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**Roger Ariew, Dennis Des Chene,  
Douglas M. Jesseph, Tad M. Schmaltz and  
Theo Verbeek, eds.**

*Historical Dictionary of Descartes and  
Cartesian Philosophy.*

Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press 2003.

Pp. xvi + 304.

US\$65.00. ISBN 0-8108-4833-3.

This work attempts too much in so short a volume. Its scope requires it to deal with too many fields, too many figures, and too many concepts — and it includes 42 pages of bibliography. Because this is not the first dictionary dedicated to Descartes' thought (e.g., John Cottingham did *A Descartes Dictionary* for Blackwell in 1993), its significance should rest upon its historical orientation. Thus the biographical material on Descartes' associates (and opponents) is a useful contribution. But the choice of individuals is necessarily limited. There is also a history of each of Descartes' various writing projects and their ultimate publication, including his posthumous works and correspondence. Again, this is helpful.

It is a bit surprising to find that when we turn to articles on specific topics, the area experts in mathematics, physics, astronomy, medicine, etc., are able to list clearly and in detail precisely what Descartes contributed to the field and how it related to the work of others. But when we turn to philosophy, the matter is by no means so clear. Thus the work that Descartes considered to be of greatest importance for the achievement of universal knowledge — e.g., method and epistemology — fare least well in presentation. For this reason, the *Dictionary* is helpful in some cases, but unconvincing or confusing in others. For example, in two places the comment is attributed to contemporaries of Descartes that he rejected both experience and logic (227, 257). No qualification or clarification is offered, either to refute or to defend this view. If, indeed, he were guilty of such a broad rejection, it would be difficult to understand why we should be thoughtful about his work at all. And if, in contrast, we are simply to reject such a comment as obviously false and to be ignored, then related articles would surely make this abundantly clear. But they do not — e.g., there is no article at all on experience.

Under the heading 'Logic', we are told that Descartes was educated within a scholastic framework which advocated the use of syllogistic logic, and that 'he held the subject in little regard' (163). It is not mentioned that in his textbooks he would also find that 'natural' logic is the essential tool for all learning, and that it provides the basis for 'artificial' logic, i.e., syllogistic. Nor is there any reference to his later insistence that throughout our search for knowledge, all inference must be deduction (defined as necessary inference). His use of logic is therefore constant and very strict.

Descartes says in *Regulae* II that there are two ways of arriving at knowledge of things — experience and deduction. He recognizes that experience can be deceptive, but then in *Regulae* III he provides two means by which



we can render our knowledge of things completely dependable: intuition and induction (or enumeration). The term 'intuition' is somewhat troubling since it may seem to suggest merely a bright idea, a privileged and spontaneous insight. Perhaps that is why, under the heading 'Intuition' (143), we are told that intuition is a concept. But what Descartes actually says is importantly different. He says that it is the conception of a clear and attentive mind, i.e., not a spontaneously given awareness, but an insight achieved through an intellectual process (applied to experience). Clearly both logic and experience are important elements in Descartes' method.

Interestingly enough, the article on 'Method' is quite good. It emphasizes that the essential aspect of method is the recognition of order and hierarchy (180). But no attempt is made to relate these elements to the empirical process of the *Regulae* within which systems of order are so thoroughly discussed. In a related article, '*Mathesis universalis*,' we are told that this means literally 'universal mathematics,' and 'denotes a highly general study of order and measure which serves as the foundation for all other sciences that admit a mathematical formulation' (170). But this ignores the fine work of Jean-Luc Marion and others establishing that *Mathesis universalis* does not mean universal mathematics, but rather (following its Greek roots) a 'universal process of learning' which would ground all aspects of Descartes' universal science.

There are similar problems with other topics, such as 'Innate Ideas'. Under this heading (138) the author correctly provides the three-fold distinction of ideas offered by Descartes — innate, adventitious (coming from elsewhere), and factitious (made up, or imaginative). And he follows with the appropriate conclusion, that since an idea such as 'God' cannot be of the latter two sorts, it must be innate 'just as the idea of the self (*cogito*) was.' But he neglects the opportunity to remind the reader that the idea of the self which arises from Meditation II is a product of reflection on sensory data concerning the piece of wax. This would illustrate Descartes' contention that the mind does not require 'innate ideas that are in some way different from its faculty of thinking.' Thus the conception of 'innate ideas' could be rescued from the unfortunate occult interpretation of many commentators, and restored to its normal historical significance: Ideas are innate if they are produced by our ordinary innate faculties (i.e., not reducible to the mere data of the senses, or the images they provide). The article goes only halfway, therefore, in closing the door to old and misguided interpretations of Descartes' thought.

My final concerns are editorial. The individual articles are not identified as contributions of a particular author. It is impossible, therefore, to assign credit or blame for specific work. This becomes particularly important when the unusual number of errors is noted, in grammar, spelling, repeated words, and erroneous references. For these reasons, the work clearly makes a contribution to the literature and will prove useful for historical information, but it fails to fulfill its potential both in vision and in quality.

**Frederick P. Van De Pitte**  
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**Robert Audi**

*The Good in the Right: A Theory of Intuition  
and Intrinsic Value.*

Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press 2004.

Pp. xi + 237.

US\$45.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-691-11434-X);

US\$22.95 (paper: ISBN 0-691-12388-8).

Ethical intuitionism, which is most closely associated with its twentieth-century British proponents — Pritchard, Ross, Broad and Ewing — is a kind of deontological theory, in that it claims that the right is independent of the good, in particular, by denying that consequences are the sole criterion of an action's rightness. Intuitionists are pluralists: they hold that there are not one, but several basic moral principles, goods, or virtues, and that they are irreducible to one more general principle. These moral principles reveal a kind of structure by illuminating the aspects of an act that make it right or wrong, and offering distinctions between basic and derivative duties, although like virtue ethicists, intuitionists hold that moral principles alone do not reveal which acts are right and wrong, but must be supplemented with judgment and experience. Finally, intuitionists hold that we have direct epistemic access to moral principles: these self-evident 'intuitions' are the basic data of moral reasoning.

For the past fifty-plus years, ethical intuitionism has been reduced to the status of a straw man against which to compare more sophisticated moral epistemologies in introductory textbooks. Intuitionism seemed incapable of performing the basic tasks of moral philosophy — enhancing understanding of moral thought by revealing its systematic structure, whether and what kind of moral knowledge is possible, what the basic moral requirements are, and morality's connections to human psychology, especially whether and in what way morality exerts a special motivational pull. In recent years, however, due to a variety of factors, including disenchantment with the leading contenders, and affinities with other resurgent strains of anti-theory, intuitionism has become the subject of fairly intense renewed interest. The new intuitionists have attempted to deflect and defuse particular criticisms, sometimes by referring carefully back to founding texts which have been unfairly read — or not read at all — by critics, and sometimes by reconstructing or significantly expanding or redacting predecessors' arguments, or by creating new lines of argument altogether. Robert Audi's ambitious *The Good in the Right* offers not only a systematic rebuttal of the major criticisms of ethical intuitionism, but a reconstructed Rossian intuitionism which attempts to complete — as least as well as other contenders — both the theoretical and practical tasks of moral theory. Unexpectedly for intuitionism (but not from the perspective of Audi's recent work) he attempts to integrate intuitionism with Kant's categorical imperative, claiming that both are improved in the process.



Audi begins with Sidgwick's intuitionism, then works his way through versions presented by Moore, Prichard, Broad, and Ross. Although brief, this history serves to establish the key tenets of all major variants of intuitionism: first, that non-inferential knowledge of ethical propositions is possible, and second, that some specifiable moral principles are self-evident, and some particular moral judgments are intuitively justifiable. Anticipating the objection that ethical claims are rendered dogmatic, Audi reminds us that Ross, in particular, insisted that they are 'grounded', i.e., supported by reflection upon life experience and careful attention, especially to like cases and relevant contrary considerations. Audi then proceeds to develop a kind of Rossian intuitionism, by liberating Ross from the shadow of Moore and Prichard, in particular by carefully explicating the problematic notion of 'self-evidence'. Self-evident propositions are *a priori* and necessary, but only 'hard' ones are strongly axiomatic, immediate, indefeasible, and compelling. Audi's moderate rationalist intuitionism needs only 'soft' self-evidence, which requires neither a special mental faculty with which we 'just see' moral truths nor a stark choice between intuitive justification and defeasibility with reference to principles. Audi's intuitionism allows for the possibility of a kind of non-inferential reflection, and disagreement and dissent in theories of normative ethics, and this thoughtful and creative attempt to defuse the challenge of dogmatism is a major strength of this book. The case is expertly made that moral truths can be intuitions, although the obvious question for critics — whether there actually are any such self-evident moral truths — lingers.

