gone further. Morality can function as a great short-cut, aggregating policies on the basis of principles, such as self-interest and altruism. Whole political agendas can be judged on the basis of moral principles. But the need is for literacy in ethics, economics, science, literature and history, plus an ability to analyse and categorise political positions. It is in the matter of education that the book slightly disappointed, perhaps because not enough was done to elucidate the link between different conceptions of democracy and a given concept of education, though to its credit the book certainly recognised the former. There are conceptual connections between democracy and education and these need to be followed through rigorously. Education is not a neutral process; by the process of selection in the curriculum it insists that some things are more valuable than others. Those values are ultimately to be derived from the political system of that society. However, I am not sure that it is fair to require the book to go so far as this. It may be fairer to say that the book may slightly disappoint those looking for an analysis of democracy on a basis not geared to United States culture. In any case, such an enquirer will still find much of interest and a serious student of citizen rationality and knowledge will want to take account of the evidence from American research.

In all other respects this is an impressive work, one which will be of considerable value to teachers and scholars working on democracy. To include essays that cover topics such as the rational public, citizen knowledge, values and policies, the town meeting, education, and participation, is to offer a fertile ground for scholars. For those who believe, with Elkin, that social democracy is on the wane, and favour a fully realised republican government, this book is a rich field. Others may be disappointed by a failure to consider how far the free market economy limits democratic thought and control, including the educational system. There is perhaps a sanguine assumption that a free market economic system is synonymous with democracy, something that should at least be acknowledged as open to question. I found in this book a consistent merit of careful research and detailed argument. The consistency here is remarkable given the number of essays in the book. One is struck by both the cohesive and coherent nature of the work, due in part to the excellence of the sectional summaries by the editors; these provide a helpful overview for anyone working at the margin and unsure about the suitability of the material. The book progresses from a consideration of the nature of civic competence, to the state of civic competence, to the means of strengthening citizen competence. Recent and carefully worked empirical data is accompanied by subtle argument. The sense

of purpose and wholeness in the work is quite remarkable. This is a work of integrity and merit that should not be ignored, and that will impress even those who dissent from its conclusions.

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Claude L. Fox
Foundations: A Manual for the Beginning Student of Epistemology.
Lanham, MD: University Press of America
1999. Pp. viii + 60.
US$17.50. ISBN 0-7618-1358-6.

John L. Pollock and **Joseph Cruz**
Contemporary Theories of Knowledge.
Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers
1999. Pp. xiv + 262.
US$57.50 (cloth: ISBN 0-8476-8936-0);
US$19.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8476-8937-9).

Although, at first glance, both these books look like introductory epistemology texts, appearances are deceiving. While Fox's book does offer a general introduction to epistemology, what Pollock and Cruz present is not so much a general introduction as a sustained argument for their particular account of justification (not knowledge, as the title might lead the reader to expect). Their book is a rewarding read for those with an interest in epistemology, but probably inappropriate for use as an introductory text. (To be fair, the book identifies itself as an 'advanced textbook'.) Pollock and Cruz explain and criticize a number of epistemological theories, but their discussion usually betrays the fact that their ultimate interest lies in showing why competitors to their theory fail. Several times, they discuss and reject positions in such a way that the original appeal of the position is not made clear. For example, early on they make use of Hume's skepticism about induction to argue that epistemology must make room for the idea of defeasible (i.e., not conclusive) justification. They summarize Hume's argument as follows: '1. The premises of an inductive argument do not logically entail the conclusion. 2. If the premises of an argument do not logically entail the conclusion, then it is not reasonable to believe the conclusion on the basis of the premises. Therefore, inductive reasoning is illegitimate — one cannot acquire knowledge of

general truths by reasoning inductively' (8). Those familiar with Hume's work will recognize this as a plausible summary of his position (although we might quibble about whether 'reasonable' is the right word to use in premise #2). Still, a student encountering Hume for the first time this way would be hard pressed to see why the problem of induction is much of a problem at all. No doubt they will agree with the authors' suggestion that we just reject the second premise and move on.

Pollock and Cruz offer an argument by elimination for their position. They begin by identifying two different ways of carving up the various possible theories of justification. One is in terms of the contrast between Doxastic Theories (which claim that if two people hold exactly the same beliefs, there can be no difference between them in terms of which of their beliefs are justified and which aren't) and Nondoxastic Theories (which deny this 'Doxastic Assumption'). The other distinction is between Internalist and Externalist theories. Here, Internalist theories insist that whether a belief is justified is solely a function of the 'internal states' (e.g., beliefs, experiences) of the believer while Externalist Theories deny this.

Beginning with the first distinction, Pollock and Cruz consider Foundationalism and Coherentism. On their way of characterizing these theories, both are Doxastic Theories and both fail for this reason. Roughly, both get into trouble in dealing with perceptual beliefs. Since the Doxastic Assumption declares that whether a given belief is justified depends only upon other beliefs, both theories indicate that a perceptual belief can be justified even if the person does not actually have the relevant perceptual experience. They rightly note this is implausible and so reject the Doxastic Assumption. Turning to the Internalism/Externalism distinction, they reject Reliabilism and other forms of Externalism. They do so by first arguing we should think of justification in terms of 'epistemic norms', i.e., rules of belief formation. 'A belief is justified if and only if it is licensed by correct epistemic norms' (123). They then argue these epistemic norms must be ones a believer could follow and, as such, must only appeal to our internal states. They point out, for example, that we are not capable of following a norm that tells us only to believe on the basis of reliable belief-forming processes. The best we can do is follow the Internalist norm that tells us only to believe on the basis of what we *think* are reliable processes. They thus conclude that correct epistemic norms must be Internalist norms.

The preceding considerations lead them to endorse a Nondoxastic Internalist Theory they call 'Direct Realism'. On this view, while it is true that only internal *states* can confer justification on a belief, more than just a person's *beliefs* are involved in this process. Much of the second half of the book is spent on developing this view. They give a detailed and persuasive account of the nature of epistemic norms, arguing that we should not think of them as rules we must consciously follow. What matters is whether we *actually do* form our beliefs in the right kind of way not whether we deliberately do so. They go on to discuss the content of these epistemic norms. The most basic norm allows for the forming of a defeasibly justified belief

concerning some fact about our surroundings based upon a perception of that apparent fact. (This is why the theory is called *Direct* Realism. A person goes directly from a perception of her surroundings to a belief about those surroundings without an intermediary 'basic belief' that she is having this perception.) Proceeding from this starting point, they make some substantial steps toward a general account of defeasible reasoning (although they acknowledge there is more work to be done here).

One of the book's novel suggestions is that an epistemological theory cannot be adequately assessed without actually trying to implement the epistemic norms it endorses. In one of the best parts of the book, they discuss how one might do this for their theory. This takes place in a fascinating discussion of Pollock's long running OSCAR project. In showing how a system might actually employ the norms they recommend, they come dangerously close to giving a good name to Naturalized Epistemology.

As I have noted, the book is not suitable as a basic introduction to epistemology, but it does present a well defended, provocative theory of justification. In this respect, I highly recommend the book.

While Pollock and Cruz say their book is in large part an attempt to say 'what is true in epistemology' (xi), Fox's intent is quite different. His brief book is intended as a survey of the 'basic concepts and judgments' which are required to understand the main theories in epistemology. In five chapters, Fox attempts to sketch what epistemology is; to outline some metaphysical concepts encountered in epistemology; to describe fundamental epistemological concepts such as knowledge and perception; to outline several theories of truth; and to outline several theories of knowledge.

I have serious reservations about this book. For one thing, terms are sometimes used in unusual ways without noting this is so. For instance, Descartes is identified as a solipsist (54). Given the definition of solipsism provided in the book — 'the determination of truth and knowledge by one's self without relying on authority' (54) — this is not inaccurate. However, since this is not the standard meaning of the term, this is a risky thing to tell the reader (especially in an introductory text). Perhaps more seriously, some central epistemological notions are left out — no mention is made of Foundationalism for example. For that matter, even when topics are covered, crucial aspects of those topics are sometimes omitted. Consider this account of pragmatism from the chapter on theories of knowledge. 'C.S. Pierce [*sic*], in uniquely American fashion, held that truth or meaningfulness is determined by utility. If an idea or judgment makes no different to theory or practice then it is not true and is meaningless. ... Dewey applied Pierce's [*sic*] idea of truth to the normative sciences, e.g., ethics, and is identified with the statement "Truth is what works". Perhaps its best known proponent, Dewey oriented the bulk of his philosophical works to the standard of pragmatism' (49). Except for a couple of bibliographic references, the above text is all there is on pragmatism as a theory of knowledge, but notice that all we get here is an account of pragmatism as a theory of truth. The reader is left to fill in what a pragmatist might say about the nature of justification or knowledge.

I should close by noting that not all of Fox's book suffers from these problems. Parts of it give clear explanations of central epistemological concepts. Still, there are enough serious problems with the book that its weaknesses outweigh its strengths.

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Hans-Georg Gadamer
The Beginning of Philosophy.
Translated by Rod Coltman.
New York: Continuum 1998. Pp. 132.
US$24.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-8264-1109-X);
US$16.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8264-1225-4).

Hans-Georg Gadamer
Praise of Theory: Speeches and Essays. Translated by Chris Dawson.
Foreword by Joel Weinsheimer.
New Haven, CT: Yale University Press 1998.
Pp. xxxviii + 185.
US$30.00. ISBN 0-300-07310-0.

It is hard to resist opening by noting that in February 2000 Hans-Georg Gadamer celebrated his one-hundredth birthday. Two recent books bring to readers an excellent introduction to his thought in a selection of lectures given between 1968 and 1988.

The Beginning of Philosophy is a translation of lectures given in Italy in 1988 and first published in Italian (1993), then German (1996). One understands, therefore (as one forgets too easily when looking at bibliographies), that we are dealing here with the record of a spoken text presented by a thinker when almost in his 90th year. Based on a course given in 1967, his last year at the University of Heidelberg, these lectures encapsulate Gadamer's view of the beginning of Western thought. Sadly, their publisher, Continuum, continues to display an almost insulting inattention to proofreading.

The Beginning of Philosophy is hermeneutics at work, for here Gadamer examines the Presocratic origins and the original Greek idea of philosophy out of his own understanding of philosophy's history. The nineteenth-century reduction of philosophy to a 'sequence of philosophical systems' was for Gadamer the undoing of 'a still living tradition' — a key part of the cultural

triumph that Heidegger called 'the forgetfulness of being' (125). Here Gadamer endeavors to recover from the shadows some of philosophy's original insights about being, 'the problem of life and death as well as the question of what the life of a human being is' (40), and the soul, seen as a 'life-principle' and as 'thinking and mind' (71). In this latter view, clearly, lies the beginning of Gadamer's own philosophy, for here the Greeks realized that 'thinking' is primordial: 'In Socrates' eyes, the linguistic universe possesses more reality than immediate experience' (53). The division of the world into subject and object that has been central to philosophy since the modern era represents the loss of an insight that originally defined philosophy: 'that mutuality of participation existing between subject and object that represents the highest point of Greek philosophy' (69).

Yet Gadamer does not simply press the Greeks into service as personal allies. A substantial part of this work involves the close reading of passages, and Gadamer does not hesitate to criticize forced Heideggerian interpretations that 'did violence to the text' (124). But Gadamer cautions against any idea that these texts can 'be viewed as documents and testimonies that inform us in an historically valuable way about the Presocratics' (72). Nothing would be more presumptuous, says Gadamer, than to think that these fragments can be archaeologically excised from the Platonic and Aristotelian matrix we find them in and cleaned up to constitute such a picture. In such restoration one does not, so to speak, knock off the mortar: the Presocratics *are* the mortar, and the edifices remain Platonic and Aristotelian. So Gadamer begins with Plato and Aristotle, 'the sole philosophical access to an interpretation of the Presocratics' — and thus *The Beginning of Philosophy* provides an excellent illustration of what Gadamer has said for years about the condition of understanding. Gadamer is against the conception of a philosophy fuelled by anonymous descriptive ambitions. To understand a Presocratic text can only mean to situate it in a live context (49), and the most productive such context we know of is the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle as we can interpret it today. The beginning of philosophy, says Gadamer, is no more capable of isolation than the beginning of our own lives; childhood or youth is intelligible to us now in light of our lives since, of what we have become (17-18). This is not an illegitimate perspective or one that does not afford real understanding; yet neither was the beginning the mere preliminary of what followed: other possibilities can still be found. Gadamer aims here, however, to counter a perspective that *is* illegitimate: a 'modernistic perspective' in philosophy that, since at least the nineteenth century, has become 'entirely alienated from history' by methodologically blocking living means of access to the past (24). The peculiarity of our understanding is 'irreducible'; there is no 'expert' view of philosophy (28).

Praise of Theory: Speeches and Essays contains ten well presented lectures by Gadamer — two from the sixties, beginning when Gadamer stopped regular teaching, and eight spanning the decade 1972-82. Translator Chris Dawson deserves praise not merely for the ease of his prose but for his care and intelligence as an editor: for the inclusion of the original German to

signal possible losses in translation and for creating a full set of notes, missing from the German edition, that supply page references for every quotation. *Praise of Theory* is a brilliant selection and a far more unified text than the average contemporary collection, and it is now the best short introduction to Gadamer's thought available. For those already familiar with his work, it will help tremendously in the matter of focus. As the translator notes in an interesting introduction, Gadamer has in fact written only two books; speaking is his preferred form, and the bulk of his published work is written lectures. It so happens that there is no individual work in that corpus that we can seize upon to get the picture with all the emphases clear. Focusing that picture is essential, and these essays provide a very effective aid. The title essay and 'The Power of Reason,' in particular, are excellent choices in this regard.

Where *The Beginning of Philosophy* examined the origin of the philosophical life, these essays deal with its fate. Collectively, they present the essence of Gadamer's thought, moving back and forth outlining the historical transformation of the ideas of theory, practice, science, and reason. Gadamer's philosophy charts the under-reported downfall of a tradition. The Greek discovery of science was the birth of Western civilization, and *theoria* — questioning, the devotion to 'what is' outside of all practicality — its way of life: 'science,' writes Gadamer, 'is the glory of our culture' (50). In an essential way, the concept of science confronts each of us with the limits of our own reason (39), and leads the individual 'to see what is, instead of what he would like to be' (31). But modern philosophy was not satisfied with this, improved upon this picture, and ultimately redefined science on the basis of its means: *method*.

The original idea of *theoria* and the 'theoretical ideal of life' with which it was aligned is no longer present in the idea of theory that we are familiar with. Modern philosophy addressed the problem of individual limitations in a way different from the Greek tradition — in a utopian way, says Gadamer (79) — and established science on a new footing. From this emerged 'a new world-schema' (81, 118). Everything now proceeds from the standpoint of 'knowability' (51) and the ancient concerns of *theoria* are all radically re-assessed. No longer is theory concerned with a 'way of comporting oneself,' a way of 'being present' to the world (31), or with 'concretizing what might fulfil the meaning of life' (41). There is no satisfactory mechanism for this. Theory today is scientific in a new sense: it is an active involvement in 'extending humankind's power by way of knowledge' (23), a knowledge now conceived as an anonymous product whose perfection is defined by generally establishable conditions. (Gadamer's pivotal notion of *method* is shown here to be, as several critics have failed to understand, a genuinely philosophical concept.) On this basis a new conception of practice gains precedence and, indeed, a new kind of reason is formed.

In the past some have judged Gadamer's thought to be mired in a particularly *démodé* anti-scientism, but as Joel Weinsheimer points out in the Foreword, Gadamer's idea of science in these later essays is continuous

with that in *Truth and Method*, and these essays make altogether clear that what Gadamer means by science is not some now-faded positivist bogeyman. Modern philosophy itself is fundamentally scientific in that it came to perceive the original concerns of *theoria* as unproductive, beyond the limit of what the mind could manage, by some new public standard of productivity that is now shared — as it was *not* in Greek times — between natural science and philosophy. In the primacy it gave to self-consciousness and the issue of 'self-certification' (28-9), philosophy became a full participant in a new process governed by new paradigms of utility, certification, and power.

Reason itself was thus redefined, and civilization now 'advances' as if our ideal were 'a perfectly administered world' (43) and what we really need is a 'society of experts' (75). But Gadamer argues that viable practice cannot be reduced to the 'application of theoretical findings about what it is possible for us to do' (66). What we are now witnessing, he claims, is in fact the expulsion of philosophy (67) and the triumph of a technical view of life, a form of thinking that is 'beginning to expand into a universal view of the world' (79) and, through a 'universal leveling,' to flatten out reality, curtailing freedom. Here the other themes of Gadamer's work enter in: dialogue, art, poetry, language — all reassigned tasks, in this administered world, outside the august purview of the withered vestige of *theoria*. It is our loss, for theory was a process of humanization (10); to be known truly, 'the world must be known as something other than just a world of unlimited possibilities' (81).