In what is perhaps the most ambitious part of an ambitious project, Audi incorporates his reconstructed Rossian intuitionism with Kant in a new ethical framework, 'Kantian intuitionism'. Because Audi has jettisoned the classical intuitionist idea that self-evidence precludes systematizing moral principles by appeal to a more general principle, it is possible for him unite Ross' *prima facie* duties under the banner of the categorical imperative. Audi's professed motivation — that this is the way to maintain both the comparatively direct application of Ross' *prima facie* principles to practical life, without sacrificing the systematization Kant provides — is not wholly convincing. Some, as anti-theorists have, might eschew unification, because it seems to require a level of justification moral theory cannot, despite countless attempts, provide, while others might try to tease order out of Ross' own set of *prima facie* duties. And Kant is not the only potential unifier, especially since Audi allows that there may be a non-rationalist intuitionism. In a move that may seem ironic to Kant's defenders and critics alike who have found Kant's own treatment of this topic highly problematic, Audi relies on Kant to help intuitionism resolve conflicts of duties, as well as the 'beneficence problem', and finally to ground some (but not all) Rossian duties. Audi concludes with a discussion of the need Kantian theory has for intuitionism, and while Kantians have long wrestled with the question of fit between Kant's theory and everyday moral practice, Audi's suggested use of Ross' duties as 'middle axioms' is a strikingly original answer.

After softening (but not subordinating) the deontology of intuitionism with an account of intrinsic value — that of the flourishing of experiencing subjects — which grounds moral principles, Audi concludes by developing the outlines of a normative theory that follows from the theoretical commitments made in the previous chapters. He reinterprets and revises several of Ross' own principles, adding some of his own, and takes up some of the major questions in normative theory today, including the balance between reducing pain and enhancing pleasure. Audi has essentially attempted not only to build a new ethical theory around a core comprised of his original interpretation of Ross, enhanced with features of Kant's theory and an account of intrinsic value, but to test it on some of the most vexing normative issues of the day. This unique and fascinating endeavor is required reading for anyone interested in intuitionism, in moral epistemology, or, indeed, in ethical theory today.

**Jessica Prata Miller**  
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**Jeffrey E. Bower and Kevin Guilfooy, eds.**  
*The Cambridge Companion to Peter Abelard.*  
New York: Cambridge University Press 2005.  
Pp. xvi + 362.  
US\$65.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-521-77247-8);  
US\$27.99 (paper: ISBN 0-521-77596-5).

After a slow start in mediaeval titles, the *Cambridge Companion* philosophy series has exploded recently with several volumes on philosophy in the Middle Ages. Contrast the pace of publishing in the 1990s with the activity of the last five years — Aquinas (1993), but then — Ockham (2000); Augustine (2001); Mediaeval Philosophy, Duns Scotus, Medieval Jewish Philosophy (2003); Abelard, Arabic Philosophy (2004); Maimonides (forthcoming 2005). Evidently readers have found the format of the *Companion* series quite congenial; each volume collects journal-length articles by specialists, which aim at an overview of a topic or figure, based on the most recent research.

Despite the fact that Frenchman Peter Abelard (d. 1142) predates the intense philosophical activity of the scholastics (occasioned by twelfth- to thirteenth-century translation into Latin of previously unavailable Greek philosophy), and that he seems not to have been immediately influential on subsequent scholastics, Abelard is a popular figure today, due in no small



part to his widely-read literary works and his titillating biography, but also on account of his devotion to logic and its application to metaphysics. That he was also the author of a highly original ethical theory, and an innovator in trinitarian theory, are facts less well known outside philosophical theology. *The Cambridge Companion to Peter Abelard* wisely develops the less well-known aspects with serious articles on his ethics and theology, without neglecting to cover better-explored topics, such as his famous *Historia calamitatum*, his logic, and his hectoring of realist William of Champeaux over universals. *The Companion to Abelard* contains ten chapters covering Abelard's biography and writings (Marenbon, Wetherbee, Brower and Guilfooy), metaphysics (King), logic and semantic theory (Martin, Jacobi, Iwakuma), ethics (Mann), as well as two chapters on theological topics (Brower, Williams).

After John Marenbon's very readable introduction to Abelard's life and intellectual milieu, Winthrop Wetherbee offers an assessment and summary discussion of the range of Abelard's literary writings. Wetherbee's chapter centers on the *Historia Calamitatum*, and rightly so, but he skillfully uses the document to frame a revealing exploration of Abelard's character and personality. The discussion is frank and interesting, and is not marred by the sort of psychoanalytic speculation to which Abelard's peculiar misfortunes might easily give rise. The chapter nicely balances a sympathetic approach to Abelard without apologizing for his egoism and his strange impersonal treatment of Heloise after they both took vows. Wetherbee concludes with a brief treatment of Abelard's poetry and lyrics, and although the *Companion* books are supposed to center on philosophical topics, I thought this section of the article quite interesting but a bit brief, and would have enjoyed a fuller discussion.

The most expansive chapters by far are Peter King's explanation of Abelard's metaphysics, and Christopher Martin's discussion of his logic. King's long and difficult chapter pulls together Abelard's views on universals, individuation, form, causality, space and time, and identity. The chapter deals with two clusters of issues: first, unity and distinction — for example, Abelard's famous rejection of contemporary theories of universals, his refinements on kinds of sameness and difference, the causes and nature of individuality, collections — and second, Abelard's views on a variety of standard subjects in Aristotelian-style metaphysics — hylomorphism, the ten categories, causality, natures, and possibility. A tidbit I found of particular interest is that Abelard is an indivisibilist; that is, he holds that continua are not only divisible into smallest magnitudes but are also actually composed of them. King has chosen an order of exposition which mixes the two types of issues, moving from the more basic ideas and distinctions to the more derivative. King sees Abelard's nominalism — or, as he prefers, *irrealism* — as the animating drive behind all his metaphysical labors. This chapter is dense, but remains quite readable, except perhaps for the section on sameness and difference, which would have benefited from more expansive explanation. King gives no indication in the text, nor even in the otherwise ample

footnotes, that some of his readings of Abelard might be controversial — for example, concerning the ontological status of the *status*.

Christopher Martin's chapter on logic is much harder than King's and is certainly less clearly organized. It does repay careful reading, however, both because Abelard had many interesting things to say about logic, and because in the long run Martin succeeds in bringing some of these things out. Like all those who follow the *logica vetus*, in which Boethius and Aristotle figure centrally, Abelard felt bound to discuss arguments in terms of *topics* or *loci*, which are roughly the grounds that license a conclusion's following from premises. After a brief background to Boethius' theory of topics, Martin describes in some detail Abelard's organization of the theory of topics, moving inevitably into his theory of conditionals, and in particular their connections with categoricals and negation. Martin finds an enormous inconsistency therein, which was first noticed by Abelard's contemporary Alberic.

The crux of the problem is that Abelard holds a cancellation theory of propositional negation, in which negation cancels the content of an assertion (in particular, he holds, for example, that  $\sim p \rightarrow p$  and its converse are impossible), together with a principle of conditional simplification (that is, for example,  $[p \wedge q] \rightarrow q$ ). However, a cancellation theory of negation will, in general, be non-monotonic, although simplification is not compatible with non-monotonicity, in the sense that no conditional could ever be true in a theory containing both principles. For, let  $p \rightarrow q$  be any conditional, then:

1.  $p \rightarrow q$  hypothesis
2.  $[p \wedge \sim q] \rightarrow \sim q$  simplification
3.  $[p \wedge \sim q] \rightarrow p$  simplification
4.  $\sim q \rightarrow \sim p$  contraposition, 1
5.  $\sim p \rightarrow \sim [p \wedge \sim q]$  contraposition, 3
6.  $[p \wedge \sim q] \rightarrow \sim [p \wedge \sim q]$  hypothetical syllogism, 2, 4, 5

Since (6) is impossible according to a cancellation account of negation, the arbitrary conditional  $p \rightarrow q$  cannot be true.

Roughly the same topics are covered in a slightly different style and from a slightly different direction in Iwakuma's chapter, bizarrely titled 'Influence'. Readers will get the most out of both chapters if they are first familiar with monotonicity, topics, and the modern approach to consecution. Neither chapter uses excessive symbolism, and either might make a fun discussion paper for a seminar on twelfth-century logic.

The only general criticism that should be laid against this volume applies equally to several other *Companion* volumes on mediaeval figures. The problem is this: in an attempt to divide the chapters topically and to achieve some comprehensive coverage of their subject, the *Companions* follow modern categories and conceptions of the divisions of *academic* philosophy, so much so that one finds some distortion of the significance and drift of the original author's views, not only in the broad categories presented to the



reader but even sometimes in the details. As evidence of this tendency one need only look at how many mediaeval *Companion* chapters begin in some such way as this: 'unlike modern philosophers, X did not view Y as a separate branch of philosophy; however ...', or 'there is little in X's work properly called Y; nevertheless ...', or 'one might not think that X has a proper theory of Y, and this is largely true, but ...' and so on. After several such beginnings, one wonders why we have a chapter called 'Y' at all. If Y is not a division native to X's intellectual schema, then such a division will likely not do justice to X's thought, and since an uninitiated modern reader will not likely find what he or she wants under the heading Y anyway, this practice serves neither reader nor subject.

Although a book intended for a modern English-speaking reader should reflect certain assumptions justly presumable for him, straining too much to pack mediaeval ideas into modern molds contributes to the perception that these thinkers were only partly philosophers like us and so only partly philosophers, thereby belying the more accurate picture — that philosophy itself was very different then, and that not every philosopher worthy of a *Companion* volume was a systematic philosopher who was innovative on every major philosophical subject. It might make more sense to divide *Companion* chapters into, say, background views and central views. One could have as background those important ideas the philosopher assumed and took over from predecessors without much change, followed by those areas where some original contribution exists.

Despite this general reservation, *The Cambridge Companion to Abelard* does not exemplify this general defect to a high degree, and it deserves praise for its relatively greater willingness to work chapters on theology and literary output into a somewhat rigid and modernist format.

**Rondo Keele**

The Louisiana Scholars' College

**David Braybrooke**

*Utilitarianism: Restorations;  
Repairs; Renovations.*

Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2004.

Pp. ix + 212.

Cdn\$/US\$55.00. ISBN: 0-8020-8732-9.

Utilitarianism has an uneasy status as a moral theory. On the one hand, it is one of the major moral theories taught to students in practically every introductory ethics course. On the other hand, it has received the most devastating criticisms to which proponents of utilitarianism have tried to respond with varying success. Although it continues to have some proponents, many contemporary philosophers regard it as an ultimately unworkable theory whose heyday is long gone. Yet, utilitarianism somehow does not completely fade away. Every now and then, a major work is produced that endeavours to revive it and show its relevance. Samuel Scheffler wrote that cynics 'may suppose that the explanation for this lies in the philosopher's penchant for keeping half-dead horses just barely alive so that they can continue to beat them with a moderately clear conscience' (Samuel Scheffler, *The Rejection of Consequentialism: A Philosophical Investigation of Consideration Underlying Rival Moral Conceptions* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, revised edition, 1994], 4). Of course, this cannot be an adequate explanation. As Scheffler indeed notes, the persistence of utilitarianism is probably due, rather, to its 'deeply plausible-sounding feature that one may always do what could lead to the best available outcome overall' (Scheffler, 4). This feature is particularly appealing for public policy. In fact, if it can overcome its problems, utilitarianism may be a useful normative guide in policy making. This is so because when addressing issues ranging from environmental regulations to health care, to conflict resolution, it is clear that the overall outcome of a given policy decision matters.

David Braybrooke's monograph *Utilitarianism: Restorations; Repairs; Renovations* is a recent attempt to revive utilitarianism in view of making it work as a guide to policy-making. The objective of the book is to show that utilitarianism, with some revisions and clarifications, can overcome the standard objections raised against it.

The book is broken down into three parts and five chapters. Each chapter addresses a standard objection against utilitarianism and offers a rebuttal. This is reflected in chapter headings, which are organized specifically to emulate Locke's headings in his *Questions about the Law of Nature* as a tribute 'to the brisk style of his headings' (11). But briskness is not just a feature of the headings. The entire book is written with an uncompromising clarity that one finds in good analytic moral and political philosophy.

The first part comprises three chapters. Chapter One addresses the objection that utilitarianism undermines reliable adherence to moral rules. A response is offered by appealing to a version of rule-utilitarianism. The next chapter addresses the objection that utilitarianism requires perfect



information about consequences. It is in this chapter that utilitarianism is presented most clearly as a theory for public policy. Braybrooke argues that the objection presupposes a 'synoptic' view of public policy, the view that policy decisions are one-shot decisions requiring the consideration of all possible consequences beforehand. Braybrooke proposes instead 'the strategy of disjointed incrementalism,' which 'allows for repeated revisions in various stages after the initial adoption of a policy' (50). This approach responds to the objection by showing that a decision can always be revised in light of new information and outcomes can continuously be reassessed. It also best reflects, Braybrooke stresses, the actual policy making processes 'in which stage-by-stage revisions prominently figure' (50).

In the third chapter, the objection that utilitarianism endorses sacrificing someone's life to make others happy is scrutinized. The response is that although it is possible to conceive utilitarianism in this way, the historic doctrine does not have such structure (81). Braybrooke then discusses how utilitarianism can overcome the objection independently of its historical ties. The conclusion reached is that 'no one could be expected to agree to join a society in which there is systematic planning for life sacrifices whenever they are useful in prolonging other people's lives' (98). This is interesting in that it implies an element of 'social contract thinking' (99-100). Braybrooke then goes on to argue that utilitarianism and social contract thinking are not inherently incompatible. But the problem is that the concept of Common Good is invoked as part of the utilitarian social contract thinking (99). In Braybrooke's parlance, Common Good is a set of public goods that constitute the common purposes of a community. Although public goods figure prominently in distributive justice debates, they do so to the extent that they generate externalities, which may require fair cost-sharing schemes. It is not clear, however, how a perfectionist and teleological notion such as the Common Good can be part of a plausible social contract theory.

The other two parts contain one chapter each. Part Two replaces the standard 'calculus' with comparative census between alternative policies. The census approach avoids the problems of utility measurement by favouring a more straightforward statistical assessment of policy outcomes. It also rebuts the objection that utilitarianism requires substantial gratuitous sacrifices to make others happy by ruling out lowering some people to a lower category in order to raise other people up (114). Part Three takes utilitarianism one step further by replacing utility with 'needs'. Needs are presented as 'basic needs', to be differentiated from either 'neediness' or 'frivolous needs' associated with wants or desires. This construction brings to mind Amartya Sen's 'capabilities approach' to justice. Although Braybrooke explains how his version avoids the perfectionist problems that arise from the ranking of capabilities, it is still vulnerable to the same problem unless the basic needs are kept to a bare minimum.

Overall, this is an interesting book. However, the volume is the result of papers published over a four-decade period and some of the chapters remain insufficiently updated. For example, the objection that utilitarianism re-

quires perfect information about consequences is presented exclusively as one raised by Nietzsche. But the chapter, based in part on a 1963 publication, does not account for the recent literature on this question. If the book is used as a textbook, it must be supplemented with material that presents the recent literature. It would also be useful to supplement it with case studies, to help generate discussion on how the revived utilitarianism can and cannot apply to specific policy issues. There are some good discussions, for example on municipal regulations to alleviate traffic congestion, but supplementary case studies would be beneficial. But classroom use aside, the book will be a great read for utilitarianism enthusiasts.

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**Joseph Keim Campbell, Michael  
O'Rourke, and David Shier, eds.**

*Freedom and Determinism.*

Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press 2004.

Pp. vi + 329.