Throughout these essays, Gadamer examines how a set of concepts central to the original idea of philosophy was transformed by a civilization increasingly governed by a spirit of calculation, success, making — a movement in which the original context of theory (*paideia, Bildung*, cultivation) became infinitely removed from anything that the essentially productive mentality of modern culture had a place for. Indeed, one need only look at the present state of the last remaining bastion of the Greek ideal, the university, to see how little survives, in this training ground for article writers, of the process of arriving at 'a life to which one can say "yes" ' (36). Gadamer argues that the new paradigms of certification, achievement, and power cannot acknowledge the depth of the world known to *theoria*, where existing relations, human finitude, 'the other person,' and an idea of investigation rooted in the good serve as fundamental and irreducible conditions for the recognition of reality.

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Gary Gutting
Pragmatic Liberalism and the Critique of Modernity.
New York: Cambridge University Press 1999.
Pp. xii + 198.
US$49.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-521-64013-X);
US$17.95 (paper: ISBN 0-521-64973-0).

Gutting's project is to 'defend a commitment to modern reason that avoids both scientistic and philosophical modernity' (3). 'Scientistic modernity' is the view that science is the only rational authority; 'philosophical modernity' is the view that there is a distinctive realm of philosophical rationality grounding either science and ethics (or both). The account of what Gutting terms 'pragmatic liberalism' is developed through a series of critical reflections on the work of Taylor, Rorty and MacIntyre.

What is pragmatic liberalism? For Gutting, it is his version of the Enlightenment ideal: 'the "liberalism" expresses commitment to human freedom through the deployment of reason, and the "pragmatic" means that this commitment is not grounded on any deep (philosophical) theory of human nature' (6). Modern analytic philosophy is both friend and foe: as foe it 'appears as an arch-modernism — a manifestation of the problems of modernity rather than a means to their solution' (1); as friend it provides analytical clarification: thus pragmatic liberalism, whilst including some of the techniques of analytic philosophy, goes beyond it, partly in its strong anti-foundationalism and anti-representationalism, and also in its insistence that 'our institutions require ... evaluation in light of the historical processes that have produced them' (184).

Gutting turns first to Rorty as he regards his approach as one of the best starting points for contemporary philosophical reflection (7), but Rorty comes under fire for failing to come to terms with the fundamental truth of realism. Rorty is wrong to deny the facts of 'humdrum' realism; we cannot deny (so Gutting claims) the truth of everyday realism. Rorty is accused of being ambivalent in his realism, because he is not always clear on whether he is operating on the level of ordinary life or philosophical theory. This flaw Gutting corrects by importing Davidson: 'If ... we stick to the distinction between humdrum and philosophical realism, Davidson's perspective allows us to develop Rorty's pragmatic approach to knowledge in a coherent and convincing manner. Davidson shows how we can, contrary to Taylor, reject the scheme-content distinction and eliminate representationalism while maintaining a humdrum realism that slips into neither transcendental idealism nor metaphysical realism' (38).

Gutting takes issue not only with Taylor's adoption of the scheme-content distinction, but also with his metaphysical anti-naturalism in ethics. The 'liberalism' in pragmatic liberalism requires no metaphysical foundations, whether naturalistic or anti-naturalistic. We should distinguish metaphysical naturalism from ethical naturalism, i.e. the claim that our ethical values

require grounding in nothing more than our beliefs and desires. 'So understood, ethical naturalism does not imply metaphysical naturalism, since it is consistent with the existence of "supernatural" entities ... Ethical naturalism claims just that any such entities are not needed to justify or make sense of ethical principles' (49).

Gutting rejects most of MacIntyre's substantive claims and argues (for example) that 'At best, MacIntyre has shown that ethics requires a tradition, with a conception of the human good and of the virtues' (98) and that MacIntyre's position is 'congenial because ... it provides pragmatic liberalism with an invaluable articulation of the social and historical dimensions of human life' (174).

So, after the dust has settled, what exactly is Gutting claiming? Pragmatic liberalism is his response to the problem of modernity. It arises from a critique of claims to ground knowledge in a body of distinctive fundamental knowledge, whether epistemological or ethical: 'The pragmatic liberal regards both knowing and doing as nothing more than human social practices, governed by norms derived entirely from the deep desires that constitute individuals as members of cognitive and moral communities. This position rejects the project of the philosophical enlightenment in favour of the affirmation of ordinary life characteristic of the humanistic enlightenment' (163). The enlightenment ideal of autonomy is ensured by situating all norms entirely within human communities. Gutting allows that critics may argue that pragmatic liberalism gives up on the enlightenment commitment to reason, but he claims that 'this is only so with respect to a philosophical reason claiming a privileged perspective on reality. There is thus a full endorsement of our ordinary modes of knowledge and of the truths, both humdrum and scientific, that they yield. With regard to such knowledge, all that is rejected are incoherent philosophical theories of justification and truth' (164).

For liberal pragmatics, philosophy, 'in its intuitive and argumentative forms', has failed, but this failure 'does not, contrary to certain forms of scepticism, call into question the fundamental Humean truths implicit in the very conduct of human life.' Not only do we not possess philosophical foundations for humdrum beliefs but also we do not need them: all knowledge and discussion must begin from beliefs that are themselves unjustified. These include the Humean beliefs (primary basic beliefs) without which human life is impossible (which we all share), and secondary basic beliefs that we happen to hold (but need not) and 'which are neither justified nor refuted by any considerations to which we have access' (168). At this point I caught a whiff of Collingwood's argument for absolute presuppositions as the ungrounded ground of our thought and action and wondered about Collingwood's affinity with pragmatic liberalism, especially in the 'metaphilosophical coda' where we read that: ' ... contrary to the aspirations of classical modern philosophy, there is no presumption that philosophical analysis ... reveals fundamental foundational truths; it simply makes relatively explicit the de facto norms that govern the practices of our epistemic, moral, and

aesthetic communities' and that 'analytic philosophers have begun to speak once again of intuitions, now meaning simply the "spade-turning" beliefs they find themselves forced to take as basic in their search for philosophical truth. ... we have no alternative to beginning with our own de facto intuitions, even though they have no certification beyond our inability to get past them' (183).

Whether Gutting finally makes good all his own positive claims is perhaps a moot point. He is good at showing what pragmatic liberalism is *not* and also at showing that it offers 'an anti-representationalist view of knowledge which avoids the standard charges of relativism and scepticism and includes a modest commonsense and scientific realism' (66-7). A larger compass than this short book is perhaps required to convince us that we should accept this offer — but, though short, it is long on argument and well worth reading.

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Ian Hacking
The Social Construction of What?
Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press
1999. Pp. x + 261.
US$29.95. ISBN 0-674-81200-X.

The Social Construction of What? is based on a number of previously published papers and lectures, but it is not a simple collection: Hacking's rewriting brings out clearly the unity of the work as a whole. In it Hacking makes important and useful distinctions, and applies them to a variety of specialized areas: the natural sciences, mental illness, child abuse, weapons research, dolomitic limestone, and the Hawaiian evaluation of Captain Cook's divinity.

Hacking begins by pointing out the wide range of items claimed (in book titles) as socially constructed. His initial list of twenty-four (many more surface throughout the book) ranges from Authorship through Illness and Knowledge to Zulu Nationalism, including along the way Nature, Quarks, and Reality, a trio which might be thought to preempt and render otiose the numerous others.

The dust jacket claims that the book, 'written with generosity and gentle wit ... brings a much needed measure of clarity to current arguments about the nature of knowledge.' It's nice to see a dust jacket getting things right for a change, but there is also, along with the generosity and gentleness, an enjoyable sprinkling of justified acerbity to season the whole. This is a

balanced and judicious book, but Hacking wastes no time on the 'many science-haters and know-nothings [who] latch on to constructionism as vindicating their impotent hostility to the sciences' (67), nor on the 'banal and narcissistic postmodern fascination with mere texts' (9). At an 'I love science' passage in Collins 'one cringes and mutters something about protesting too much' (68), and Stanley Fish's attempted but 'inept conciliation,' is briskly dismissed: 'Unlike Stanley Fish, I do not want peace between constructionist and scientist. I want a better understanding of how they disagree, and why, perhaps, the twain shall never meet' (31). Hacking is briskly dismissive of pretentious band-wagon jumping, but illuminatingly helpful on the better aspects of constructionism.

What is it that is (putatively) *constructed*? And what *kind* of construction is it? Hacking notes three different types of accusative for the verb *construct*, objects, ideas, and 'elevator words' such as 'truth, facts, reality' which, 'in philosophical discussions ... raise the level of discourse' and 'are used to say something about what we say about the world' (21, 68, 80).

Under *objects* Hacking includes any number of disparate things which we would normally take to be 'in the world.' Examples are: 'People (children), ..., Practices (child abuse, hiking), Actions (throwing a ball, rape), ... , Relations (gender), Material objects (rocks), ... , Unobservables (genes, sulphate ions), fundamental particles (quarks),' as well as a large number of things which may not fit clearly into any of these categories: 'rent, dry rot, evictions, ... , squatting, greed, ... the Caspian Sea ... periods of time, ... fidgety behaviour, [and] loving-kindness' (21-2).

Idea includes 'ideas, conceptions, concepts, beliefs, attitudes to, theories,' as well as 'groupings, classifications (ways of classifying), and kinds (the woman refugee).' Their extension, e.g., 'the group of women refugees now meeting with the Minister of Immigration ... count as objects.' Hacking adds, 'I am well aware that there is much slippage in this coarse system of sorting' (22).

Clearly though, it is important. If someone says that (for example) *quarks* are a social construct, do they mean quarks wouldn't have been if we hadn't? Or that perhaps no one would have come up with the idea if (say) the Spartans hadn't been at Thermopylae? Or ... ? What *exactly* is the claim? Hacking looks for a middle ground between the implausibility of the first and the banality of the second.

And why would anyone be tempted by constructionism? 'People ... argue that X is socially constructed precisely when they find that: [currently] X appears to be inevitable' (12), when it isn't. And when 'X is quite bad as it is,' or even, 'We would be much better off if X were done away with, or at least radically transformed' (6), then the construction should be pointed out, unmasked, perhaps even destroyed. Saying that X is *constructed* draws our attention to the fact that it is *not* a natural kind: that we could function, perhaps we have functioned, perhaps we should function, without it.

Hacking concentrates on three salient areas where a tendency to constructionism reveals itself: contingency, nominalism, and the explanation of

stability. These 'sticking points emphasize philosophical barriers, real issues on which clear and honorable thinkers may eternally disagree' (68).

The notion of *contingency* is most interestingly applied with respect to the natural sciences. 'A social construction thesis for the natural sciences would hold that, in a thoroughly nontrivial sense, a successful science did not have to develop in the way it did, but could have had different successes evolving in other ways that do not converge on the route that was in fact taken. ... I find this idea hard to state, let alone to believe' (32-3). It *is* hard to state, partly because its very proponents do not make it clear. Hacking notices Pickering's claim that an active, successful, robust *different* physics might have arisen as 'something badly in need of clarification,' for 'the "different" physics would not have been equivalent to present physics. Not logically incompatible with, just different' (72). One reason this calls out for clarification is that, in elementary first order logic at least, $\neg(A \leftrightarrow B) \leftrightarrow (\neg A \leftrightarrow B)$, so the senses of 'equivalence' and 'compatibility' need some attention. This notion of contingency is not an undetermination thesis of the Quinean sort, rather it is the claim that real world science might have taken an importantly different direction from the one it did take, so that, in the year 2000, we could have had a robust, quarkless, physics which (a) was not equivalent to the one we have, and (b) was at least as developed and successful as the one we do have. Physicists who say, 'for example?' are unsurprisingly unanswered.

Noting the too often blurred distinction between constructivism (as found in Brouwer), constructionalism (as in Russell), and constructionism, the topic of the present work, Hacking remarks: 'All construct-isms dwell in the dichotomy between appearance and reality set up by Plato, and given a definitive form by Kant. Although social constructionists bask in the sun they call post-modernism, they are really very old-fashioned' (49).

One of the ways in which constructionists are old-fashioned may be seen in their penchant for one of the facets of nominalism. We must be careful here, for *nominalism* not only is, but always was, an umbrella term. Things got off to a bad start when Plato ran two distinct notions together, making our ability to classify parasitic on the existence of abstract objects. Their existence, in turn, ensured that there were *natural* kinds. All things to all thinkers, the term 'realism' is nowadays too amorphous to be useful as 'nominalism's antithesis. Hacking suggests 'inherent-structurism' as a term clear enough to be understandable and barbarous enough not to be borrowed and broadened. It is worth noting that one can be an *ontological* nominalist — be dubious about a non-spatio-temporal Platonic realm housing word types, numbers, and the unending Cantorian sequence of infinities — without being a *classificatory* nominalist, indeed while being a whole hearted inherent-structurist: humans took a long time to *notice* that there were galaxies, but there they were, all along, and the same is true of axolotls, barnacle geese, and beavers' tails. Philosophers like Ockham and Buridan were nominalists in both senses, but the two sorts come apart easily enough.

Hacking's third sticking point has to do with the stability of explanations: are 'external factors relevant to the stability of the laws of nature (91)' or are

they irrelevant? As the second sticking point looks back to St Thomas's *antiqui nominales*, the ancient nominalists, so this third sticking point looks back to the seventeenth century dust up between people like Leibniz on the one hand and Locke on the other: 'Rationalists think that most science proceeds as it does in the light of the good reasons produced by research. Some bodies of knowledge become stable because of the wealth of good theoretical and experimental reasons that can be adduced for them. Constructivists think that reasons are not decisive for the course of science' (91).

Hacking invites us to see where we stand on these three issues (on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being pure constructionist) and offers his own 'debilitatingly ambivalent' scores: Contingency: 2; Nominalism: 4; External explanations of stability: 3. (99) This very ambivalence, which many of us would share in various degrees, is itself enough to show that (social) constructionism is multi-faceted and, that being so, its curate's egginess should occasion no surprise.

I have left myself no space to discuss Hacking's application of these notions to particular cases, but let me urge you to read this book from cover to cover. It's a delight, it's packed full of fascinating factual information, and it is a careful and important piece of philosophical analysis.

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Hendrik Hart, Ronald A. Kuipers and **Kai Nielsen, eds.**
Walking the Tightrope of Faith: Philosophical Conversations about Reason and Religion.
Atlanta: Editions Rodopi 1999. Pp. ii + 225.
US$67.00 (cloth: ISBN 90-420-0716-8);
US$22.00 (paper: ISBN 90-420-0706-0).

The essays presented in this volume are intended to expand upon a dialogue undertaken many years ago by Hart and Nielsen at meetings of the Canadian Philosophical Association, the substance of which was published in 1990 under the title *Search for Community in a Withering Tradition: Conversations between a Marxian Atheist and a Calvinian Christian*. In addition to Hart and Nielsen, this book includes contributions by such diverse and respected philosophers as Rodger Beehler, Michael Langford, Barry Allen, C.G. Prado and A.W. Cragg. The expanded range of this book is promising indeed, suggesting that the conversations contained therein might be seen as an exemplification of the method of 'wide reflective equilibrium' (WRE),

that form of social discourse which Nielsen has often recommended as a forum in which well intentioned intellectuals might productively address the numerous social, political and moral ills that modernity has heaped upon us.

It might reasonably be expected that Nielsen's claim, which he vigorously iterates throughout his three lengthy contributions to the volume — that religious belief is both repugnant to reason and unrewarding in practice — would prove to be a bit of a conversation stopper. And Nielsen certainly is at the center of things. Indeed, the other participants can be seen to be seeking in their various ways to address his apparently uncompromising positivistic views in an effort to establish a toehold for a fruitful and meaningful religious discourse. If, in fact, this is WRE, it is a conversation in which Nielsen appears to be firmly in charge of the agenda, 'laying down the law, left and right, about what can rationally be believed, what makes sense, what is indefensible nonsense, and so on,' a tendency to which, according to Beehler, Nielsen often succumbs in his writings on the philosophy of religion (53).