US\$35.00. ISBN 0-262-53257-3.

The past decade has seen a renaissance in work on free will and moral responsibility. A debate that had seemed moribund has flowered once more, with, on the (broadly) compatibilist side new options explored, and, even more significantly, a new incompatibilism, both libertarian and hard determinist. This book, based around a selection of papers presented at the 2001 Inland Northwest Philosophy Conference, is representative of much of this recent work. It contains a mixture of contributions by prominent figures in the new debate, as well as some papers by lesser-known people. Most of it covers the ground upon which the new debate has focused, but, in a good sign for the future health of the debate, some novel approaches are explored as well. Space will not permit comments on every paper contained in this volume; what follows will remark briefly only on those that for one reason or another seemed most interesting to me.

In many ways, a book like this is more closely akin to a special issue of a journal than to an anthology. Contributions are linked only by the fact that they address the same, broad, theme. As a consequence, relatively few people



will be interested in the entire book. Instead, different people will find different things of interest in it. Newcomers to the debate over the compatibility of free will and determinism will find some of the essays by established figures in the field accessible introductions to their views. They will benefit from Peter van Inwagen's overview of the evolution of his view that free will is fundamentally mysterious: apparently incompatible with both determinism and indeterminism, yet plainly (van Inwagen believes) possessed by us. Van Inwagen's conclusion is not widely shared, but one of his arguments — the so-called *Consequence Argument* — has been very influential, and has set the stage for some of the debates covered in more detail elsewhere in the volume. Non-specialists will also find Robert Kane's exposition of his event-causal libertarianism useful. Kane's view is one of the most influential and powerful libertarian accounts currently available, and any student of the topic must be familiar with it.

However, specialists will find little new in van Inwagen's or Kane's essays. They will instead be more interested in the continuation of the debates that these views have sparked, or in the new perspectives presented here. In the former category fall John Martin Fischer's discussion of the validity of various 'transfer principles' employed by van Inwagen and other philosophers who argue for the incompatibility of free will and determinism; Todd Long's attempt to develop new Frankfurt-style cases that test the sufficiency of Fischer's own influential view (developed in conjunction with Mark Ravizza); the latest incarnation of Keith Lehrer's compatibilist theory; and John Perry's own attempt to answer the Consequence Argument. Fischer's papers are always illuminating, but this one will be hard going for those new to these debates, since it continues an argument, over the status of various counterexamples to van Inwagen's principles, that is now almost Byzantine in its complexity. Lehrer's article is welcome, inasmuch as the position it sets out has been unjustly neglected. Lehrer's is a hierarchical theory, somewhat akin to those associated with Harry Frankfurt and Gary Watson. However, his view, that an action is free if it is in accord with the agent's preferences, seems less vulnerable to certain manipulation counterexamples; whereas other hierarchical theorists are forced to say that the structure of mental states suffices for freedom, no matter the history of that structure, Lehrer's requirement that agents *prefer* their structure of preferences allows him to escape simpler versions of counterexamples that turn on manipulation. I suspect, however, that more complex counterexamples will give Lehrer trouble: if our preferences can be manipulated, so, surely, can our higher-order preferences. Perry claims, convincingly, that the debate over the consequence argument turns on competing accounts of laws of nature and notions of ability: compatibilism can be defended against the Consequence Argument by adopting a weak reading of the former, or the latter (or both).

Ginet is an influential defender of a variety of libertarianism. However, like much of his recent work, his contribution focuses on tryings, rather than on free will *per se*. This is a valuable contribution to the growing literature on volitions, to which Ginet has been an important contributor. But it is

somewhat orthogonal to the theme of the volume. Nelkin's essay addresses an important component of the phenomenology of free will; the sense that we are free, and its connection to our nature as rational deliberators. Some philosophers have argued that the sense that each of us seems to have, that our actions are up to us, is evidence for the intuitiveness of incompatibilism. Nelkin denies this conclusion; she argues that the sense of freedom in deliberation is better understood as the sense that one's actions are responsive to one's reasons. Nelkin's essay is a significant contribution to this debate, but it might have been better still if she had paid attention to the growing empirical evidence on the sense that ordinary agents have that their actions are free.

Haji has been an important contributor to the debate over free will and moral responsibility over the past decade. His contribution to this volume argues that blame need not always be backwards-looking: if we know that an agent will commit a morally blameworthy action, he argues, we can appropriately blame her *before* she acts. One person's *modus ponens*, it is often said, is another's *modus tollens*, and I suspect that many people will take from Haji's argument not the conviction that blame need not be backwards-looking, but instead that moral responsibility is incompatible with ensuring conditions: determinism, or counterfactual interveners.

Feldman's contribution is an examination of a new and fascinating approach to free will. Many people have been convinced by contextualist responses to sceptical arguments in epistemology, which hold that the context in which we claim that we do not know that we are not, say, brains-in-vat, is not the same as the context as the context in which we claim to know that we have two hands, and that there is therefore no conflict between the two propositions. John Hawthorns has recently suggested that contextualism may be the appropriate response to doubts about freedom: the contexts in which we can, without obvious error, think that an agent is not free because her actions are determined is not the context in which we assess the responsibility of agents for blameworthy or praiseworthy actions. Feldman rejects contextualism, epistemological or with regard to free will. Feldman thinks that contextualist arguments concede too much to sceptics and to incompatibilists. But this seems to me mistaken: rather than accepting the sceptical or incompatibilist intuition, contextualism seems to aim to explain why many people have what seem, *prima facie*, to be conflicting intuitions, sceptical *and* common-sensical, compatibilist *and* incompatibilist.

Arplay's contribution is an early version of work that has since appeared in her warmly-received *Unprincipled Virtue*. She argues that the notion of autonomy has too many senses to be useful, and should be abandoned in favor of more direct assessments of moral blame and praiseworthiness. Her own favored alternative is reliabilist — roughly, agents are responsible for actions just in case they are produced by reliable reason-tracking mechanisms — and seems vulnerable to the criticisms that seem to many people to be decisive against reliabilism in epistemology.



I have space only to mention the other contributions: Earman's careful and difficult examination of the extent to which contemporary physics is committed to determinism; Gier and Kjellberg's exploration of free will in the Buddhist tradition; and a sketch by Honderich of his well-known successor view to compatibilism and incompatibilism. Given the range of approaches this volume canvasses, it might seem churlish to castigate it for its omissions. But two omissions are glaring, inasmuch as both have been ably defended in recent years and have given new life to the entire debate: agent-causation, as defended by Tim O'Connor and (less enthusiastically) Randolph Clarke, and scepticism about free will, as represented by Galen Strawson and Derk Pereboom.

The free will debate is notoriously difficult. Where *Freedom and Determinism* succeeds best is in giving the flavor of the difficulty. It is not that the individual papers are themselves very difficult; it is the range of topics that they cover which makes them so daunting. Assessing the compatibility of freedom and determinism requires coming to firm conclusions regarding the nature of causation (Perry) and the nature of the world (Earman); it is to that extent a branch of metaphysics. But metaphysics alone will not settle the question; in addition we need to know about the structure of the mind/brain (Kane) and the nature of action (Ginet). Finally, free will is a normative question as well as a descriptive matter: free will is often understood as that property (whatever it is) that makes people responsible for their actions. For that reason, appeal to moral intuitions is routine in the debate. The free will debate therefore brings together specialists in mind, metaphysics, action and ethics, to an extent unparalleled elsewhere in philosophy. *Freedom and Determinism* represents that cross sub-disciplinary debate in its most challenging and rewarding form.

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**David Carr, Thomas R. Flynn, and  
Rudolf A. Makkreel, eds.**

*The Ethics of History.*

Evanston, IL: Northwestern University  
Press 2004.

Pp. xvi + 263.

US\$79.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-8101-2026-7);

US\$29.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8101-2027-5).

This richly insightful philosophical anthology investigates the historian's ethical responsibilities to the past, present, and future, confirming ethics as an essential consideration in the writing of history. Unified by the dominating theme of the ethics of history, the shared sub-themes of many of the articles provide additional threads of continuity that pervade the collection. An additional and refreshing strength is the anthology's interdisciplinary character, with contributors representing a variety of disciplines and approaches including philosophy, intellectual history, and comparative literature. Lastly, the introduction includes a concise summary of the prevalent positions shared by many of the articles, together with a synopsis of each offering.

The affinity between truth and value in historical discourse leads Frank Ankersmit to assume that subjectivity (political and moral values) influences the historian's accounts of the past. Elucidating this relationship requires an analysis of historical representations which are to be understood in a way similar to how we understand a work of art, that is by the '“substitution theory”' (8) of representation. The aesthetic criteria identified here are non-normative and precede the criteria used in evaluating both cognitive and normative discourse. Hence, truth precedes value, and so aesthetic criteria allow the historian to avoid both relativism and irrationality.

Rejecting the idea of historical narrative as representation, Edith Wyschogrod argues for a revised view of the past. She contends that values are unavoidable in history writing, since the historian begins with the ethical promise to the 'dead others' (30) of the past, and claims to make past events available to present and future generations. The two main ingredients in the re-figured past are the ineluctable role of language in the composition of historical 'facts' and the inescapable presence of moral values in the writing of historical narrative. While absolute truth is unachievable, we can attain 'limited certainty' (41-2) through the employment of the past's 'negated possibilities' (41).

Alan Megill emphasises the fundamental epistemological concern of the historical enterprise - that 'history aims to tell the truth in particular cases' (45). The primary ethical demand is a responsibility of the promise of truth '... toward the community of moral agents in general' (52). Megill argues that history should be a model for truth-telling, the source for the historian's ethical responsibilities. Where the past is more obscure, Megill contends (68) that the historian employ 'speculative' or 'abductive' reasoning which must



be satisfied with an assertion of possibility, rather than certainty or probability.

Arthur C. Danto looks to Herodotus for a connection between history and morality: "To preserve the memory of the past ..." (Herodotus, *The Histories*, trans. Aubrey de Selencourt [Markham, ON: Penguin Books, 1973], 41) (76). The ethical question is: What is the basis in morality for making this truth a duty? Drawing from Nietzsche's *The Genealogy of Morals*, Danto answers that '... morality and historical consciousness arise together' (83). Thus, the historian has a duty to the critical preservation of the memory of the past by presenting the truth and rejecting falsity. Hence, history and morality, 'mediated by the ontological reality of other consciousnesses, form ... a metaphysical knot' (87).

John D. Caputo claims (91) that historians are morally obligated to respond to history's unjustifiable wrongs, e.g., the Holocaust, 'irreparable losses' to which no theodicy can adequately respond. He proposes eschatological history, 'written with prayers and tears' (91), as the source of an answer. Traditional history is '... too obsessed with truth as representation' (109), whereas eschatological history lets justice precede truth, and ethics precede episteme, and confronts the impossibility of repairing the irreparable' (110). Following Levinas, Caputo declares (112) "... I am commanded by the 'mortality' of the other, ... not to remain indifferent to his death, ... — lest I become an 'accomplice' in that death" (Emmanuel Levinas, *Entre Nous: On Thinking-of-the-Other*, trans. Michael B. Smith and Barbara Harshav [New York: Columbia University Press 1998], 109). Ultimately, the historian preserves the memory of the 'gift' (105) of the dead, i.e., their lives, and presents that written memory to the children who are the hope for the future.

Relying on Lacan's psychoanalytic critique of Hegel's interpretation of Sophocles' *Antigone*, Joan Copjec considers the ethical issues spawned by rereading the play in the modern context. Copjec's approach involves both analysing immortality in terms of Lefort's concept of 'singularity' (128) (Claude Lefort, 'The Death of Immortality?', in *Democracy and Political Theory* [Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 1988], 256) and investigating the association between singularity '... which gives rise to our ... unconscious, sense of immortality' (128) and 'the psychoanalytic concept of sublimation' understood as the 'proper destiny of the (death) drive' (135). For Lacan, psychoanalytic ethics are concerned with '... the subject (e.g., Antigone), ... who metamorphoses herself at the moment of encounter with the reality of an unexpected event' (149); in Antigone's case, upon learning of the exhumation of her brother's body.

Jean-Francois Lyotard focuses on how, in the *Confessions*, Augustine's aspirations to live the Christian life are constantly thwarted by the influence of sexuality. Despite the intensity of his conversion experience, Augustine's path is fraught with obstacles including the inaccuracy of the memories of the experience of God's visit, the confusion resulting from the collision between the respective space-times of the material world and the divine, and the inadequacy of language as a means of describing the encounter between

the 'inner human' (156-7) and the divine. But most significantly, what Freud terms the 'atemporal' (163) sexuality ultimately pulls Augustine back into his old habits, thus preventing him from achieving the 'wholeness' he seeks in the Christian life.

Joseph Margolis argues for a 'limited, constructivist based' (175) objectivity for history, an objectivity independent of objectivism and impervious to scepticism. Such objectivity originates in the dynamic interdependence between the 'apt selves' (174), formed by historicity, and a "historicized" adaptation of Wittgenstein's notion of '*Lebensform*' (Ludwig Wittgenstein, *On Certainty*, ed. G.E.M. Anscombe and G. H. von Wright, trans. Denis Paul and G.E.M. Anscombe [Oxford: Basil Blackwell 1969] (176). The constructivism permeates the norms of rationality and legitimation on which it [objectivity] depends. The antidote for residual persistent ideology and doctrinal bias is a '... dampened measure of what is to count as "objective"' (185). Finally, to adjudicate between competing historical interpretations or ethical judgments apparently equal in legitimacy, Margolis follows Plato's *Statesman*, recommending a 'second-best' (188) conjecture, one that escapes '... the untenable excesses of the "best" (objectivist) claims and proposes plausible gains against such claims and against all other second-best alternatives' (188).

Jörn Rüsen analyses historical responsibility and its relationship to historical objectivity. The historian has responsibility to the past, present and future, each of which is vulnerable to a type of irresponsibility. The realization of the historian's responsibility to the past involves both reproduction and interpretation of the facts. The key condition for the fulfillment of the historian's obligation is 'temporal intersubjectivity' (206). Rüsen then considers the challenge to historical responsibility offered by the methodological responsibility to follow methodical rules and their aim of value freedom and objectivity. Hermeneutics is the remedy for the loss of ethical '... responsibility as a conscious factor of historical work' (210).

In considering the relationship between hermeneutics and the ethical responsibilities of historians, Rudolf A. Makkreel holds the main ethical issue to be that the negotiation of 'the different perspectives of the interpreting subject and the interpreted subject' (222), preserves the integrity of both sides. In general, interpretation involves two processes, one 'reflective' (223) and the other 'reflexive' (223), whose relationship permits a more succinct redefinition of a hermeneutical interpretation, so that understanding requires the following: reflection on how we are related to others; evaluation of what universal norms if any bind us; and a reflexive sense of how this affects self-understanding. The ethical impact of hermeneutics on historians is to expand the scope of ethical-historical consideration to those who have been ignored or marginalized by traditional history writing.

Thomas R. Flynn examines the notion of 'committed history' (235), a subspecies of Sartre's 'literature of praxis' (Jean-Paul Sartre, *What Is Literature? And Other Essays* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1998] (234). This praxis manifests itself in committed history as the histo-



rian's moral responsibility both to illuminate past human sufferings and to perform the emancipatory act of promoting freedom. A further disclosure of praxis is that our historical knowledge is not pure, but is rather 'our constitutive relation to the world' (236). Flynn defends 'committed history' against epistemological, methodological, and moral criticisms, and lastly notes that despite the apparent threat of relativism, Sartre views history as involving 'eternal' facts' some of which comprise a 'physical and moral evil' which 'committed' historians must address (244).

David Carr challenges the view that 'it is the literary form of history which seems to prevent it' (251) from satisfying its claims to knowledge of the past, by arguing that this position is based on three 'dubious' (252) assumptions: that narrative distorts reality; that imagination precludes knowledge; and that insofar as history contains fictional elements, it presents a false picture of the world. Carr argues, to the contrary, that the three concepts in question, imagination, narrative, and fiction, rather than preventing historians from telling the truth about the past, are actually indispensable to the goal.

Of value especially to historians and philosophers of history, for classroom use this collection should be of particular interest and benefit to graduate students and undergraduates who have already taken a senior level course devoted to issues in the contemporary philosophy of history.