In spite of this (or perhaps because of it) the contributions are genuinely articulate and provoking, sensitive to the power of religious faith to provide life with passion and meaning. Read as responses to Nielsen, they seem to fall into two groups: Cragg and Langford produce arguments that attempt to show that at least some religious beliefs are both coherent and morally uplifting; Beehler, Allen and Prado, following Hart, attempt to avoid the main thrust of Nielsen's critique by locating religious discourse in a privileged epistemic space outside of the domain of standard post-enlightenment justificatory practices. Thus Hart's defense of religious faith succeeds in part by excising it of creedal content: to believe is to be disposed to recognize the face of God in the other, not to affirm beliefs or otherwise assent to propositions. Religious language is thus deliteralized, becoming instead a language of metaphor, in which faith emerges as that passionate trust or commitment which helps us cope with the boundary conditions of life: death, suffering, good, evil. Hart thus portrays himself as post-modern, pluralistic and skeptical about meta-narratives. His goal is to discern ways to tackle our shared problem about how we are to work together in a respectful and fruitful manner.

In a manner not dissimilar to Hart, Beehler suggests that Nielsen's attempt to dismiss religious beliefs is rooted in a discredited, positivistic epistemology the claims of which are themselves steeped in problems of coherence. More to the point, such claims fail to address adequately the true meaning and purpose of religious discourse, which is, in part, to better enable people to live in real communities. In the language of Wittgenstein, religion is a form of life and its language provides an important framework within which we forge our collective lives. It may be true, as Nielsen suggests, that for most of us today, situated as we are in the modern world, such beliefs can appear arcane and difficult. Beehler recognizes that religious beliefs have very slender cognitive support and citing Wittgenstein, he compares the believer to a tightrope walker who appears to be supported by nothing. He nonetheless makes a strong case that such beliefs are both possible and

compelling. Indeed Beehler expresses some confusion at 'a curious division' that he sees in Nielsen's attitude: Nielsen's condemnatory views on religious belief and practice seem to be at odds with his express claim that it is not the job of philosophy to be the 'overseer of culture.' Indeed, Nielsen's attitude would also seem to narrow the range of those competent to participate in the conversation, implying that WRE is a trifle elitist, a point taken up by both Allen and Prado. They identify Nielsen as a recidivist universalist rationalist who is deeply committed to 'our tribe's justificatory practices'; they cite this hubris, and not the apparent incommensurability of religious language as the major obstacle to genuine dialogue and conversation. Prado suggests that the 'reasonable' in Nielsen's 'reasonable pluralism' is really a ploy intended to secure the domination of our justificatory practices, thereby resisting genuine pluralism.

It is Langford's view that, with appropriate modifications, religious belief is 'worthy of respect', i.e., something to which one could rationally assent. He describes his view as Wittgensteinian and the modifications that he has in mind arise from the natural elasticity of language. Much of his paper is given over to the argument that a theory of analogical predication can rescue religious language from the abyss of meaninglessness. It can also help to explain why it is that: for some people at least, religious belief is a live option; the concept of God is an 'interpretive concept'; the world as experienced by religious believers is partially reflective of that belief; and religious emphasis on love can add an important moral dimension to life. It is this latter point that is taken up by Cragg who suggests that Nielsen is faced with the challenge of showing that a secular morality can in fact 'speak to those whose health has been broken, whose lives have been interrupted by personal tragedy, who have been crippled or severely incapacitated by misadventure' (143). Cragg suggests that it is these people to whom the church has traditionally, if inadequately, addressed its message of concern and love, and that post-enlightenment ethics, however well-intentioned, has yet to demonstrate its ability to effectively embrace these people.

Nielsen does not throw up the white flag. His responses are robust and sometimes sharp. He simply cannot understand (he says) why everybody assumes that just because he claims that religious beliefs are irrational he is thereby suggesting that religious believers are irrational people. Nothing, he says, could be further from the truth. Many, perhaps most, committed believers are (apart from these beliefs) perfectly reasonable folk. He is especially hostile to the suggestion that his position, which he thinks of as inclusive and pluralistic, might be perceived as narrow and elitist. These criticisms have often been directed at his views and his responses to them here, as elsewhere, do not seem entirely convincing. At the same time, he does effectively question whether it is possible to talk about religion entirely outside the domain of matters of fact. With Penelhum, he argues that portrayals of religious faith as entirely non-creedal make no sense; believers must believe something. His challenge to them is to show that what they believe makes sense. In fact, both Cragg and Langford respond to this

challenge. Cragg's statement, that Christianity has found the moral high road, particularly infuriates Nielsen and his reply is quite vitriolic. Such a claim, made on behalf of Christianity, seems to Nielsen immoral. Christianity has had its chance and has proved unequal to the task. It is time, he proposes, to do something about human misery and give socialism a chance, the kind of socialism espoused by Marxian critical theory which he describes as 'the best game in town.' Perhaps, perhaps not. Nonetheless, the very intensity of his response suggests that here, in the moral domain, there is an issue of real importance, and that a nerve has been touched. Nielsen seems to simply dismiss Langford, referring to his views as Thomistic, not really a form of fideism. As such, they are subject to the powerful criticisms of both Hume and Kierkegaard. At the same time, if Langford is right, then both Hume and Kierkegaard are wrong and this suggests that the language of post-enlightenment philosophy may simply be too impoverished to allow for genuine religious expression. This is a path that Nielsen does not explore. It would require, among other things, a serious re-examination of his philosophical ancestry.

This is a lively, polyphonic and important book. It provides the reader with perceptive and engaging contributions to what, almost in spite of itself, is a genuine conversation addressing important issues related to the rationality of religious belief. We highly recommend this book to those interested in the philosophy of religion.

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Stephen R. Haynes and **John Roth, eds.**
The Death of God Movement and the Holocaust: Radical Theology Encounters the Shoah.
Westport, CT: Greenwood Press 1999.
Pp. xvii + 152.
US$55.00. ISBN 0-313-30365-7.

David Jones
Moral Responsibility in the Holocaust: A Study in the Ethics of Character.
Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield 1999.
Pp. xi + 255.
US$55.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-8476-9266-3);
US$15.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8476-9267-1).

For those of a theological bent, the Holocaust must come as an earthquake. The great cultural critic Theodor Adorno said that with it, 'all the clocks of measurement were broken, and surely God, the ultimate guarantor of time, regularity and value, must fracture with his (her, its?) clocks.' Any attempt to represent the Holocaust in theology must be a way of picturing, approaching, drawing near to that which cannot be said, that which is beyond understanding, that which the human has done but the human will never understand, to that historical moment (are there then others?) where the human becomes permanently unrecognizable to itself. While this is the domain of religion (more on that below), it must also be the moment when God becomes equally unrecognizable. Richard Rubenstein, one of a foursome of Jewish and Christian theologians who announced 'the death of God' in the 1960s, and who composed the main entries in *The Death of God Movement and the Holocaust*, has found that the terms of theology will simply not do when applied to a Europe drenched in the dried blood of millions and, having turned from a deceased God, is now more interested in socio-historical explanations of the Shoah. For what has theology to say about a God who would allow the Shoah to happen? What has it to say about a world in which God could not prevent it, or disappeared from the scene of the crime like some secret agent?

The death of God, applauded by Nietzsche, who could never have known what the twentieth century would wreak (and worse for him, in his name), is imagined differently by each of the four theologians in this volume, which is the proceedings of a conference dedicated to revisiting their views 25 years later, and contains, in addition to their chapters, short commentaries by a number of other writers. While the pieces by the main participants are hermetic to the death of God movement, and shed little light either on it, or on the role of the Holocaust in its past and present configuration, the commentaries can be worth reading. However, it is an unfortunate editorial decision to have failed to allow the commentators to expand their views from

the few pages they were allowed at the conference, and this is crippling to the volume.

The death of God was announced by the four, each independently, in the 1960s. The three protestants make their announcements on the basis of views about an increasingly secular culture, and in addition the scientific demand for a kind of evidence disastrous to faith. Thomas Altizer, the most utopian of the bunch, believed that the death of God could be interpreted Christologically, as a kind of eschatological emptying. The others rejected this utopianism but spoke of the moral opening that could follow from a retreat from faith, an opening of which Christianity could remain a steward. Only Richard Rubenstein, a Jew, derived his views from the gravity of the Holocaust. Part of the point of the conference was for the others to rethink their views in the light of this gravity.

I am sorry to report that in general this is most superficially done and seldom goes beyond a morally appropriate but underdeveloped reminder that 'Christian society' is partly responsible for the preparation of the Shoah. Such a reminder gets attached to evocative but again, unexplored views about religion. For example, William Hamilton, writing in a pluralistic vein, speaks of the death of monotheism as a liberation from the culture of oppression and intolerance which he argues is inherently part of a monotheistic attitude. There is something perhaps right about this over-generalization, but what, we do not learn. As Edith Wyschogrod says in an illuminating commentary, Hamilton believes both that monotheism has in modern times become the 'ideology of death' and that it 'bears much of the responsibility for the Holocaust' (59). I think she is right about what Hamilton believes. Wyschogrod also attributes to Hamilton something I do not find in his writing, namely the assertion that 'the narratives of the Holocaust victim carry no privileged status' (59). What Hamilton says is this: contra remarks by Elie Wiesel, it is not the case that only the survivors from the camps have the right to speak. Hamilton is surely right, if only because the best writing on the Holocaust, not to mention the best films, are by those who mostly did not get deported. Whose voice counts in what way and for what reason: this is, again, not taken up by anyone in the book.

There are interesting commentaries by Thomas Idinopulous (on the four) and Gerson Greenberg (about contemporary Jewish theologizations of the Shoah). But may I suggest that one wishing to turn to the question of theology either look at the longer writings of these people, or turn to the work of Claude Lanzmann. Lanzmann's film *Shoah* is about the *absence of God* rather than his (her, its) death. In the evocation of this absence, his film bespeaks the religiosity of the Shoah, its way of occasioning ultimate, unanswerable questions before the sublimity of what is not and can no longer be, and places the Shoah within the impulse towards religion. It is an irony that none of the discussions in this book entertain the thought that the Holocaust invokes the religion it also disfigures, for it occasions two aspects of the sublime — an incomprehensible size and scope and a raising of ultimate thoughts, in this case without grandeur but instead of horror. God lives in the Holocaust

because the event raises the thought of his absence: hence Lanzmann's skepticism about God's death and emphasis on his *absence*. Skepticism about God's death is especially appropriate for those who are already skeptical about his (her, its?) existence.

Go and watch Lanzmann's film, or read Adorno, or an historical volume on the Shoah. And then consider where God fits into the picture, if anywhere. You will find, in all probability, no satisfying answer. What *that* shows about religion is the real question.

The second of the pair of books under review is written as a textbook for undergraduate students. Its aim is to use moral theory to think about questions of responsibility that pertain to the Shoah. The intention is praiseworthy, and Jones has recruited a great deal of interdisciplinary material to his purpose. There is no question that issues of responsibility, guilt, and punishment are paramount when crimes against humanity are at stake, and the concept was more or less invented at Nuremberg. Unfortunately, the virtue-based moral theory (upon which Jones relies, and which he lays out well in the first few chapters) is far from adequate to the complexity of perpetrators, victims and crimes against humanity (genocide). The book comes off looking more than a little pat. On the basis of a very weak argument, Jews are excused from most every scrap of blame for what happened to them (against the view of the important historian Raul Hilberg). More importantly, perpetrators are evaluated uniformly in terms of standard moral and legal categories of responsibility, the question being whether they acted on the basis of 'free will' instead of some compulsion or insanity that would have come from social conditioning and/or psychological disturbance. It is as if to blame Hitler for the atrocities he instituted, one must refute the charge of 'temporary insanity.' Jones's purpose is to assimilate radical evil to ordinary evil with respect to the moral categories that apply. There is no doubt that one must blame Hitler, but on the basis of what moral categories pertaining to free will, lack of excusability and the like? I firmly believe two things: first that Hitler was mad, and second that he is responsible. What this shows about ordinary moral concepts of free will vs. determinism, sanity vs. madness, excusability vs. responsibility, is that they are philosophically cast into doubt when radical evil obtains. Jones fails the task of philosophy in unproblematically assuming them.

When finished watching Lanzmann's films, a return to the pages of Adorno is in order. There, the breaking of the clocks of measurement, including and especially moral clocks, is the philosophical starting point, given the Shoah.

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Errol G. Katayama
Aristotle on Artifacts: A Metaphysical Puzzle.
Albany: State University of New York Press
1999. Pp. xii + 202.
US$54.50 (cloth: ISBN 0-7914-4317-5);
US$17.95 (paper: ISBN 0-7914-4318-3).

Katayama's monograph focuses on an issue often relegated to the background in the abundance of scholarly works about Aristotle's theory of substance: what is his final answer to the question about the substantial status of artifacts? Aristotle's repeated appeal to the analogy of artifacts in the explanation of substance, change, etc. makes this a worthy topic of independent scrutiny. Answering that manufactured things are not substances, but *pragmata* or 'things', Katayama's analysis includes discussion of such issues as the criteria of substance, the clarification of which living things are actually substances, and whether the successful candidates are universal or particular.

The analysis pays particular attention to four passages, *Metaphysics* B 4 999a24-b24, K 2 1060b19-30, H 3 1043b4-32 and Λ 2-4 1069b7-1070b10, in which Aristotle's comparison between artifacts and natural substances reveals the failure of the form of an artifact to exist apart from the individual instance. Key in Katayama's analysis is the process of generation: substances are generated by nature, whereas artifacts are formed in accordance with nature. The actual form of a substance exists apart from individuals with that form, whereas the form of an artifact does not exist apart from its instantiation. Thus, that a manufactured thing is created in accordance with nature does not convey substantial status to its form or to the composite.

Examining Aristotle's arguments at Λ 6 1071b12 and B 4 999b4-12, Katayama argues that included among the criteria of substance are actuality and eternity. Katayama argues for an ontological connection between the separability of substance and the fact that it is ungenerated, and thereby eternal. If the form is not eternal, an unacceptable infinite regress would arise. Nor is the form which is the substance of natural things generated, although the composite is something which comes to be, i.e. it is a form in the matter. This explains why the Unmoved Mover and heavenly bodies are substances, and the forms of the living things which are capable of reproduction: in accordance with his theory of generation, the forms of these substances are the actual powers to reproduce their own nature in other things. (One would like a further analysis of some of the literature on this controversy — and others — although Katayama's endnotes do provide references to the locations of the controversy. Two texts in particular which appear to require a more probing analysis are the Z 3 arguments for the criteria of substance, the passage in H 4 1044b3ff which contrasts natural substance and natural eternal substance and H 6 1045a20ff: in this last, the form is explicitly identified as the actuality of the composite, rather than a potenti-

ality. Nevertheless, Katayama's conclusion that the form is a *dunamis* for reproduction is apparently consistent with this.)

The criteria defended by Katayama rule out some living things as substances: spontaneously generated things and infertile creatures such as mules. They fail as substances because they are formed by nature but not generated by nature; their forms are not actualities (appealing to the *Generation of Animals* II.1) because, e.g., the heat of the celestial spheres explains how they arise from rotting wood, rather than their generation from prior individuals of the same form; nor are they complete because they are unable to produce their own form in something else. (Incomplete things are sometimes substance 'with a qualification' in that a restriction of nature prevents them from reproducing their form e.g. children who are too young to reproduce, or women.)

Katayama argues that form as substance is both universal and particular. He distinguishes between different notions of 'separation', concluding that not only the separation of a composite individual and the separation of its form as formula apply (the last epistemically), but also the separation of the form (ontologically). If so, then a possibility occurs of substance as both individual and universal: the power (*dunamis*) to reproduce a substantial form.

'Aristotle on Artifacts' is an economical (108 of 202 pages) study of a very worthwhile topic, tightly composed. (For those who prefer to read texts which follow a linear progression, the sequence of the book is unhelpful. Because reference is made frequently to the four passages mentioned, Katayama's analysis of them is given in one of four appendices. Yet since reference is made frequently to the appendices, the endnotes are full of references to them. Giving the notes at the end obliges one to direct attention to the body of the book, the endnotes, and the appendices; footnotes would be preferable. Nor does the author adopt a consistent policy of references to Aristotle: sometimes these are given in parentheses following an appeal, yet other times they are given in the endnotes, which make for a lot of paging through the text.) The book includes an extensive bibliography, index locorum, index and an index of Greek terms.

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Kelvin Knight, ed.
The MacIntyre Reader.
Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press 1998. Pp. ix + 300.
US$40.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-268-01436-1);
US$19.95 (paper: ISBN 0-268-01437-X).

This Reader, the first of MacIntyre's work, is a perceptive and accessible guide to the full range of MacIntyre's thinking over the course of the last four decades, and will be of real value to those interested in his provocative and unique philosophy. Knight's aims in editing this Reader are 'first to present MacIntyre's central arguments, secondly to make available some of his most important but least known work and, only thirdly, to trace the development of his ideas' (1). The resulting collection achieves all three aims.

This success is due mainly to Knight's judicious selection and careful arrangement of material. Unusually for a Reader — but purposefully, given the aims — this material consists mainly of entire, short works (one published for the first time in English) which are independently comprehensible and allow for a lucid presentation of the central concerns of MacIntyre's thought. Included among these short works are MacIntyre's own synopses of his famous books *After Virtue* and *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?*, extracts from which have also been selected. In addition, there are two interviews taken from the later stages of MacIntyre's career, which not only supply some biographical detail but more importantly provide MacIntyre's own elaboration of the problems he has confronted in his work, and his self-reflection on his present philosophical position.

Knight has arranged the material into six parts such that, taken together, they give a clear sense of the progression of MacIntyre's thought. Thus we move from his early outlining of a critique of liberal morality, through his discussion of the failure of the Enlightenment project of justifying morality, and the identification of this failure as the aftermath of a breakdown of 'the tradition of the virtues', to his efforts to recover the virtues and reconstruct an updated Aristotelian moral theory, recombining reason and morality with practice and tradition.

This progression is made all the more coherent with the inclusion of Knight's unifying and critically perceptive introduction, which is also noteworthy in two further respects: firstly, its emphasis on how, throughout his career-long project, MacIntyre has perhaps been his own best critic, constantly re-evaluating his arguments and redefining his standpoint; secondly, its clarifying suggestion that MacIntyre's work should be seen as comprising two stages: (a) a substantive theory, which aims at putting in question the presuppositions of social and moral theories and (b) a metatheory which aims at constructing, in MacIntyre's words, 'the best theory so far about what makes a particular theory the best one' (264). Whilst Knight admits that viewing MacIntyre's task in terms of these stages might entail the risk of doing violence to his philosophy as a whole, this suggestion nevertheless

offers a valuable guideline for the identification and appreciation of MacIntyre's philosophical contributions.

At the end of the collection is an excellent and extensive guide to further reading which, as well as detailing the most important works on and by MacIntyre, also directs the interested reader towards commentaries from both political and theological standpoints, and towards the numerous debates and symposia in which MacIntyre has been engaged. In short, this Reader is an indispensible guide and work of reference to the thought of one of today's most compelling critics of modern philosophy and politics.

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Harold Hongju Koh and
Ronald C. Slye, eds.
Deliberative Democracy and Human Rights.
New Haven: Yale University Press 1999.
Pp. 317.
US$40.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-300-07583-9);
US$20.00 (paper: ISBN 0-300-08167-7).

This volume collects 19 essays in honor of Argentine jurist and philosopher Carlos Nino (d. 1993), whose life as a scholar and public figure was motivated by his deep concern for democracy and human rights. The essays address four broad areas of inquiry: 'First, what is the moral justification for the concept and content of universal human rights? Second, what is the relationship among nation-building, constitutionalism, and democracy? What are the political implications for a conception of universal human rights? Third, what is the relationship between moral principles and political practice? Fourth, how should a society confront what Kant called "radical evil"? What moral principles and practical realities must a successor regime address in seeking to hold a prior regime accountable for gross violations of human rights?' (5).

These essays, written by prominent legal and political thinkers, are on the whole well-written and tightly argued. In particular, pieces by Bernard Williams on the contextual nature of human rights, by Elaine Scarry on the philosophical implications of human rights violations, by Ronald Dworkin and by Stephen Holmes on the not-always comfortable fit between democracy and constitutionalism, by Jeremy Waldron on the failure of deliberative theory to conceptualize adequately the role of voting, and by Ruti Teitel on the moral and political importance of addressing the crimes of the *ancien*

regime — all offer fresh perspectives on important problems in contemporary political theory.

Unfortunately, the whole is less than the sum of its parts; despite the strength of the individual contributions, the volume lacks coherence. The chapters nicely show off the intellectual range and firepower of the essayists but leave the reader unsure what exactly — aside from the obvious link to Nino — warrants putting them all together. While the four themes around which the essays cluster are worthy and interesting, taking them all on at once ensures that none receives the careful, sustained attention it deserves. The editors might have mitigated this difficulty somewhat in their opening remarks by offering at least a broad sketch integrating the four themes — which are not, after all, unrelated.

More frustratingly, amid this thematic diversity, fascinating and relatively understudied questions about the relation between democracy and human rights get lost or obscured. Several chapters build on the empirical observation that democratic regimes do best at fostering respect for human rights; this is an important point, not to be dismissed lightly, but it is not new. Otherwise, the essays deal with one or the other of the book's headline concepts; readers attracted by the title will be disappointed to find little about the advertised connection between them. In this sense, the book suffers mainly from the unfulfilled expectation it itself generates.

This is unfortunate not least because numerous important questions about this broader connection arise in the interstices among the chapters. For instance, chapters on Haiti and Russia suggest that stability and fundamental economic reform may be prerequisites of successful democratic transitions and the realization of rights. Do these arguments lend support to the controversial 'Asian Values' thesis that development takes precedence over rights and sometimes justifies their suppression? Is there a conflict between development and democratization? Is democracy mainly a human rights delivery system? If so, how does that require us to rethink fundamental democratic principles and institutions?

Are there hazards in conflating, as several essays do, human rights with constitutional rights? In particular, is there a conflict between citizens' or democratic rights and human rights? Which account should we prefer, and why?

If truth-telling and affirmation are sometimes preferable to criminal trials and punishment because they promote reconciliation and foster democratic stability, does this tell against arguments for international war-crimes tribunals and a proposed International Criminal Court? How should the international community's efforts to prosecute and punish weigh against considerations like stability and democratic entrenchment at home?

Nino subscribed to a liberal theory of human rights that the essayists generally share, yet liberalism has limited persuasive power, for historical and cultural reasons, in many countries undergoing democratic transitions. How does this fact bear on our understanding of liberal theories of human rights and of the fit between democracy and human rights more generally?

The book comes closest to addressing such issues in its scattered allusions to Nino's views on the moral and practical connections between democratic deliberation and the realization of rights. This might leave interested readers feeling that they should revisit or discover the work of Nino himself. The book thus succeeds in what seems to be its principal aim: what better tribute could a group of scholars pay to a respected colleague than to stimulate interest in his work?

No reader of *Deliberative Democracy and Human Rights* will put it down without having learned something, at the very least that there is much more still to learn. It is perhaps unreasonable to ask anything more of such a book, even if we also put it down with a twinge of regret for a missed opportunity.

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Emmanuel Levinas
Alterity and Transcendence.
Trans. Michael B. Smith.
New York: Columbia University Press 1999.
Pp. xxiv + 195.
US$29.50. ISBN 0-231-11650-0.

At first glance, the publication of this collection of a dozen essays composed by Levinas between 1967 and 1989 might appear to be inconsequential. Several essays have already been translated elsewhere, and the three interviews included here are not as insightful as Phillipe Nemo's interview published under the title *Ethics and Infinity* (1982). Nevertheless, *Alterity and Transcendence* is noteworthy due to the three excellent historically oriented essays devoted to the theme of transcendence: 'Totality and Totalization', 'Infinity', and 'Philosophy and Transcendence'.

To be sure, transcendence is a central theme in Levinas's thought. The word appears directly in countless titles of Levinas's works, such as *Transcendence and Intelligibility* (1984), 'Transcendence and Evil', 'Transcendence and Height', and it also resonates within the titles of Levinas's two major works, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority* (1961) and *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence* (1974). While, as Levinas would have it, the philosophical tradition has been the refutation of transcendence, transcendence is an idea that challenges the philosophical tradition. Still, in spite of the fundamental importance of this theme, Levinas rarely offers

sustained discussions of what such notions as 'totality', 'infinity', and 'transcendence' mean within the philosophical tradition. As a result, Levinas has often been criticized for being insufficiently rigorous in his reading of the philosophical tradition. But, it can be shown that *Alterity and Transcendence* overcomes this apparent deficiency by offering historically oriented accounts of the notions of 'totality', 'infinity', and 'transcendence', respectively.

'Totality and Totalization', an altogether unique text in Levinas's corpus, examines the various meanings this term has adopted in the philosophical tradition, viz. sensible intuition, rational thought, the dialectical understanding of history, and the hermeneutics of texts. Despite these widely divergent contexts, there are two basic manners to establish the totality: either a regressive or a progressive movement of thought. A regressive movement occurs, for example, when reason goes beyond the perceptual given to determine the causal conditions that give rise to it. In so doing, reason follows the causal chain back from the conditioned to an unconditioned condition. Once the unconditioned is attained, reason grasps the object in its totality. In addition, the totality can also be determined through a progressive movement, as, for example, in the hermeneutics of the text. Every text is an organized whole consisting of a beginning, middle, and end. The problem, however, is that while an understanding of the text as a whole requires an understanding of its parts, the converse also holds true. This gives rise to the famous hermeneutic circle describing the back and forth movement involved in the process of understanding the text in its totality. Against both the regressive and the progressive determinations of totality, Levinas's critique is fundamentally the same: totality leaves nothing outside (41). Even though philosophy has commonly sought to establish totality, the possibility of breaking the totality, according to Levinas, has also been indicated on a number of occasions in the philosophical tradition, for example, in the works of Anaximander, Plato, Plotinus, Fichte, Bergson, and Rosenzweig (50-1). Yet, this break from the totality signifies neither a weakness nor a failure of thought but rather an opening onto an entirely different type of relation from knowledge.

The essay 'Infinity' clarifies the various meanings this term has adopted in the philosophical tradition. The notion of infinity, as Levinas shows, has been interpreted either in terms of the infinity of the divine or the infinity of the free will. Under the influence of Judeo-Christian theology, philosophy has associated the notion of infinity with the being of God. In Spinoza, for example, this association leads to the reduction of all finite modalities to the infinite. Since nothing can be conceived in independence from God, Levinas infers that the infinity of Spinoza's God signifies a being without an other. Quite differently, in German Idealism infinity is associated with the free will. For thinkers like Fichte, Schelling, Hegel and Nietzsche, the power of the will is unlimited. Instead of being determined by the oppositions between good/evil, truth/falsity, actual/potential, etc., the will is rather their condition. As a result of its status as an absolute origin, the free will never encounters anything radically alien to itself. Levinas criticizes both of the

above conceptions of infinity for being guided by an underlying attempt to totalize. That is to say that they admit of nothing outside of infinity. Hence, it becomes just as necessary to break from the traditional conceptions of infinity as it was to break from totality.

By clarifying the distinction between traditional conceptions of transcendence and the transcendence of the other person, the essay 'Philosophy and Transcendence' sheds light on the originality of Levinas's philosophy. In contrast with the entire philosophical tradition, Levinas contends that the encounter with another person is the primary locus of transcendence. The transcendence of the other person signifies another freedom, which, as an alien freedom, resists every attempt by myself to know or to master it. But, the other person does not only signify a negative freedom from myself. Positively, the freedom of the other person appears when the other person speaks to me. In speaking to me, the other places a demand upon me from the outside. By coming to me from the outside, the freedom of the other exposes me to the infinity of a radical past and future. For, the speech of another person emerges from a past that precedes any possible anticipation by myself, and my response to the other opens onto an absolute future that exceeds any completion. Hence, as Levinas shows, the encounter with another person is the true origin of a coherent, non-totalizing account of transcendence.

While the skill of Smith's translation is undeniable, it suffers from several notable difficulties. First, the use of italics to distinguish *moi (I)* from *Je* (I) is unwarranted and confusing. Second, a careful comparison with the original French text has shown one significant inaccuracy: the question 'Does the "knowledge" of pre-reflective self-consciousness know how to talk, properly speaking?' should be revised to ask 'Does the "knowledge" of pre-reflective self-consciousness, properly speaking, know?' (19). Indeed, that is the fundamental question raised by *Alterity and Transcendence*.

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Martin McAvoy
The Profession of Ignorance, With Constant Reference to Socrates.
Lanham, MD: University Press of America
1999. Pp. x + 330.
US$49.00. ISBN 0-7618-1387-X.

In this book, McAvoy seeks both to provide interpretations of several Platonic dialogues, and thereby to show how the Socratic profession of ignorance is central to the proper practice of philosophy itself. He identifies and argues for six theses in the book:

(1) Socrates' profession of ignorance [PI] is worth studying in depth, and essential study if we want to understand the character of Plato's Socrates and his particular activity.

(2) When Plato's Socrates professes ignorance he is being sincere and means what he says, [PI] is genuine in an important sense.

(3) Socrates' profession of ignorance [PI] is also a claim to a special kind of knowledge, i.e., knowledge of ignorance [KI].

(4) The profession of ignorance [PI], understood as presupposing knowledge of ignorance [KI], is the initiating force and kinetic engine of Socrates' philosophic life and activity.

(5) Thinking is at the heart of this engine, as an internal dialogue between our knowledge of ignorance [KI] and our ignorance of both, as if with the whole person wholly attentive we attend to both as someone who knows and someone who does not [PI].

(6) Philosophy itself is, in an important sense, the profession of ignorance, i.e., the specific profession with this as its speciality, the occupation whose preoccupation is also part of its own special calling [S-PI], and so its own special self-recognition as such [S-KI] is essential if it wants to understand its own particular character and activity. (3)

The book consists of an introduction, a prologue, seven chapters, and an epilogue. In the introduction McAvoy explains and briefly defends the above theses. Everything that follows other than Chapter 2 is in the form of a dialogue between 'Icarius' and 'Urquhart'.

The first of these discussions is the 'Prologue: Carnal Knowledge and Psychic Ignorance', in which the characters spar over various comparisons between what philosophy pursues and carnal knowledge. 'It is intellectual, but more. It aspires to and would respire in the condition of a carnal knowledge fully realised in full recognition. [...] You haven't carnal knowledge of every body, have you? But you might be able to conceive or imagine such a hypothetical condition as total carnal knowledge, as if the universe were one great living body to be known' (55). Plato claimed that our pursuit

of truth had *erōs* as its motive force, but I doubt that he had physical union with the universe in mind as his model for knowledge.

The chapters that follow each discuss of one or two Platonic (or, in the case of Chapter 3, perhaps pseudo-Platonic) dialogues: Chapter 1, *Parmenides*; Chapter 2, *Apology*; Chapter 3, *Alcibiades I*; Chapter 4, *Protagoras*; Chapter 5, *Charmides*; Chapter 6, *Gorgias* and *Republic*; and Chapter 7, *Theaetetus* and *Meno*.

Some of McAvoy's interpretations are intelligent and plausible (as, for example, in Chapter 2), but most tend to be more about drama than logic. Indeed, McAvoy seems to think that good logic is not something (Plato's) Socrates is much interested in (as, for example, in the chapter on the *Protagoras*, which McAvoy's characters find filled with bad arguments).

Scholars have long speculated about why Plato used the dialogue form. McAvoy sees this form as especially well-suited for the intellectual exploration of ignorance by those who are ignorant in the thoughtful way he finds essential to philosophy. But McAvoy's own use of dialogue has none of the attractions of Plato's. McAvoy's characters are anything but engaging. Icarius invariably develops the position, with Urquhart a kind of straight man huffing gruff criticisms, but there is no characterization here, and neither of the speakers arouses personal interest. Their patterns of speech are generally plodding and pedantic — bits of scholar-speak forced into conversational mode. McAvoy tries to compensate for this in various ways, for example, by occasionally having his characters become giddy with word-plays and paradoxes — but these, unlike Plato's, come across only as precious and do not provoke deeper thought on the issues. The careless and very unsystematical references to other scholarship make the discussion more like a real dialogue — but do nothing for the credibility of the author's positions. There is enough learning and thought evident in the pages of this book to show that McAvoy could write a good book about Plato. But this one is not it.

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John McDowell
Meaning, Knowledge and Reality.
Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press
1998. Pp. ix + 462.
US$39.95. ISBN 0-674-55777-8.

This is McDowell's second volume of collected papers. It includes essays on meaning, truth and understanding; on reference, thought and world; on realism and anti-realism, and a final section on issues in epistemology. Some of these essays rank among the finest work in contemporary philosophy. Taken together, they make compelling the view that McDowell is one of the most productive and innovative philosophers writing today.

The essays in Section II, on singular thought, are central. McDowell generously and repeatedly acknowledges his debt to Gareth Evans, both to his personal input to McDowell's thinking and to his seminal *Varieties of Reference*. It will be the task of later historians, if they are so minded, to tease out the threads of influence that run back and forth between McDowell and Evans. There is no doubt, however, that it has been McDowell who has done most to step back from the details of the development of Fregean theory of singular senses and to fill out the metaphysical re-orientation that the idea involves. In the essays in Section II, Essays 7 - 13, we get the next best thing to a McDowell book on reference. In many ways, we get something better.