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**Philip Clayton and Jeffrey Schloss, eds.**

*Evolution and Ethics: Human Morality in  
Biological and Religious Perspective.*

Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans  
Publishing Company 2004.

Pp. x + 339.

US\$32.00. ISBN 0-8028-2695-4.

The relationship between evolutionary biology and human morality is currently a subject of intense debate in what is often called the 'religion-science dialogue'. Does morality have a biological basis? If so, is that because it has evolved along with other human attributes and capacities? And if so, does that mean that one need no longer appeal to religious or philosophical arguments to explain why humans *are*, by in large, morally conscientious beings, much less justify why they *should* be? (If it's adaptive to be moral, what more explanation or reason is needed?!) The essays in this volume address these and other related questions with care, concern (since most of the authors are religiously oriented), and considerable sophistication.



Many of the essays are products of a seminar at Calvin College in the summer of 2002, which were, after critiques and revision, presented at a conference at Calvin in the fall. The others were either keynote addresses at the conference or were written especially for the volume. Substantial support for the project was provided by the Sir John Templeton Foundation. The editors, philosopher and theologian Philip Clayton and biologist Jeffrey Schloss, have arranged the essays under three broad headings: 'The Evolution of Ethics: Scientific Perspectives', 'Religious and Evolutionary Ethics — Are They Compatible?', and 'The Ethics of Evolution: Theological Evaluation and Critique'. This is a rich and provocative volume whose scope can only be suggested in a brief review.

Begin with the evolution of ethics. The question of whether morality has its origins in evolutionary biology (EB) is an interesting and important one, not only because ethical systems typically urge specific attitudes and behaviors that appear contrary to reproductive self-interest, but also because ethical judgment involves choosing courses of action using criteria that are understood to exist independently of the particular inclinations of the agent. (Think of Bentham's Principle of Utility or Kant's Categorical Imperative.) EB theories of ethics try to explain how and why the capacity to make moral judgments arose in *homo sapiens*, that is, what proto-moral capacities could have been modified, in selective environments, to account for morality's phylogenetic and cognitive origin, and why a 'moral sense' would have been selected for and preserved.

Evolutionary theories of ethics are allegedly descriptive rather than prescriptive; they posit natural causes for the origin and functional maintenance of moral capacity or particular moral beliefs, but they do not purport to provide justification for particular beliefs. So, for example, one might seek to explain our ability to be impartial and altruistic if (contra psychological egoism) one thinks that we actually *have* that ability — as moral theories typically assume we do; but evolution-of-ethics theories don't try to justify impartiality or altruism as morally praiseworthy. At most they seek only to show that such cognitive and affective 'stances' are adaptive (for co-operation within social groups, for example), and so have been selected for in our evolutionary past.

All of the authors in this volume, but especially those in Part I, address the EB origins of morality. Given the attention they devote to it, allow me to say a bit more about altruism, since this is a vexing problem for EB theorists. Suppose we define altruism as a genuine concern for others and a willingness (indeed, a *desire*) to contribute, when possible, to their well-being. How could that concern, that desire, have arisen, since it does the altruist no good? Here an EB theorist might reply that a concern for others, and a willingness to help them, *does* do the altruist some good, since it enhances his reputation as a good guy. The problem with this is that while virtue may be its own reward, 'virtue' consciously pursued for reward's sake strikes most of us as seriously unvirtuous, and that's why we are usually on the outlook for hypocrites whose goodwill is intentionally tied to a rate of reputational

return. Still, for a biological explanation of morality the nagging question remains: How could we have evolved through natural selection to be *genuinely* caring if it offers no advantage?

Part II of the volume addresses questions in a field sometimes called evolutionary ethics, sometimes ethics *from* evolution. Unlike the evolution of ethics, which is, or purports to be, purely descriptive, evolutionary ethics seeks to be prescriptive by deriving normative ethical principles from EB and providing a justification for them. This looks unpromising, if for no other reason than that it appears to commit the naturalistic fallacy by trying to derive ‘an ought from an is’. The objection is that fully naturalized theories of ethics are inadequate because descriptive accounts of how things *are* don’t provide warrant for normative evaluations of how they *should be*. But several authors try to respond to this criticism by arguing for a particular kind of functional ‘is-ness’ based in EB and sufficient to ground normative claims. One way to do this is to argue for a connection between EB and natural law theory, as Larry Arnhart does in his essay: what is right is what fulfills fundamental, evolved human desires (204-20). Arnhart appeals to the version of natural law theory developed by Thomas Aquinas, and so can answer the central question of Part II — Are religious and evolutionary ethics compatible? — in the affirmative. Darwin provides, he writes, ‘a biological explanation for how the moral sense could be rooted in human nature. In so doing he confirms a tradition of moral naturalism that stretches back through the Scottish moral sense philosophers to Aquinas and the natural law philosophers and finally back to the biblical doctrine that there is a natural sense of right and wrong that is implanted in the human heart by the Creator. And in doing so, he denies the tradition of moral transcendentalism that stretches back through Kant and Hobbes to the Gnostic dualists who rejected the biblical doctrine of creation by denying the goodness of the natural world’ (209).

Arnhart is surely right in stressing that we are embodied and that morality cannot require, as the Gnostics thought, a denial of our biological nature. But, as he also knows, one can be a natural law theorist without being a theist. The non-theist has a harder time explaining why we are naturally moral, but the theist has to appeal to God: the natural moral law is imprinted on us by the Creator. We are made in the image of God, and it promotes our ultimate end, which is to be with God, to live a moral life. So while religious and evolutionary ethics may be compatible, there is no necessary connection between them. Instead, one might invoke the non-theistic Aristotelian notion of proper function, informed by EB perspectives on organismal homeostasis. According to such a view, morality helps us to identify and avoid pathological desires, balance our wants, and thereby lead a more flourishing life. The normative injunction, based in our evolved capacities, is simply put: choose good so that you may live well.

If evolutionary ethics is problematic, the ethics of evolution — the subject of Part III — is even more so. Does the cosmos have a purpose? If so, what is it? Is there a ‘moral structure’ to the universe? And, if so, what is its basis?

Can purpose and moral structure be grounded in the evolutionary process itself, both cosmological and biological, or do they require appeal to a transcendent being guiding evolutionary change?

Co-editor Jeffrey Schloss suggests in his Introduction to the volume that ‘when it comes to matters of ethics and human purpose, we seem to be dealing with two profoundly different meta-narratives in evolutionary naturalism and Christian theism’ (2). Schloss doesn’t think the gap is unbridgeable (17-19), and neither do the authors of Parts II and III. They all think — rightly in my view — that EB and Christian theism can naturally inform one another. For example, EB can and should lead theologians to a better understanding of who we are as embodied creatures. Transcendentalists, like the Gnostics, think that we have to get beyond our bodies, our ‘animal nature’, and nature itself in order to be moral. EB shows — convincingly, I think — that this can’t be done. Humans are not essentially disembodied spirits, so that views of morality and purpose that assert or assume that they are, are seriously misguided. At the same time, a proper theological understanding can illuminate the ways in which purely biological explanation is incomplete. For example, there is a rich legacy of theological reflection on whether morality involves a constraint on or fulfillment of natural human desires, or instead a transformation of them, or whether genuine altruism represents an extension of natural affections or a transcending of them — questions of deep ambiguity in the human experience that are addressed in current and competing accounts of evolutionary ethics. Consider the following. A soldier in Iraq takes off his helmet, uses it to cover a grenade thrown by insurgents, and then covers both with his body. He dies, but he saves the rest of his platoon. What are we to make of this? The soldier was a Christian who believed that Jesus died to help save the world, and that he should be willing to do the same. How can EB explain that?

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*Knowledge, Nature, and the Good:*

*Essays on Ancient Philosophy.*

Princeton, NJ: Princeton University  
Press 2004.

Pp. x + 410.

US\$65.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-691-11723-3);

US\$27.95 (paper: ISBN 0-691-11724-1).