McDowell's writing has an economy of expression that, coupled with a fondness for a sudden alternative take on an issue, can be revelatory. He writes with a scholarly patience and accuracy. He provides a precision lancing of a theory and then poses a question that inverts the underlying misconception that had been his target all along. There is a sort of sleight of hand in the way McDowell writes. The initial critique of a position wears all the hallmarks of a scholar's attention to and profound respect for another's theory. That is always there. But it is usually subservient to the revelatory insight that throws genuinely new light on old ways of thinking and floodlights new ways of thinking. Essay 12, 'Intentionality *De Re*', is a case in point.

This is one of the later essays from Section II. McDowell starts by raising the problem of how Searle's conception of object-directedness in thought can survive Kripke's attack on descriptivism. On Searle's account, the object-directedness of a thought consists in the thought specifying conditions that, if satisfied, make it about the object. But how does this handle the duplication of specifications across possible worlds? Such duplication means that it can never provide directedness to a particular, but only to a *type* of thing. Searle's response is to insist that the particular-directedness of thoughts can be anchored in the particularity of the relevant experiences (263). For example, the demonstrative thought 'That man is φ' can gain its particular-directedness on Searle's account in virtue of its canonical expression being of the form, 'There is a man there causing this visual experience and that man is φ.' McDowell then probes the question of how Searle is to capture the particu-

lar-directedness of the embedded demonstrative that picks out 'this experience'. After finding Searle's account wanting McDowell then offers the insight that, once developed, heralds a complete reversal of Searle's conception of intentionality.

McDowell suggests that the best account of the particular-directedness of 'this visual experience' is the fact that the experience itself — 'the very object to which those contents are directed' — is the focus of the mind's attention (264). This suggestion is of profound importance. Searle presented his *Intentionality* as a broadly Fregean inspired work. McDowell shows how taking his suggestion is compatible with a Fregean perspective in which it is *how* an object is present to mind that individuates a thought and not the object itself. Thus far, one might suppose that we have a patient examination and correction by one Fregean of a minor point of difference in another broadly Fregean conception of intentionality. That, of course, would be a mistake, for having prepared the space for the idea that Searle's demonstrative reference to the visual experience could be object-dependent, McDowell generalises the case and introduces the option of using this ploy as an account of object-directedness in the first place. So, there turns out to be no need for the Fregean to buy into Searle's conception of intentionality at all. The central neo-Fregean insight that a demonstrative mode of presentation is not specifiable independently of 'exploiting the perceived presence of the object' (267) is slipped in under cover of the meticulous examination of Searle's theory.

Essay 12 and the two preceding ones, the 1984 '*De Re* Senses' and the 1986 'Singular Thoughts and the Extent of Inner Space' provide a detailed continuous unwinding of the assumptions that stand in the way of a clear sight of the sea-change in our conception of intentionality heralded by the introduction of the idea of singular senses. In a footnote to '*De Re* Senses' McDowell observes that Evans' rebuttal of Perry's account of the alleged difficulties demonstratives pose for the Fregean turns on Perry's assumption that singular senses must be descriptive. As McDowell notes, the point is correct but 'risks being met with incomprehension, as long as the framework that holds the assumption in place is not challenged' (219). What McDowell offers in these essays is as comprehensive deconstruction of the framework as you will find anywhere.

The problem that strikes most people with the idea of singular senses is an epistemological one. If singular senses are object-dependent, what account can be given of error? McDowell does not have a detailed account of how to treat the different sorts of cases in which a singular term fails to refer, although there is much to be said in cataloguing the rich resources available for the singular sense theorist in handling such cases. McDowell does, however, have plenty to say on two general issues that matter here, namely: whether the idea of empty singular terms is as viable as most people seem to think on first reflection and, whether the epistemological framework that underpins the idea of empty singular terms is compelling. The former topic is covered in Essay 9 'Truth-Value Gaps'. The latter topic is the second main theme running through this collection.

The section on epistemology contains McDowell's 'Criteria, Defeasibility, and Knowledge'. As in so many of these essays, although the opening orientation is a confrontation with a particular author, or particular reading of a text (in this case, the reading by Wright and others of Wittgenstein's notion of a criterion) what the essay really focuses on is an assumption so seductive that many do not even stop to think of it at all, let alone record that they take it obvious. The assumption is that our experience of the world is marked by an interface comprising a 'highest common factor' conception of experience. This conception provides us with an account of experience that enables experience to be something that is invariant between the veridical and illusory cases. When our experience misleads us about how things are in the world, that it is in error is to do with something beyond experience itself. An experience of the presence of an object or property in the world does not become a different experience if the object or property turns out not to exist. McDowell, of course, given his advocacy of singular senses, is committed to denying this. You can't have a perceptual demonstrative thought of an object if the object is not there. No matter that you may *think* you are having such a thought; you are wrong. It is on the details of what sort of thought you are having that McDowell offers little assistance. But in the essays on epistemology he provides a series of striking insights into the problems that the 'highest common factor' conception of experience produces.

McDowell methodology owes much to Wittgenstein. He writes in a therapeutic manner. His work in trying to get people to see that the 'highest common factor' conception of experience is optional and, quite likely, erroneous is of the greatest importance. The conception makes our knowledge of the external problematic. It also lies behind the resistance to the idea of singular senses, for, as he puts it elsewhere in this collection, the disconnection of experience from the world makes it problematic how the inner representations left 'can be anything but dark' (249). That remark comes from Essay 11 - 'Singular Thought and the Extent of Inner Space'. The six page Section 5 of that essay constitutes one of finest accounts of what is wrong with the Cartesian conception of experience and the mind in general. McDowell's epistemological innovations run throughout this collection, see also Essay 15 from the section on realism and anti-realism for his deconstruction of the 'highest common factor' conception in the account of knowledge of other minds. Denying the interface conception of experience makes knowledge of the external world possible and gives the space for us to be in direct engagement with the world in singular thought. Essays 11 and 17 should be compulsory for all students of philosophy. Epistemology would then be very different.

The first section that covers McDowell's writings in a broadly Davidsonian conception of a theory of meaning might strike, at first, as of more historical interest. That would be a mistake. Re-reading some of these older essays only serves to make clear the consistency in McDowell's work over the last 25-30 years. The calm measured tone of his writing may have disguised the depth of his insights, but he has, I suspect, always realised that in a Davidsonian

theory of meaning properly understood, when we are given the meaning of our sentences we are given the world.

Harvard should release this book and its companion volume in paperback immediately.

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Balázs M. Mezei and **Barry Smith**
The Four Phases of Philosophy.
Atlanta: Rodopi 1998. Pp. 122.
US$28.00. ISBN 90-420-0544-0.

Roberto Poli, ed.
The Brentano Puzzle.
Brookfield, VT: Ashgate 1998. Pp. x + 226.
US$63.95. ISBN 1-18014-371-1.

The development of the history of philosophy is the subject of two recent books on Franz Brentano. Balázs Mezei and Barry Smith present Brentano's theory of the history of philosophy and apply it to the development of philosophy in the 20th century. The articles in the collection edited by Roberto Poli concentrate on the so-called 'Brentano Puzzle' — the question why Brentano, whose work was and continues to be very influential, is hardly mentioned as a main figure in the history of philosophy. I will first turn to the book of Mezei and Smith and then discuss the collection edited by Poli.

Throughout his life Brentano developed a cyclic model of the history of philosophy, according to which each period undergoes several phases, beginning with a phase of renewal and ascending development that is followed by various phases of decline. The clearest expression of this theory can be found in Brentano's text *The Four Phases of Philosophy and Its Current State*, which is presented for the first time in an English translation in the appendix of Mezei's and Smith's book. The rest of the book consists of two parts: first, an introduction to Brentano's model that situates it in a wider context, and, second, an adaptation of that model to twentieth-century philosophy, concentrating on the development of the phenomenological movement.

The basic contention that underlies Brentano's text is that philosophy should be done with scientific methods. Consequently, Brentano states that 'the history of philosophy is a history of scientific efforts' (85). Unlike the history of the sciences and very much like the history of fine arts, Brentano

continues, it does not show constant development, but is rather a succession of diverse periods. His goal is to demonstrate that in the history of philosophy 'periods of development and decline ... display certain common features and analogies' (85) that follow regularities of cultural psychology.

In his attempt to describe these common features, Brentano claims that every period undergoes four phases, the first of which is characterized by 'a lively and pure theoretical interest' (85) combined with 'a method that is essentially appropriate to nature.' (86) The three subsequent phases are phases of decline. In the second, which is determined by practical motives, theories gain in breadth and doctrines become popularized at the price of losing their depth and rigor. This loss of scientific rigor, however, is answered by a scepticism that characterizes the third phase. In the fourth phase people, dissatisfied by scepticism, 'start once more to construct philosophical dogmas,' inventing 'entirely unnatural means of gaining knowledge on the basis of "principles" lacking in insight, ingenious "directly intuitive" powers, mystical intensifications of the mental life' (86). Philosophy deteriorates into mysticism.

In the rest of his essay Brentano applies his theory to the periods of antiquity, the Middle Ages and modern philosophy. Even though Brentano's attempt to explain the development of the whole history of philosophy with a rigorous scheme on a few pages is somewhat superficial — he concentrates on some of the main figures and completely ignores any exceptions to his model — it is an invaluable source for Brentano scholars, as it is a concise statement of Brentano's perspective on the history of philosophy. According to Brentano's model, Aristotle, Aquinas, and Descartes form the ascending phases of the respective periods. The work of philosophers like Plotinus, Meister Eckhardt, and Kant as well as the German idealists, on the other hand, characterize the last phases of decline. In addition, the text contains a concise version of Brentano's critique of Kant, which was to become one of the defining criteria for the Austrian tradition in philosophy. Brentano's optimistic outlook, predicting as it does an upcoming phase of renewal, shows what Brentano thought of the work of his time (and probably his own work) — a time that has seen the raise of scientific psychology. And even though Brentano acknowledges that this phase of philosophical renaissance will probably be followed by phases of decline, his outlook remains optimistic, since these phases of decline will eventually lead to a new period with a new phase of a radical renewal; the cycle will repeat itself.

The great merit of Mezei and Smith is not just that they deliver the first English translation of this text; they also present a detailed and very informative introduction in the first part of the book. They outline the development of Brentano's model from his first publication in 1867 up to 1894 when the title essay of the book was published. In addition, they situate Brentano's model well in the context of continental philosophy of the 19th century, and demonstrate the influence of other philosophers, most notably Comte, Kant, and the Catholic tradition of philosophy of which Brentano, a Catholic priest until 1873, was part.

The most controversial part of the book is undoubtedly the second in which the authors apply Brentano's theory to twentieth-century philosophy. The main problem of this approach is the complexity of the development of philosophy in this century. There has not been one uniform tradition, but at least two, continental and analytic philosophy, each of which comprises various schools and individual thinkers that form traditions in their own right. The authors, aware of this problem, explicitly state that they are not aiming to give a comprehensive account of the history of twentieth-century philosophy, but are rather 'dealing in ideal types, with all the simplification that this involves' (41). Moreover, they concentrate on the continental tradition which 'seems to be much closer to constituting a closed period in the Brentanian sense' (39).

The main philosophers of the first phase are, according to the authors, Brentano and the early Husserl. The three phases of decline are characterized by Husserl's turn to phenomenology and his later philosophy, Heidegger's early philosophy, and Heidegger's later philosophy and its influence on other philosophers — Mezei and Smith focus on the later work of Emmanuel Levinas. The most interesting aspect of this characterization of continental philosophy in the 20th century is that it puts a strong emphasis on the roots of this movement. One might fear, however, that due to the simplifications and the strong accentuations, many philosophers who work on or in the continental tradition will have difficulties accepting this perspective; rather than evoking a fruitful discussion concerning the place of Brentano and Husserl in the continental tradition it might thus be easily dismissed.

A different perspective on the development of the history of philosophy and Brentano's role in it is given in Poli's collection *The Brentano Puzzle*. Poli describes the main problem that is addressed in this volume in the following way: 'Even if the width and depth of Brentano's intellectual legacy are now well known, those asked to list the principal philosophers of the nineteenth century very rarely mention his name. We may call this puzzle the problem of Brentano's "invisibility" ' (ix).

In the introduction of the book, Roberto Poli introduces the Brentano puzzle and lays out the three main reasons for Brentano's 'invisibility'. First, Brentano was more interested in the method of philosophy than in specific results — he advocated the use of scientific methods in philosophy; second, he put a strong emphasis on oral teaching and did not publish very much; and third, he influenced a number of important students, among them Husserl, Meinong, Freud, Ehrenfels, and Twardowski, who became famous thinkers in their own right, some of them eventually going on to found their own schools. 'The personal success and academic recognition attained by these exponents of Brentano's school ... have come to obscure their common thematic origins' (5).

The volume contains articles by Roberto Poli, Dallas Willard, Claire Ortiz Hill, John Blackmore, Alf Zimmer, Liliana Albertazzi, Jan Srzednicki, Serema Cattaruzza, Karl Schuhmann, Evelyn Dölling, and Robin Rollinger,

and a translation of an article of the Eastern German philosopher Paul Linke, originally published in 1947, that provides 'some valuable clues as to how and where Gottlob Frege fits into the Brentano puzzle' (45).

The contributors approach the 'Brentano Puzzle' in quite different ways. Some of the authors concentrate on specific aspects of Brentano's philosophy or offer theories that are based on Brentano's philosophy. Others try to show Brentano's importance by concentrating on the work of his pupils or, like Karl Schuhmann in his article on Daubert, on philosophers that were indirectly influenced by Brentano. The most direct replies to the 'Brentano Puzzle' come from Dallas Willard, who discusses the reception of Brentano's work among North-American analytic philosophers, and John Blackmore, who shows various waves of interest in the philosophy of Brentano among Austrian intellectuals at the beginning of the century by studying the influence of Brentano and his students in the University of Vienna Philosophical Society.

I do not have the space to discuss the contributions to Poli's collection in great detail. They cover a wide range of topics and are in general well-informed and interesting. Some of them, however, leave it to the reader to make the connection to the actual 'Brentano Puzzle', a connection that is not always obvious. It is, nonetheless, fair to say that Poli's collection is a valuable source for anybody who is working on the Austrian tradition in philosophy or on philosophers who bridged the gap between analytic philosophy and phenomenology in the early days of these traditions.

I hope that these two books will spur the reconsideration of Brentano's place in the history of philosophy — a project that requires that other philosophers follow Mezei's and Smith's example of translating the shorter texts of Brentano.

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Jeffrie G. Murphy
Character, Liberty, and Law:
Kantian Essays in Theory and Practice.
Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers 1998.
Pp. ix + 242.
US$105.00. ISBN 0-7923-5275-0.

This collection of essays falls into three parts. In the first, Murphy wonders how Kantian justifications for the use of state power can be squared with liberal neutrality, on the one hand, and with the supreme value and dignity of humanity, on the other hand. In the second part, he employs a tempered Kantian liberal outlook to reflect on various issues of public policy, most notably legal policy toward violence against women. Finally, Murphy wonders whether the broadly Kantian retributive theory of punishment that he has argued for over the years should be moderated by forgiveness. Thematic links between the essays are not strong. Such unity as there is derives from Murphy's neo-Kantian outlook, developed over a longish career in legal philosophy which, in various reflective asides, he reveals to be drawing to a close.

Murphy's tempered Kantianism is very different from the neo-Liberal position that he formerly argued was properly Kantian. As he notes, Kant argues that the proper role of government is only to protect negative rights. These negative rights exclude any right to aid, since rights impose perfect duties on others to uphold them, and there can be no perfect duty to aid (33). As one who has therefore found a Kantian framework 'an uncongenial framework in which to structure' (34) my moral thinking, I was struck by the relative lack of dissonance between my intuitions and a Kantianism tempered by a commitment to cherishing other persons as well as respecting their rights. Thus Murphy considers the possibility that rendering aid might be genuinely discretionary in any particular case (even if we must give some aid to someone in some circumstance). But he cannot accept that it could be morally acceptable to decline a victim's request for (relatively costless) aid by saying that one has elected to discharge one's obligation to aid otherwise (35). Nevertheless, Murphy sticks with his original Kantian assumption that aid is not a matter of rights and justice, modifying it by affirming that other values should sometimes be regarded as at least as pressing as those of justice.

Murphy also raises what he sees as a problem for 'neutral' liberalism, which refuses to use its coercive power to prevent acts simply because they are immoral, as this would violate the right of citizens to determine their own morality. He suggests that this view conflicts with the view that the 'wickedness' of a crime should determine the severity of its punishment, as retributive theories require, and with the view that what the majority wants as law should be law. However, limits on government and the 'tyranny of the majority' are arguably as constitutive of liberalism as anything else. There

has therefore always been a tension between liberalism and the principle of democracy that we hardly need reminding of.

The tension between retributivism and liberalism may be more troubling to liberals. But it is not clear that a policy of retributive punishment invokes the coercive power of the state against immoral acts simply because they are immoral. Murphy suggests that it must, since the judicial system must punish the more wicked harmful act more severely than the less wicked one. But this can still be justified on grounds of harm prevention. The vicious perpetrator of a given criminal act is more likely to offend again so that, if we want punishment to prevent harm, we have good reason to punish 'wickedness' more severely. That sentencing is concerned not only with the criminal act but with the character of the perpetrator need not entail a moral stance, but only that effective containment of criminal actions is believed to require dramatic community repudiation of ways of thinking and feeling that are especially liable to lead to them. In this spirit, Hobbes, conceding that what is vicious is subject to intractable dispute, suggests that we equate what is vicious with what tends to undermine peace.

Murphy's shift from standard neo-Liberal thinking is, perhaps, most striking in his 'ruminations on women'. Murphy considers four issues in feminist criminal law theory: 1) What makes rape such a serious assault? 2) What is the difference between rape and seduction? When should we say that 'yes' does not mean 'yes'? 3) When is sex obtained through fraud a serious felony? 4) Can violence against women justify killing in the way that self-defence does, rather than merely excuse it?

In answering all these questions Murphy goes well beyond orthodox liberal positions. He affirms that the law should intrude into personal lives, rejecting the idea that danger is the price of freedom if that price is not borne equally. Murphy suggests that rape is not only an act of violence but desecrates its victim. Though this might seem to imply that rape of a prostitute is less serious, he argues persuasively that it should be treated as just as serious a crime. And he counters the suggestion that a simple preference test should determine how serious a form of assault rape is, given that such a test might entail that attempted murder is a less serious crime than robbery. Murphy retains his view that a threat is coercive only if it is illegal, but he is prepared to extend the ambit of 'illegality' so that various improper uses of power could constitute 'some degree of criminal rape' (158). He also considers that consent to sex obtained by fraud could in some circumstances constitute rape. On battered women, Murphy suggests that a woman who has no way out of a violent relationship may be justified by necessity if she kills to escape.

Having found not much to agree with in Murphy's earlier writings on liberalism, I was pleased to find so much that I could entertain, despite the lack of any really coherent thread through the collection.

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Stanley Rosen
Metaphysics in Ordinary Language.
New Haven, CT: Yale University Press 1999.
Pp. xii + 290.
US$30.00. ISBN 0-300-07478-6.

Stanley Rosen's fourth collection of essays and lectures, *Metaphysics in Ordinary Language (MOL)*, is a rich and provocative discussion of many of the themes and problems that have concerned him throughout his career. In these fifteen texts, Rosen continues to show that he stands amongst those philosophers most qualified to reflect upon the possibility and meaning of philosophy in the contemporary era. The grasp of the history of philosophy necessary for such reflection (and this grasp is no mere competence with the texts of the history of philosophy, but rather a radical insight into the significance of these texts for the continued project of philosophy) is demonstrated throughout this volume.

The problems that concern Rosen in these texts are many and varied: there are significant treatments of the possibility of metaphysics, interpretation, esotericism in philosophy, perception, freedom, temporality, nothingness, rationality, the quarrel between the ancients and moderns, and the relationship between poetry and philosophy. Underlying this multiplicity of interests and concerns, however, is a fundamental unity of purpose. Rosen's project could be described, I believe, as the articulation of a coherent 'Platonist' response to the philosophical problems raised by modernity and its postmodern critics. This project is announced in the book's title as the attempt to demonstrate the continued vitality of metaphysics in opposition to the many pre-mature obituaries written for it throughout the last two centuries.

In his memoir, 'Kojève's Paris', which concludes the book, Rosen relates an encounter with Lucien Goldmann — 'Goldmann inquired in a high, squeaky voice, "Alors! Quelle est votre position philosophique?" I could think of nothing better to say than "Je suis platonicien" or something of the sort' (264). What will most surprise readers unfamiliar with Rosen's previous work will be his understanding of 'Platonism'. Today, Platonism generally denotes nothing more than an interpretation of the 'theory of Ideas'. For Rosen, however, Platonism is much more than this: 'Platonist metaphysics is not simply about ontology of the Ideas; it is a comprehensive account of the philosophical way of life .... [P]hilosophy, as a way of life, is closer to drama than to logical or conceptual analysis. [These] are essential ingredients of philosophy, but for the Platonist their roots lie in the nature of human existence' (52). The problem with the common interpretation of 'Platonism' lies in its abstraction from *eros*: It is only when the 'doctrine of Ideas' is combined with a doctrine of *eros*, that we find anything deserving of the name 'Platonism'.

There are three components to Rosen's project — the criticism of the philosophical difficulties inherent in the enlightenment, a criticism of post-

modern responses to the enlightenment, and a retrieval and explication of a 'Platonist' alternative. The latter work is probably most familiar to Rosen's readers, since his monographs and many essays have a secure place among scholarship on Plato's dialogues. In *MOL*, there are three essays which focus on Plato's texts and develop Rosen's Straussian interpretation. The first contains an important interpretation of the three passages which focus on the 'erotic ascent' of the philosopher. The second reprints a review of G.R.F. Ferrari's 1987 book on the *Phaedrus*. This review is of especial interest as an attempt to articulate the crucial differences between a Straussian reading of the dialogues and the contemporary eclectic tendencies found increasingly in the works of the Anglo-American mainstream. The new-found interest in 'dramatic' and 'literary' elements of the dialogues within this mainstream is generally coupled with a rejection of Strauss' substantive conclusions. In contrast, Rosen offers a vigorous defense of Straussian hermeneutics and shows that it is much more difficult to set aside Strauss' conclusions than the 'eclectics' seem to believe. The third is a significant exposition of the account of sense perception in the *Philebus*. Lest this discussion suggest that Rosen has inherited Strauss' nostalgic return to antiquity as a response to the problems of post-modernity, I must emphasize that Rosen returns to Plato not as a substitute for philosophical reflection on contemporary problems, nor in order to find ready-made answers to these philosophical problems, but primarily in order to make philosophical reflection on these problems possible once again.

The response to the 'post-modern' critique of the enlightenment is a significant thread running throughout Rosen's works in the last two decades. In *MOL*, however, only Heidegger's account of the present and Gadamer's notion of *Horizontverschmelzung* receive sustained criticism. The challenge to modernity articulated by post-modern philosophers, however, rarely ever moves into the background.

For Rosen, post-modernism arises from an almost dialectical development of certain crucial and fateful decisions made in modernity. The identification of these decisions is thus central to Rosen's project of turning back the clock and freeing us from entrapment within post-modernity. In *MOL*, there are many chapters that address the philosophical weaknesses of modernity. Mention should be made of Rosen's rejection of 'analytic' formalism in 'Forms, Elements and Categories', in which he marks the significant difference between his own metaphysical project and the metaphysics in fashion amongst contemporary Anglo-American philosophers. The thematic center of this book and the most explicit and direct articulation of Rosen's view of metaphysics is found in 'Philosophy and Ordinary Experience'. Rosen argues that the ordinary dimension of human life makes philosophical reflection possible. To deny this is to transform philosophy into poetry. Further, since philosophy arises out of our reflection on ordinary experience, we will not be able to make it disappear as easily as some have suggested.

My discussion of this volume is unfortunately selective and woefully cursory. It does justice neither to the breadth of the work as a whole, nor to

Rosen's provocative discussions in the individual chapters, nor to the intricate and nuanced relationships amongst the different chapters. *MOL* should be of great interest to all who are skeptical of, or even just concerned with, the reports of the death of metaphysics. Without comforting us with a nostalgic return to either antiquity or modernity, Rosen squarely faces metaphysics' critics and takes up their challenge to rethink the possibility of metaphysics. Rosen's articulation of the necessity of the metaphysical project is timely and will contribute significantly to the task of rethinking the destiny of metaphysics in the history of Western philosophy.

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Michael Ruse
Mystery of Mysteries:
is Evolution a Social Construction?
Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press
1999. Pp. viii + 296.
US$27.50. ISBN 0-674-46706-X.

As one might expect, *Mystery of Mysteries* is a thought-provoking and highly enjoyable book from Canada's most widely recognized zoologist-philosopher Michael Ruse. Ruse has earned a well deserved reputation for writing astute but accessible material in the philosophy of biology, and his most recent book lives up to this reputation by presenting a compelling and exceedingly clear discussion of evolutionary theory's history and the cultural forces that shape its development over time. However, while the book is both entertaining and engaging, it unfortunately fails to address its intended topic in such a way as to carry a significant philosophical impact.

In *Mystery of Mysteries*, the topic is the presumed objectivity of science as Ruse enters into the 'science wars' debate — an area still immersed in heated controversy since Alan Sokal published his subversive parody of physics' subjectivity in the pages of a leading cultural studies journal (without the editors noticing the hoax). Ruse's aim is to weave a delicate path through this area using the history of evolutionary theory as a test case for science's much disputed value-free status. To this end, the book consists of a series of short biographies of prominent scholars along with summaries of their contributions to our ongoing understanding of evolutionary theory. By examining the cultural influences acting on these individuals and the ways in which their unique social predispositions may have affected the content of their work,

the hope is that the book's historical approach will provide the reader with a fresh perspective on the question of whether science is an objective description of reality or a subjective social construction.

Ruse begins as far back as Erasmus Darwin, whose theorizing about evolution is described as being thoroughly impregnated with eighteenth century British industrialist beliefs about the desirability of progress. Charles Darwin, however, fares much better than his grandfather. He is still portrayed as having developed his selectionist view of evolution in accordance with deistic beliefs about God creating a world that obeys fixed natural laws, but this cultural bias is said to operate as a metavalue — a value *about* science rather than one operating *within* science — and one which encourages Darwin to ensure that his theory conforms to rigorous scientific standards (75). Darwin is therefore described as a thinker who reflects his cultural surroundings but who is nonetheless meticulous about gathering evidence to support his scientific beliefs.

This theme proves to be one that lasts throughout the remainder of the book. As Ruse moves into the twentieth century, the underlying message is that cultural influences continue to play a significant role in the construction of evolutionary theory, but that the overriding metavalue for scientific integrity and the separation of 'epistemic' values from explicitly cultural values has led to a marked improvement in evolutionary theory's objective status. (Ruse uses the arguably neutral term *epistemic* to denote truth-seeking values that 'are thought to put us in touch with reality' [32], e.g., predictive accuracy, consistency, internal coherence, predictive fertility and unifying power.) Thus, Julian Huxley and Theodosius Dobzhansky are described as having progressionist values lurking within their philosophical outlooks, yet Dobzhansky is noted as being particularly adept at separating his social beliefs from his professional research. Similarly, Ruse pairs off contemporary theorists in order to contrast their varying ideological outlooks (Richard Dawkins vs. Stephen Jay Gould, Richard Lewontin vs. E.O. Wilson, and Geoffrey Parker vs. Jack Sepkoski), but in each case the subjects are shown to be both influenced by their social backgrounds and at the same time powerfully motivated by the metavalue that their research live up to strict epistemic criteria. In the end, Ruse concludes that both sides of the science wars debate are correct. Evolutionary theory's conformity with the demands of good science demonstrates a decisive move towards *objectivity* via the constraints imposed by scientific norms (236-8). Yet there is also something deeply cultural about evolutionary biology, Ruse argues, because its scientists are inescapably bound by the *subjective* constraints of their language, their social situations and the cultural metaphors used to express their findings (239).

Unfortunately, this diplomatic conclusion comes across not so much as a step towards resolving the objectivity/realism debate, but as a restatement of the terms of engagement with which both sides are by now exceedingly familiar. No right-minded subjectivist would claim that scientific values are incapable of producing improved levels of epistemic coherence. Similarly, no

right-minded objectivist would claim that scientists are impervious to their cultural surroundings. The content of Ruse's historical analysis is therefore beside the point when it comes to sorting out the tricky epistemological issues at stake in this dispute. As Ruse himself points out, neither side is denying the standards of science; they are simply interpreting them differently (254). Perhaps if we are left only with a choice between Popper and Kuhn, as the opening chapter provocatively implies, then Ruse's compromise seems profoundly judicious. But if more sophisticated positions are considered, it soon becomes apparent that the fine-grained distinctions separating the two sides of this debate cannot be resolved using Ruse's methodology.

Of course, Ruse's book is intended for a wide audience and one can hardly expect him to familiarize his readers with highly specialized philosophical positions. But even those not formally trained in the philosophy of science will likely feel underwhelmed when they reach the final chapter and learn that they have been reading about precisely the kind of information that is *not* capable of solving the debate to which they have been introduced (254). *Mystery of Mysteries* is therefore an exceptionally enjoyable but philosophically moot enterprise. It is worth noting, though, that the emphasis placed here on Ruse's ability to make his subject matter appealing is not empty consolation for the sake of a balanced review. It is a more difficult task than most realize writing as clearly and as charismatically as Ruse does, and he ought to be commended for writing a book that will be intriguing to anyone who picks it up. The only disappointment awaiting them is that a captivating series of scientific biographies has been advertised as one long argument.

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William Seager
Theories of Consciousness:
An Introduction and Assessment.
New York: Routledge 1999. Pp. x + 306.
Cdn$120.00: US$75.00
(cloth: ISBN 0-415-18393-6);
Cdn$36.99: US$24.99
(paper: ISBN 0-415-18394-4).

Charles P. Siewert
The Significance of Consciousness.
Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press
1999. Pp. x + 374.
US$39.50. ISBN 0-691-02724-2.

The recent resurgence of interest in consciousness shows no signs of abating. In this essay I review two of the latest contributions to this renaissance, William Seager's *Theories of Consciousness*, and Charles Siewert's *The Significance of Consciousness*. Although very different in style, there is a significant overlap in the terrain that they cover, and indeed in the conclusions that they reach. Both books begin with critical discussions of contemporary theories of consciousness, both go on to examine the relationship between consciousness and intentionality, and both authors argue — or at least suggest — that externalist accounts of intentional content sit uncomfortably with phenomenal consciousness. Although both books make important contributions to the literature, I found more profit (and enjoyment!) in Seager's.

The primary challenge for the reader of Siewert's book is his prolix and somewhat self-indulgent style: the book could have been halved in length without any loss in argumentative content. But the reader able to ignore the laboured prose will find a careful, although somewhat limited, discussion of many of the central aspects of consciousness. Siewert spends the first two chapters defending the legitimacy of a first-person approach to consciousness. In the next four chapters he argues against higher-order thought, functionalist, and representationalist analyses of consciousness; each of these theories confuse phenomenal consciousness with something else, they suffer from 'consciousness neglect'. Although I had the occasional quibble with the discussion, the central line of argument was forcefully presented. Siewert's discussion revolves around a person (Connie) with very poor (amblyopic) conscious vision. He argues that whatever states these mainstream analyses of consciousness reduce consciousness to — be it functionalist, representationalist, or whatever — one can conceive of a person with blindsight who has more of the appropriate states than Connie, and yet lacks phenomenal consciousness. While this style of argument is far from novel, Siewert's use of it involves fewer controversial commitments than its more (in)famous relatives. In particular, he is not committed to the conceivability

of Chalmer's zombies or Block's super-blindsight. Presumably functionalists, representationalists, and the like will respond to Siewert's arguments in much the same way that they respond to super-blindsight and zombie-based arguments, but perhaps the standard responses will be even less plausible in this context.

Siewert's most interesting claims occur in chapters seven and eight. Like most of the book, these chapters are poorly organized, but the central contention is clear: visual experience and conscious thought are both inherently intentional. I found this claim plausible, but wished that Siewert had done a more thorough job of chasing down its implications. In response to the objection that phenomenal states can only be contingently intentional because intentional content is wide, while phenomenal content is narrow, Siewert claims that it's more plausible to suppose that intentional content is narrow than it is to suppose that (no) phenomenal content is intentional. But he allows the externalist about intentionality an out in that he accepts that phenomenal states themselves might be wide or external (304). This is a radical suggestion, and I was disappointed not to find any discussion of its merits. It is also far from clear what the upshot of this discussion is for theories of consciousness, given that Siewert's claim is only that *some* phenomenal features are intentional.