This second volume of Cooper's essays, complementing an earlier collection of writings on ancient ethics, spans a wider range of topics in ancient Greek philosophy. Collections of important essays like this are very useful, since the essays originally appeared in journals and conference proceedings; moreover, one is new and some have been revised and expanded. The essays cover a time period ranging from the pre-Socratics to the Aristotelian commentators. A mere indication of the breadth of the scholarship represented by these essays is the fact that the cumulative bibliography and index of passages cover more than twenty-five pages. These essays are essential reading.

Cooper engages philosophically with the issues raised by ancient writers as a way to understand and appreciate them, but without imposing on them the terms of modern debates. For example, a study of the relationship between philosophy and oratory begins with Plato's rationale for conceding only a limited philosophical status to Isocrates' work, since it is not reflective on its own methodology. Cooper considers how Isocrates might have defended oratory, for reasons not unlike those an ancient sceptic might have espoused. He then shows how Cicero adopted such a position, and the weaknesses it nonetheless contains. Equally complex is the argument of Cooper's paper on Arcesilaus, which tries to show that Arcesilaus' position can be understood both as Socratic and as sceptical — in the Pyrrhonist sense of the term — and not as a theoretically motivated denial of the possibility of knowledge associated with the sceptical academy. Cooper shows that Cicero's presentation of the 'scepticism' of Socrates and Arcesilaus as motivated by Presocratic denials of the possibility of knowledge, given their metaphysical views, could have arisen by reading back a Philonian approach onto Arcesilaus. He raises the possibility that Arcesilaus' method could have been based on a genuinely Socratic commitment to the life of reason, which withholds assent heuristically because reason demands this in the face of the dubiousness of the extant theories of his contemporaries; an interesting contribution to our understanding of the motivating background to ancient scepticism. The section on knowledge and methodology also contains a thorough discussion of the Hippocratic work *On Ancient Medicine*, and a classic piece on Plato's account of the relationship between sense-perception and knowledge.

The section on natural philosophy collects together two justly famous pieces on Aristotelian teleology. Equally interesting are the issues central to articles on Aristotelian mixture theory and on metaphysics in Aristotelian embryology. Despite their different subject matters, two articles both address

the difficult ideas Aristotle uses in explaining cases where two substances intermingle, including the ideas of overmastering, of slackening or loosening, and of powers and potentials. One of the two considers how ingredients can each maintain their own powers when they are mixed, and whether Aristotle needs to think that ingredients are evenly distributed throughout a mixture in order for it to acquire its own perceived character. Cooper argues — surprisingly, and against the interpretation of Philoponus — that, on the most interesting reading, Aristotle does not do so; Cooper cautions against reading Stoic ideas back into Aristotle. In the account of inheritance of parental characteristics, Cooper argues that the embryological account of *Generation of Animals* belies the two most popular interpretations of the role of substantial form offered by interpreters of the *Metaphysics*. Cooper thinks that neither the idea that male seed contributes merely species-specific form, nor the idea that the form of the individual parent is passed on in generation, adequately capture the detailed account of the transmission of form found in the biological work. Rather, Aristotle allows that the male seed has movements in potential that allow it to transmit characteristics from male ancestors in the male line, and also from the mother.

An essay on Stoic notions of autonomy bridges the discussion of natural philosophy and the essays on ethics. This last section includes an expanded essay on finality and self-sufficiency in the *Philebus* and *Nicomachean Ethics*, and Cooper's 2000 APA Presidential Address, where he contrasts two theories of justice in the *Republic*. This shows how Socrates' account of the 'city for pigs' is based on different assumptions about the nature of community from those made by Glaucon. Cooper argues that a city that is founded on a principle of cooperation to serve needs is quite different from that based on desire satisfaction, because of the insatiability of desire. Hence Socrates' remark that justice and injustice are only found in the latter: the citizens of Socrates' city would scarcely feel the need of such a principle to motivate cooperative action.

Cooper returns to the relationship between rhetoric and philosophy in the final two essays, which consider the relationship between moral theory and moral improvement in Seneca and Marcus Aurelius. In both, Cooper defends the systematicity of orthodox Stoicism against two attempts, one to bring it closer to common beliefs, and the other to claim that a Stoic could maintain his moral purpose even if he came to believe that Stoic physical theory was incorrect. Just as Cooper argues that Seneca cannot reject the subtleties of Stoic metaphysics and argue rhetorically for its ethics without the reasoned justifications grounded in the entire system, the final essay — first published in this volume — critiques Marcus Aurelius' attempt to use rhetorical imagery to anchor his own commitment to Stoicism, in the imagined absence of the support provided by the Stoic theory of the physical universe and its providential order. Marcus Aurelius supposes that, even if he came to believe that the atomists were right and this is a purposeless universe, a Stoic mind, inviolable by externals, could retain its moral focus. Cooper argues that the Stoic notion of belief requires more than tenacity, but must be motivated by

good reasons, so that the ethical commitments of a Stoic require the entire metaphysics to sustain it. By philosophical engagement with the claims of a text, Cooper shows the complex structure of Stoicism and its resistance to piecemeal use.

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**Sean Coyle and Karin Morrow**

*The Philosophical Foundations of  
Environmental Law:*

*Property Rights and Nature.*

Portland, OR: Hart Publishing 2004.

Pp. xv + 228.

US\$80.00 (cloth: ISBN 1-84113-359-0);

US\$36.00 (paper: ISBN 1- 84113-360-4).

As an environmental lawyer I have asserted that destroying key wildlife habitat is not part of a property right. The point seemed most convincing where habitat was that of a species tottering on extinction. 'How could it be,' I would assert, 'that a property right to land could include the right to rob humanity forever and erase from earth a unique type of living being?' The converted and often the non-committed immediately see the intuitive plausibility of my claims. Many of the non-converted (even libertarian development advocates) get defensive. Luckily for me, when I make such assertions in a legal context there has not been opportunity for full philosophical debate. Now, after having read this book, I welcome such discussion. The book provides my arguments.

The book's mission is to make plausible the claim that there is a philosophical foundation for environmental law 'of surprising antiquity and sophistication' and that 'by exploring certain currents in thought relating to property and tort, and the relationship between public and private law, one can find the germs of a distinctive philosophical approach to concerns which we now regard as environmental' (3). Coyle and Morrow argue that the foundation is found in property law. Property rights, they contend, have a moral core, comprised of a concern for environmental protection, and they are limited by that concern.

The book challenges the view that environmental law is merely a collection of statutory responses to the problems of modern living. The challenged view holds that environmental law is a distinctive branch of law only in that the rules, mechanisms and controls which comprise legal environmental



protection deal with a unique subject matter. The view holds that environmental jurisprudence centres upon questions of social harm, and on how individual rights and interests give way to collective interests in a clean and healthy environment. In Coyle and Morrow's words, 'environmental law, thus conceived, consists of a series of restrictions (as well as positive obligations) on owners of property, which are not typically thought of as requiring any deeper explanation in terms of fundamental moral or political values' (212). Holders of this 'regulatory conception' (213), are committed to a number of suppositions. One is that the environmental regulatory agenda is at odds with property owners' interests. Others are that property rights must be perceived within a Blackstonian black-letter law regime and that there is a dichotomy between public and private interests, one pitted against the other in regulatory policy discussions.

Coyle and Morrow offer an alternative to the regulatory conception. They contend that the philosophical roots of environmental law may be found in the deliberations of natural rights theorists of the seventeenth century. They show how these theorists saw property rights imbued with a moral and religious significance. Property was conceived not only in the context of humans in relation to other humans, but also in relation to the external world. The intrinsic values embedded in notions of property were what we call 'environmental': 'property rights were regarded as arising from, and moving within, conceptions of social justice which were fundamentally tied to the cultivation and care of the environment' (212-13). Coyle and Morrow meticulously trace the transformations and variations of this view through the ages with the objective of demonstrating that there is good argument that the intrinsic moral and social values of property rights have withstood the test of time. Property rights today are subject to comparable, though not necessarily the same, limitations as property rights during their conceptual development in the seventeenth century. Coyle and Morrow take great care to demonstrate that at least some environmental legislation is rooted in this property rights common law tradition.