In his final chapter, Siewert defends the following claims: 'we value having phenomenal features for its [sic] own sake', 'we value having them to an enormous extent', and 'we consider life without consciousness to be little or no better than death' (329). Siewert defends these points by asking us to consider the possibility of zombification. Quite plausibly, he argues that most of us would recoil with horror from a zombie future. But the fact that we regard zombification as little better than death does not show that we place an enormous value on mere phenomenal consciousness, for zombification strips from us our *self*-consciousness as well as our phenomenal consciousness. It is very difficult, I think, to tease apart the respective roles that consciousness and self-consciousness play in our scheme of values, but I am tempted to think that most of us would do much to avoid a future that consisted only in mere consciousness. It seems to me that the horror the thought of zombification evokes in us has more to do with self-consciousness than consciousness per se. Siewert fails to address this line of reply in any detail (see p. 332 for a very cursory treatment of it). Indeed, a general weakness with this chapter is Siewert's failure to engage with objectors. He barely mentions a target in this chapter, and I was hard-pressed to come up with opponents on his behalf.

To my mind, Seager's book is the best introduction to the contemporary philosophical discussion of consciousness on the market and would make an excellent text for an upper-level undergraduate or graduate class. Starting with a chapter on Descartes's account of the mind, Seager provides clear and insightful accounts of the identity theory of consciousness, higher-order theories of consciousness, and representational theories of consciousness such as those defended by Dretske and Tye. (There are some noticeable

absences though — there is no discussion of higher-order perception theories of consciousness.) He also does a particularly good job of navigating through the swamp that is Dennett's approach to consciousness. Seager's own sympathies lie with representational accounts of consciousness, and he spends two chapters exploring the strengths and weaknesses of the view. The book ends in a speculative (and rather technical) vein, as Seager joins the ranks of those who are tempted by the idea that consciousness is a quantum phenomenon — a view that seems to lead to panpsychism.

For the most part, Seager's writing is a model of clarity and grace. Unfortunately, he slips up on occasion. Crucially, he is not clear about what he means by the representational theory of consciousness. He introduces representationalism as the claim that consciousness is essentially representational in nature (17), it is representational 'through and through' (144). But this could mean one of two things. On the one hand, it could mean that consciousness is *exhaustively* representational in nature. This, I take it, is what Tye and Dretske have in mind when they talk of the representational theory of consciousness, and some of Seager's statements suggests that it is also what he means (see, e.g., 135). At the same time, Seager denies that states of consciousness are individuated by their intentional objects (191). He implies that representationalism need only include the claim that all states of consciousness have representational content, that all conscious states are at least *partly* representational, that they all have intentional content (133). This is a much weaker claim. It is possible to claim that all states of consciousness have representational content, but at least some of them also have non-representational aspects or content. This thesis would find broad support among those who would disavow the label 'representationalists'. As far as I can tell, Siewert would be very sympathetic to it, and he is certainly a good distance from Dretske and Tye! I think that Seager really has the former, stronger, reading in mind, but I'm not certain about this.

A further worry concerns what Seager calls the generation problem. Immediately after introducing (and endorsing) the representational theory of consciousness, he writes: 'Now, even if we could get straight the relation between intentionality and consciousness, including a satisfactory account of qualia (even if perhaps an eliminativist one), a serious problem would appear to remain, which I will call the "generation problem". The generation problem can be vividly expressed as the simple question: what is it about matter that accounts for its ability to become conscious?' (18) This is a puzzling passage. For a start, if a thorough-going representationalist account of consciousness is correct, then there is nothing more to consciousness than representation. But for all Seager has argued, there is no generation problem for representation — there is no particularly deep problem explaining why some states have representational content. Is the generation problem for representationalism the problem of explaining why representation suffices for consciousness (or, more probably, why certain types of mental representation suffice for consciousness)? Perhaps this is what he has in mind, but if so, it could have been a bit clearer. Furthermore, on most approaches to

consciousness, the generation problem is the problem of accounting for the generation of qualia. How could there be a generation problem if eliminitivism is correct and there are no qualia? Finally, I had a difficult time discerning exactly what Seager takes the generation problem to be. I took it to be primarily an ontological worry, or perhaps an epistemological worry with ontological import. Seager takes it as 'primarily a kind of epistemological worry — a worry about how we can properly fit consciousness into the scientific picture of the world' (29) — what we want to know is '*how* or *why* do certain physical-functional states, with just *this* sort of conceptual role, ground conscious experience' (29f.). But an inability to fit consciousness into the scientific picture of the world — and Seager seems rather pessimistic about the prospects for such a fit — would seem to call into question the adequacy of the scientific picture of the world. Seager makes some attempt to explain how the generation problem differs from the hard problem, but I found the contrast rather elusive. (146)

A third problem I had with Seager's discussion concerns his characterization of qualia. Seager presents what he takes to be a minimal characterization of qualia, according to which qualia are ineffable, intrinsic, immediate and private. Seager's discussion of the first three features is illuminating, but his discussion of the privacy of qualia is more problematic. Concerning privacy he says, 'surely all [it] involves is the obvious metaphysical truth that distinct objects can share only state-types, not tokens or instantiations. Thus the privacy of qualia is not different from the privacy of any other property. The privacy of your qualia does not at all imply that others can't know what experiences you are having or what they are like. But of course they cannot know this by literally sharing your experiences' (92). But this is too quick. The claim that distinct objects can share only state-types is far from being an 'obvious metaphysical truth'. Even if it is true that two subjects of experience cannot share a token conscious state, it is far from clear that this claim should be part of a minimal conception of qualia. Surely those who are tempted to think that token conscious states can be shared by more than one subject of experience are not ipso facto qualia phobes.

The most interesting section of *Theory of Consciousness* concern representationalist theories of consciousness. Although sympathetic to representationalism, Seager is also keen to point out what he takes to be its shortcomings as well as its advantages. One of the more intriguing problems for representationalism that Seager discusses concerns the lack of first-person access to the vehicles of mental representations. In having conscious states, one has access to the contents of those states, what those states represent (what Descartes called 'objective reality'), but one does not seem to have access to their non-representational properties, their vehicular nature (what Descartes called 'formal reality'). But Seager finds this puzzling, for

> it is obviously true that we come to know what a particular normal representation represents by being aware of (some of) the non-repre-

sentational properties of that representation. When I come to know that some story is about a cat, this is because I was aware of the word "cat" via its shape, its contrast with the paper on which it is printed, etc. ... It now turns out that brain representations (at least some of them) are remarkably different from all the representations we are familiar with. I can become aware of what certain brain states represent (their content) in the complete absence of any awareness of the properties of the brain states which are doing the representing (their vehicles). How is this possible? (175f.).

Seager goes on to say, 'I confess that I can find no model — even an implausible one — of how representations can, as it were, reveal what or how they are representing to consciousness in the absence of any consciousness of the properties of the representation which enable it to be a representation' (176). Although I do think that representationalism is subject to crippling objections, I don't think that this is one of them. The problem that Seager raises implicitly supposes that there is some kind of homunculus looking at one's mental representations. If, instead, one supposes that the subject of experience *just is* certain mental representations, then it's not clear that Seager's puzzle can get a foothold. There is no one to whom conscious mental representations reveal how or what they are representing, and thus there is no need for access to the vehicles of mental representations. '*You*, in principle, can read my brain like a book but *I* can read my brain in an entirely different way' (176). But I don't need to read my brain, I *am* my brain.

In his penultimate chapter, 'Conscious Intentionality and the anti-Cartesian Catastrophe', Seager mounts an attack against externalist theories of intentionality that has much in common with Siewert's criticisms of externalism, although Seager's attack is both more explicit and rigorous. One has an anti-Cartesian catastrophe on one's hands when one combines externalist theories of representation with representational theories of consciousness, for these two positions seem to lead to the anti-Cartesian position that states of consciousness are not intrinsic features of the subject. If Swampman lacks representational states, and conscious states just are representational states, then Swampman lacks consciousness. But surely this conclusion is false: Swampman has all the intrinsic properties that I do. Seager argues that the way to avoid the anti-Cartesian catastrophe is to replace externalism about representation with internalism. I found Seager's arguments on this point convincing, but more importantly, I think (and certainly hope!) that they will engender interest in this neglected but crucially important crossroads in the philosophy of mind. If the eighties was the decade of intentionality and the nineties the decade of consciousness, perhaps this decade will examine the interaction between these two central aspects of mentality.

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Jordan Howard Sobel
Puzzles for the Will: Fatalism, Newcomb and Samarra, Determinism and Omniscience.
Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1998.
Pp. xiii + 212.
$55.00. ISBN 0-8020-4326-7.

Puzzles for the Will is an examination of some philosophical problems that arise in connection with the exercise of the will. In addition to the core question of the compatibility of free will and causal determinism, Sobel discusses other challenges to freedom, such as that posed by God's omniscience, and topics related to the rational exercise of the will, such as Newcomb's problem.

The book seems intended for use in the classroom. There are some sections in which elementary background material is explained, and much of the material was first developed in lectures for introductory courses in philosophy. On the other hand, some parts of the book are very difficult and are certainly unsuitable for a typical classroom full of college freshmen and sophomores. They seem intended for a professional audience or perhaps for a graduate seminar. Although this is an extremely demanding book in places, there is lots of good stuff in it. It is worth every bit of the effort needed to follow the reasoning all the way through, whether for the elucidation of the reader herself or for recycling as course material for her students.

Chapter One, 'Logical Fatalisms', deals with a handful of arguments that purport to demonstrate on a priori grounds that there are no free choices. Sobel shows how these purely logical arguments, including some drawn from the work of Richard Taylor, fail, and argues that the 'moral' of their failures is that no argument of this type can possibly succeed in proving anything of real significance, such as the thesis that we never choose freely. According to Sobel, the conclusions of purely logical arguments (valid arguments with only logical necessities as premises) 'cannot be just in themselves proper subjects for dismay or relief or any human attitudes' (43). Nothing that could not conceivably be otherwise ever matters in the sense that it is an occasion for rational dismay, joy, etc. (He may be painting himself into a corner here, because his theory of rational dismay and joy threatens to be a counterexample to itself. Either his theory is true and, since it seems obvious that it would apply to itself, therefore doesn't matter, or it would matter if it were true, and therefore isn't true.)

In the course of defeating these arguments for logical fatalism, Sobel discusses some varieties of necessity and the possible worlds method of modeling necessity, differences in the interpretation of modal claims that turn on differences in the scope of the necessity operator, the interpretation of conditionals in the indicative and subjunctive moods, and David Lewis' views on the truth conditions for counterfactual conditionals. These discussions are all beautifully clear and very persuasive.

Chapter Two, 'Predicted Choices', describes Newcomb's problem and the Samarra problem (I must choose one of two cities to travel to and my enemy, who is an excellent predictor of my choices, will kill me if he has correctly predicted my choice) and argues for a particular theory of rational choice 'Causal Expected Utility Theory'. Richard Jeffrey's and Robert Nozick's views are discussed, among others. It seems that in these two imagined situations no rational option is available to the agent. Sobel argues that there is a rational choice available in Newcomb's problem, but not in the Samarra problem, because rational choices must be stable upon reflection. The inclination to think that no rational choice is available in the former case turns out to be the result of another ambiguity of scope, this one of the epistemic operator, 'I am nearly certain that ... ' and a failure to distinguish 'backtracking' conditionals from genuinely causal conditionals.

The doctrine of causal determinism as a threat to free will is the subject of Chapter Three. A range of varieties of this doctrine are canvassed and some are found to be compatible and some incompatible with the possibility of free choices where this is understood as 'some person can choose to perform an action, though it is not an action he will do, and that this person would, were he to choose to do that action, do it instead of some action that he is going to do' (111).

Chapter Three is a very complex and difficult treatment, involving careful discussion of many aspects of the question of the compatibility of causal determinism and freedom, so understood. Sobel distinguishes six main forms of determinism and 18 main modes of each of these forms, which generates, by my count, 108 main varieties of determinism and many more minor varieties. (For some reason, maybe because he added one more form of determinism at the last minute, Sobel claims to have distinguished only 90 main varieties [121].) Many of the formal tools explicated in the previous two chapters come into play again here, including modal operators, possible worlds semantics, and material and subjunctive conditionals, and these are supplemented by laws of nature and miracles, states versus processes, and other philosophical concepts and distinctions, all carefully explicated.

The final chapter of the book is an expansion of a critical notice of John Martin Fischer's book, *The Metaphysics of Free Will: An Essay on Control* and takes up some of the topics from each of the previous three chapters for further elaboration. At this point, some readers may feel a little overwhelmed by all the technical apparatus brought into play and for that reason a little disconnected from their original interest in the questions addressed in the book. They may also believe that some of the life and significance of the problems under discussion has been drained out. One's mind returns again to Sobel's claim that all purely logical results are trivial or in some sense don't matter.

Consider, for example, Sobel's claim that at least one variety of causal determinism is compatible with free will, which he says is 'of more interest, perhaps, (than the incompatibility of free will with some other varieties of determinism) and possibly somewhat surprising' (146). This variety is a 'most

demanding' mode of the form 'state to state causal determinism — every state has an antecedent cause that is a state' (146). The prima facie threat to free will from such a variety of determinism is that if every choice has an antecedent cause and every cause also has an antecedent cause, then all choices are caused by states that antedate the agent's birth ('ancient causes') and so he can't be said to be able to choose freely.

Sobel shows that ancient causes are not entailed by this form of determinism because, like the Zeno-esque series { ... 1/8, 1/4, 1/2, 1 }, each member of the set of causes could have a predecessor without the whole series stretching back infinitely far, indeed without its stretching back very far at all. (This number series, for example, does not stretch back so far as one unit.) This is a very clever and interesting possibility, especially when contemplated in the context of the 'big bang' theory of the origins of the universe and its compatibility with causal determinism, but is it helpful in the context of the free will question? I doubt that it is, because there is no reason to think that such ' "fast-starting" series of states, very fast starting, frighteningly fast-starting, beginningless series of states' (89) which nevertheless have 'a latest early bound' (88), though logically possible, have any realistic application to the case of a person acting on his free decision to do something.

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Manfred B. Steger and **Terrell Carver, eds.**
Engels After Marx.
University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press 1999. Pp. xvi + 294.
US$55.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-271-01891-7);
US$18.95 (paper: ISBN 0-271-01892-5).

Imagine Engels without Marx — nineteenth-century philosopher, revolutionary socialist, manufacturing scion, and feminist. Contributors to this book compel one to consider a Friedrich Engels independent of Karl Marx — not an easy matter for those accustomed to an entity known as 'Marx-Engels'. The first Marxist, Engels was the first revisionist, yet undeniably a collaborator with Marx on what is today called 'Marxist theory'.

Has a disservice been done to Engels (or an undeserved benefit?) by 'Marx-Engels' scholarship? Engels's thought deserves study in its own right, but surely we have looked at Engels because he was the associate of Marx. There is Marxism but no 'Engelsism'.

Contributors here offer critical reappraisal of Engels's thought after Marx's death in 1883 (hence the title), his role as an independent socialist theorist, and his continuing significance more than 100 years after his own death in 1895.

One does not envy Engels. Entering the swirling currents of Hegelian philosophy, German Idealism, and materialism, he was self-educated in philosophy and lacked Marx's academic training in the history of Western philosophy. Capable of clear readable prose, and secondary as a thinker to Marx, there was danger of simplification in popularizing theoretical ideas. Outliving Marx, Engels was regarded as authority in matters of socialist theory and politics in the 1890s. As Marx's literary executor, he edited Marx's voluminous and unruly unpublished writings.

Part I contains 7 essays on Philosophy and Theory. Joseph Margolis singles out Engels's famous 1890 letter to J. Bloch as a clear, philosophically compelling statement of the materialist conception of history. What is still living in the Marxist theory of history and what any theory of historical explanation must address are found here. Read the letter carefully, Margolis advises, to appreciate Engels's rigor, fidelity to Marx, and the astuteness of this philosophy of history with its base/superstructure edifice — even if 'class conflict' is not the correct engine of history.

S.H. Rigby, a non-Marxist medieval historian, holds Engels is wrongly blamed for economic reductionism of the base/superstructure model because Marx and Engels were allied in their theory of history. His criticism that Marxism fails as a unitary theory rests on his objections to all 'primacy of causal factor' explanations, to all versions of the base/superstructure model, and to functional explanations in social science. Even if these problems were overcome, Rigby maintains, Marxist historiography explicitly asserts the primacy of one or another factors, but implicitly lapses into explanatory pluralism. This pluralism explains why Marxist theory of history appears to be assimilated into mainstream historiography, which is explicitly pluralist in explanation!

Two chapters treat Engels's concepts of science, materialism, and socialism. Peter T. Manicas observes that the philosophy of science is a recent (1950s) invention, but we must ask what Engels's philosophy of science was. Not surprisingly, when materialism is taken as dialectical materialism with laws analogous to scientific laws of nature, scientific socialism is invalidated. Scott Meikle argues that Engels succumbed to both the Victorian vogue for physical science and grand metaphysical speculation for which he was unequipped intellectually. Engels's representation of Marx's *Capital* as an application of Enlightenment science and metaphysical theory is historically flawed. The presence of science, metaphysics, and ethics in *Capital* must be seen instead as engagement in *politekē* in Aristotle's sense.

Douglas Kellner credits Engels with discovering before Marx the constitutive role of capitalism in modernity's emergence from premodern society. Kellner refuses to attack Engels for vulgar debasement of Marx's ideas. Rather, Engels engaged in descriptive and critical political economy, antici-

pated the Marxist critique of ideology, and accepted communism while Marx was still an avowed radical democrat. Although Engels preceded Marx in his adherence to ideas today regarded as the core of Marxism, they were genuine collaborators and Engels should be recognized for his contribution to the critical and emancipatory social theory of modernity.

Manfred B. Steger's chapter on German revisionism, one of 6 essays in Part II, Politics and Social Science, examines Engels's 1890s letters on historical materialism and his 1895 introduction to Marx's *Class Struggles in France*. Engels's authority tipped Marxist theory and politics into revisionist tendencies that flourished in Bernstein. Although Steger argues Engels's revisionism was for him temporary and tactical in light of conditions at the time, 'temporary tactical' revisionism, one thinks, is like being 'a little bit' pregnant.

Carol C. Gould's chapter on Engels's feminism acknowledges the ad hoc and question-begging character of his explanation of the modern oppression of women as due to the institution of private property. Not that an economic perspective is misguided, but she claims patriarchy is neither confined to capitalism nor explainable by it. Engels is worth reclaiming and extending because he realized the subordination of women was due neither to biology nor some essential human nature present in all historical periods. Gould proposes that research on gender differences investigates economic factors but retains a normative commitment (egalitarianism) present in Engels.

James Farr looks at Engels in relation to the reception of Marxism in America, reminding us of Max Eastman's revelation that Dewey published a book on Marx but admitted never having read him! Dewey's rejection of Marx and Marxism was a rejection of Engels!

Paul Thomas deplores that Engels was the first, but unfortunately not the last, believer in the mythic entity 'Marx-Engels' and charges Engels's popularizing and publicizing writings so simplified the theory as to distort it and thereby damaged Marxism.

These scholarly, lively essays show Engels preceded Marx in some matters, and made some original contributions of minor importance. Where his originality was ungrounded, or where Engels has been taken as surrogate for Marx, there have been disasters in theory and politics. No one claims Engels superior to Marx in anything essential or authentic in Marxist theory, but this book enlarges our understanding of Engels and Marxism.

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Kim Sterleny and **Paul E. Griffiths**
Sex and Death:
An Introduction to Philosophy of Biology.
Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1999.
Pp. xv + 440.
US$60.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-226-77303-5);
US$22.00 (paper: ISBN 0-226-77304-3).

There seems to be an unspoken agreement that all philosophers of biology worth their salt will write an introductory text to philosophy of biology (where 'philosophy of biology' is usually short-hand for 'conceptual issues in evolutionary biology'). Consequently, there are more intro texts to philosophy of biology per unit philosophers of biology than in any other area in philosophy. One might, therefore, be tempted to dismiss Sterleny's and Griffiths's *Sex and Death* as just another introductory text to throw on the pile. This, however, would be a mistake.

Sex and Death has two immediate virtues that set it above all other introductory texts in philosophy of biology. Though evolutionary biology does form its core, it is concerned with more than the same old standard issues that have gripped philosophers of biology since the mid-1970s. In addition, it is crammed full of exciting biological examples that go well beyond the fare usually offered up by philosophers — how many times can even the best of us read about pepper moths and still remain intellectually alive? *Sex and Death* is well-written, fast moving, and covers many ideas in surprising depth. It also has the best name of any textbook I know.

Sex and Death begins at the traditional starting point, covering Darwinian natural selection and the Dawkinsian challenge from the gene's eye point of view, then uses this conflict as a springboard to outline some of the complex details of Mendelian genetics and reductionism in philosophy of science. What is new to the mix is a chapter on developmental systems approaches and how they might solve some of the difficulties that both Darwin and Dawkins have in modeling evolution in all its nitty-gritty detail. Because Sterleny and Griffiths come at these problems from different sides of the fence, all three approaches are treated exceptionally fairly. They do what all should do in writing an introduction to any topic — present all sides and let the readers decide for themselves how to judge the issues.

The text includes chapters on the nature of species, group selection, and what biological functions are. All this is standard for philosophy of biology. But then the authors move beyond the usual and include chapters on ecology, the notion of biological progress, sociobiology and evolutionary psychology, emotion, and the definition of life. I applaud these additions. They add a larger perspective and embed the old debates in new contexts. A course taught using *Sex and Death* as the primary text would be an interesting course indeed.

As with most introductory texts, *Sex and Death* can only treat the conceptual issues rather perfunctorily. If one is looking for all the subtle nuances

in a particular discussion, I wouldn't look here. Nevertheless, given the constraints of writing a general textbook accessible to all, *Sex and Death* does an admirable job of providing considerable philosophical detail and spelling out the debates. I particularly recommend the chapters on molecular biology and evolutionary theories of emotion.

As a bonus, Sterleny and Griffiths display their obvious wealth of biological knowledge throughout. Perhaps because I am not from their hemisphere, I was particularly fascinated to learn so much about Australian ecosystems. But regardless of nationality, all should be amazed by numerous examples they devise to illustrate their various points. Biology is complicated and the details difficult. Sterleny and Griffiths don't skimp on the science; at the same time, they don't bog down the flow of the argument by burying their points in a mass of unnecessary data. It is my humble opinion that philosophy of science can only be as good as the philosopher's knowledge of the science itself. Sterleny and Griffiths are good philosophers of science indeed.

My only critical comment concerns the first chapter. To be perfectly blunt, I would avoid it at all costs. It is all over the map, covering way too much material, as it tries to justify philosophy of biology in general and this book in particular. The authors would have been better off picking a single theme found throughout their book and writing about that instead of trying to sketch them all. Those without any background in philosophy of biology are sure to be lost and confused. Those with a background will likely be frustrated as well.

First chapter aside, this is an excellent book. I intend to use it in my next philosophy of biology course. I am sure I will refer to it and its examples often. I recommend it highly.

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Walter P. Von Wartburg and **Julian Liew.**
Gene Technology and Social Acceptance.
Lanham, MD: University Press of America
1999. Pp. x + 338.
US$41.50. ISBN 0-7618-1325-X.

In *Gene Technology*, Wartburg and Liew (W & L) provide an introduction to, review of, and analysis of the emerging genetic technologies. From gene splicing to transgenic species, they present what has been done in the past as well as what technologies may emerge in the future. With each technology comes a review of commentary across the spectrum. Commentaries are then analyzed from their particular moral, social, or political standpoint.

The central premise around which W & L build their text is that no technology can be emplaced unless it is accompanied by social acceptance. The degree of acceptance will shape new technologies and their places in any particular social context. Social acceptance is framed by several factors: Rational Factors (including Public Understanding, Social Control, Risk Assessment, and Utility), Emotional Factors (including Knowledge, Anxiety, and Risk Aversion), and Trust. One of W & L's principle contentions is that gene technology is running into social rejection because of a late twentieth-century distrust of science on the part of most people (for any number of reasons, but especially a lack of adequate science education, lack of understanding of the scientific process, and fear of the outcomes of research).

W & L cite prior experience of science and technology as the source of social anxiety: nuclear weapons, environmental damage (especially pollution from industry and automobiles), nuclear reactors (and their perceived lack of safety), and loss of privacy (due to the digital revolution). The sense is that the common folk feel they have lost control of their lives to unknown and un-understandable scientists. W & L contend that until the scientific and technological communities communicate clearly and openly to the public about what they are doing and what the possible consequences will be, the public will be suspicious of them and will tend to reject their actions.

W & L back up their arguments with results from public, state, and private studies. These polls, surveys, and tests seem clearly to demonstrate that the public are suspicious (if not outright fearful) of genetics technologies and will remain so until there is increased trust established between the several communities involved in the further progress of these technologies. If scientists and engineers believe that they and they alone are the only communities involved in the process, they must understand that their work will come to naught. They must gain acceptance from the wider public (as a vital participant in the process).

The initial argument given by W & L is that any and every technology will (and must) go through this same process of social acceptance before it will become a widespread part of the culture. In this, we can begin an analysis of *Gene Technology*, for this claim, as well as many others within the text, is questionable if not outright untenable. W & L proceed from a definition of technology that comes from and/or is related to only the most recent and spectacular of twentieth-century technologies, such as automobiles, computers, nuclear reactors (and weapons), and advanced electronic devices (televisions, telephones, and microwave ovens). We are to assume that each of these technologies became widespread because they were considered understandable, beneficial, and without significant risk; in short, they were controllable by the larger public, or they were less common because not accepted. We could look as well at such a ubiquitous technology as electricity to find that W & L's argument seems well-founded, for common, household electricity went through much the same debate which currently engulfs gene technology. There are members of the public who still do not understand, trust, or readily accept electrical devices (such as a colleague

who unplugged every device in his office every evening so that 'the electricity won't leak out').

If we shift our gaze, however, to past innovations or to the lesser technologies of the modern era, we find that W & L's argument is not quite so convincing. There are technological advances that pass unnoticed into the everyday world, that were accepted without question or concern: ballpoint pens, typewriters, synthetic and blended fabrics, refrigerators, wrist watches, and hand calculators). There are many who contend that the typewriter is the *sine qua non* of the last hundred years' technology, upon which all the other innovations are dependent and/or from which they grew.

Even further, W & L contend that technological change brings a 'paradigm shift' — a change to everyone, and everything about their culture. This premise is questionable if we glance even casually about our world today or to innovations of the past. Parts of developed technologies have filtered throughout the world (can one eve escape the red and white of Coca-Cola and bottled and canned products?). Without the necessary infrastructure to support the remainder, the technology cannot be adopted, whether or not it is accepted by the populace. If we look, for example, at the development of the stirrup, we see that while it did contribute to the alignment of Western Europe at the end of the Middle Ages, one may question whether anyone gave a thought to the general public and their social control and acceptance or whether the general public (be they yeoman or peasant) even noticed. It is possible that the general folk simply accept that which is commonplace, whether or not they have a voice in its 'acceptance'.

It is more than possible that W & L are writing from a *Zeitgeist* that is most suitable only to current, Western views and that their analysis is neither as a-historic nor a-cultural as they would have us believe. As a broad, thorough, detailed overview of genetic technologies and their current uses as well as the social issues and viewpoints surrounding those technologies, *Gene Technology* is a masterful work, easily readable and accessible. Any of us involved in ethical, social, and political issues of this day should take the time to read this work. One should be careful in reading, however, for W & L's founding premises (and thus their final conclusions) should be carefully considered as their own, personal, social and ethical concerns and views.

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Dan Zahavi
Self-Awareness and Alterity:
A Phenomenological Investigation.
Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press
1999. Pp. xvi + 291.
US$74.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-8101-1700-2);
US$29.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8101-1701-0).

Self-Awareness and Alterity is an important book. It is an ambitious and original discussion of subjectivity and self-consciousness — that is, of the knowledge we have of ourselves. Zahavi argues that phenomenology, particularly the Husserlian variety, has much to contribute to recent debates about the nature and origin of self-awareness. His book has two goals: to reconstruct what major phenomenological thinkers have said about self-awareness, a topic sometimes seen as peripheral to their interests; and to advance and defend an original theory of self-consciousness. The result is an extremely interesting work that will be influential both within phenomenological circles and in other branches of philosophy.

Zahavi's starting point is the work of the so-called Heidelberg school. These philosophers — Dieter Henrich, Manfred Frank, and several others — have done much to undermine traditional understandings of self-awareness. Building on the work of Sydney Shoemaker and Hector-Neri Castañeda, they have shown that the knowledge a subject has of itself must be radically different than the knowledge it has of objects, and cannot be accounted for on standard epistemic models. Having shown what self-awareness is *not*, however, the Heidelberg School has little to say about what it *is*. This is where Zahavi comes in. He sets out to develop a more substantial theory of self-consciousness, one that can answer the following questions: What exactly is the structure of self-awareness? Is it accessible to theoretical observation? Is our acquaintance with ourselves conditioned by our experience of others, or our bodies, or temporality? What is the connection between self-awareness and intersubjectivity? Zahavi maintains that the phenomenological tradition has the resources to answer these questions, and he relies heavily on the insights of this tradition while constructing his theory. He brings to this task an impressive familiarity with the texts of the phenomenological tradition, particularly Husserl's unpublished manuscripts. His appropriation of classical phenomenology is scholarly and serious, yet clear and accessible to non-specialists.

Zahavi's theory of self-awareness draws on many different sources. He borrows extensively from Husserl's phenomenology of internal time-consciousness, arguing that subjectivity must be understood as a 'temporal ecstasis,' a 'living pulse with a certain temporal density and articulation and variable width' (82). Strictly speaking, the subject is not *in* time, since the subject is what first constitutes temporality. It is more accurate to say, with Husserl, that subjectivity 'stretches itself out' in some more primordial way.

Zahavi also borrows from other phenomenologists, such as Levinas and Merleau-Ponty. He agrees with these figures that much can be learned about subjectivity by studying its relations to alterity. Our awareness of ourselves as worldly, embodied selves 'has the encounter with the Other and the Other's intervention as its condition of possibility' (164). But Zahavi does not hesitate to criticize major phenomenological thinkers. For example, he disputes Sartre's thesis that to study subjectivity theoretically is to distort and falsify it. According to Zahavi, self-awareness has an internal structure that lends itself to being reflected upon. Theoretical observation is not a falsification of subjectivity, but its 'consummation' (187). He is also critical of standard views about the relation between phenomenology and psychoanalysis. Properly understood, he maintains, phenomenology is not incompatible with the existence of an unconscious, but only with simplistic understandings of it.

Zahavi's discussions of these topics are subtle and wide-ranging, and it is impossible to summarize them quickly. But if he has a central thesis, it is this: we will misunderstand self-awareness as long as we view it as 'a kind of marginal object-consciousness' (199). Self-awareness is neither knowledge of an object nor a particular epistemic act. Instead, it is 'a dimension of pervasive self-manifestation' (199). It is not the knowledge that some *thing* has *of itself*, but rather a peculiar, first-personal *mode of givenness* inherent to some states of consciousness. Quite simply, selves are given in a radically different way than are other phenomena. Zahavi's study is therefore a critique of what Michel Henry calls 'ontological monism' — that is, the assumption that all phenomena manifest themselves in the same way. In this respect, *Self-Awareness and Alterity* is not just a product of phenomenology, but an exciting contribution to it as well.

Zahavi's book has much to recommend it. But there is also something frustrating about it. Zahavi's project is both interpretative and argumentative: he wants both to reconstruct what major phenomenologists have said about subjectivity, and to advance an original theory of self-awareness. *Self-Awareness and Alterity* sometimes hovers uneasily between these two tasks, and it is not always easy to tell which one Zahavi is engaged in. At times, when he claims to be giving an exegesis of Husserl or some other figure, he seems rather to be appropriating the tradition creatively for his own ends. In Chapter Five, for example, Zahavi considers and rejects a certain reading of Husserl on the basis that the view it attributes to Husserl is implausible (71). Surely it is one thing to determine what Husserl's views are and another to decide whether they are plausible. But Zahavi sometimes lets his argumentative agenda drive his interpretative one. At other times, he lets interpretative considerations drive his arguments. In Chapter Eight, he defends a certain conception of the ego, but does little to argue for it except point out that Husserl advanced it (151). It sometimes seems that for Zahavi, discovering the truth about an issue is the same thing as determining what Husserl thought about it, and *vice versa*. His book would be stronger if its exegesis and its argument were more sharply distinguished.

But while Zahavi sometimes runs together original argument and Husserl interpretation, he makes important contributions to both. *Self-Awareness and Alterity* fills a void in scholarship, and it does so in a way that is accessible, rigorous, and engaging. It should become influential in many different philosophical debates.

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