Coyle and Morrow conclude that the regulatory conception is wrong and accordingly the commitments supposed by this conception must unravel. Hence environmental regulation need not always be at odds with property rights since property rights are limited and do not usually include the right to harm environment. Also, environmental regulation need not take away or restrict property rights. Regulation rather may be a statutory reflection of common law restrictions on activities that cause environmental harm. As well, property rights are not 'black-letter law' since they are not comprised of unwavering principles. Instead, their moral content and thus their limitations evolve with social and environmental circumstances. Finally, the private/public distinction is not a strict dichotomy. Instead, private property rights have inherent limitations that reflect public interest and hence the private is in a sense public.

Coyle and Morrow show that environmental law, like property law, contract law and tort law, in contrast to sport law, or, perhaps, internet law,

has its own unique doctrinal basis. It does not consist just of applying rules from other areas of law. The doctrinal basis primarily may be found in property law as impacted by tort law. An example of the impact of tort law is the strict liability rule set forth in the nineteenth-century case *Rylands v. Fletcher* (1868 LR 3, HL 330). The rule imposes strict liability (no intention to harm required) where damage follows from a 'non-natural' use of land. What constitutes a non-natural use is contingent on prevailing environmental and social conditions. Coyle and Morrow argue that this rule evidences inherent environmental and social limitations of property rights.

In carrying out their mission, Coyle and Morrow weave an intricate argument that proceeds as follows:

1. At its heart, property law, like environmental law, concerns the relationship between humans and the world and the limits on entitlements to natural resources.
2. A fully developed understanding of modern environmental law cannot be achieved without understanding prior connections between environmental concerns and ideas of property.
3. The roots of philosophical preoccupation with property, when traced back to the world views from which they emerged, stem from concerns that are environmental. A unique doctrinal basis for environmental law may be found in these roots.
4. Historically, property entitlements developed to recognize intrinsic environmental values and accordingly were not based solely on instrumentalist, rights and duties, or just distribution approaches.
5. Modern environmental legal doctrine incorporates elements of intrinsic environmental values as reflected in tort (*Rylands v. Fletcher*) and contemporary notions such as sustainable development, common heritage, future generations, and stewardship.
6. Nevertheless, modern property entitlements ideology reflects a dominance of instrumentalist thinking over recognition of intrinsic value.
7. A fundamental conceptual shift re-establishing the core importance of intrinsic environmental values is necessary in order to fully provide and appreciate the correct philosophical foundation for modern environmental law.

Coyle and Morrow' conclusions have implications that may be profoundly more practical than academic. If they were absorbed into our day-to-day concept of property entitlements, many practical results would follow. For example, chilling effects on governments to regulate in the public interest would dissipate. Even in the United States, where property rights are protected by the U.S. Constitution, governments would not have much to fear when they clearly act in the public interest and restrict what landowners can do with their land. Appropriate restrictions would not be taking away a part of a property right and subject to a constitutional challenge because society

would recognize inherent limitations to property rights that may be reflected in government legislation. What constitutes 'appropriate restrictions' will change over time depending on a number of factors, including ecological and related stresses and scientific knowledge. Thus, reasonable regulatory protection of species and habitat, important watersheds and other ecological values, and heritage interests and landscapes, would not be contentious, they would be accepted. Landowners would understand that their ownership of land does not give them the right to, for example, mow over endangered burrowing owl habitat. A land developer would look at the landscape he or she owns and naturally envision and design a subdivision that respects and enhances watershed capacity and function, and leaves in tact wildlife corridors and habitat ecological values. Conceptual changes would be reminiscent of the vision in Aldo Leopold's land ethic (*Sand County Almanac and Sketches Here and There* [Oxford: OUP 1968]). Is this merely pie in the sky? I think not. There are numerous examples of society engaging in comparable conceptual shifts which arguably involve a realization that property does not properly extend to certain entities rather than a reduction of property rights. Western concepts relating to the ownership of slaves, children, and women, readily come to mind.

Although the text sometimes drifts into intricate discussions which could detract from the main points, I cannot fault it. Although the reader must wade through elaborate and particular (though valuable) discussions, it is a coherent whole. The long but profound discussion on sustainable development (200-11) in itself is worth the price of the book. My only worry is that the book's arguments might be abused and taken out of context. Coyle and Morrow in no way support the view that property rights alone can address environmental harms, that legislation is unnecessary, or that publicly owned resources should be privatized. Quite the opposite, their text is supportive of environmental regulation and bolsters it by establishing how it need not conflict with private rights.

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**Alfred Denker and Michael Vater, eds.**  
*Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit.*  
Amherst, NY: Humanity Books 2004.  
Pp. 357.  
US\$35.00 (Paper: ISBN 1-59102-056-5).

**John Russon**  
*Reading Hegel's Phenomenology.*  
Bloomington: Indiana University Press 2004.  
Pp. xii + 299.  
US\$ (cloth: ISBN 0-253-34421-2);  
US\$ (paper: ISBN 0-253-21692-3).

The explosive activity of English-speaking Hegel scholars over the past half-century has produced a vast number of collections and studies of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Nevertheless, it is a sad fact that this work, arguably Hegel's greatest and richest, has yet to garner the same level of interest and influence amongst the general philosophical public in the English-speaking world that it has long enjoyed in France. This is all the more troubling in light of the growing desire on both sides to overcome the analytic/continental divide, insofar as it tends to obscure for us the significance and motivation behind many of the debates in which Post-modern French thinkers have been engaged. In part, the openness of the French to Hegel's *Phenomenology* can be explained in terms of a number of local and historical factors, particularly the strong Marxist tradition there. Arguably, however, the most significant factor was the influence of Weil, Hyppolite, and Kojève. The skeptical dialectic of the *Phenomenology*, its progression staged, as Hegel said, like a Bacchanalian revel, often leaves the reader feeling rather dizzy if not drunk. It is thus difficult to tell what, if anything, remains standing. In other words, the question remains as to what sort of philosophical lessons one can extract from the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. How can it be applied today, to our current philosophical problems and obsessions? How can one *use* it? Weil, Hyppolite and Kojève managed to show their students how Hegel's *Phenomenology* spoke directly to the interests and issues of their time. Hence the importance and significance of the two works under review.

Although the layout of both of these books roughly follows the progression and argument of Hegel's *Phenomenology*, neither offers a complete or exhaustive account of that work or careful analysis of the details of various arguments. This is not to say that close reading and scholarly examination is altogether neglected, but rather that their main focus is to show how the reader can extract significant and relevant philosophical lessons from this labyrinthine text.

*Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit* offers a diverse collection of essays from scholars, both young and established. Moreover, the book offers an international snapshot of the state of Hegel scholarship. The various contributions fall broadly into three categories. First, there are the more detailed textually

based analysis like that of Cobben, who examines the relation between 'Self-Consciousness' and the structure and categories of Hegel's later logic. Second, there are essays that consider the relation between Hegel and other thinkers, such as Denker's essay on Heidegger's and Fink's readings of the *Phenomenology*. Kant, Schelling, Nietzsche and Chisholm are also considered in detail at various points. Third, there are essays which try to show how Hegel's *Phenomenology* can be read as offering important and significant contributions to the contemporary philosophical debates, such as that of De Vos', who tries to show how the transition from 'Understanding' to 'Self-Consciousness' can be read as an immanent and 'definitive critique and rejection of so-called "realistic philosophy of knowledge"' (169). Amongst these essays one finds the authors arguing that Hegel's *Phenomenology* has something important and relevant to say on such diverse topics as ethics, the philosophy of history, epistemology and the phenomenon of secularized ontological guilt. Of course, given the number and diversity of the authors one can expect neither a continuous nor consistent approach to Hegel's text. Indeed, some of the essays take diametrically opposite positions on, for example, the status of Hegel's critique of Schelling or the question of whether Hegel's *Phenomenology* should be seen as modeled after the later or earlier versions of his Logic.

In contrast, *Reading Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, being the work of a single author, is naturally much more unified, despite the fact that it too is comprised of a series of relatively autonomous essays. As a whole, these essays cover the full breadth of the *Phenomenology*, albeit with a good deal more emphasis placed on some parts of the text than others (10). According to Russon, this study of the *Phenomenology* diverges from others in that it neither attempts to offer a detailed analysis of Hegel's complete text, nor to track down the many allusions that are scattered throughout the work (1). Rather, according to the introduction, his method is as follows. He proposes: first, to read the main sections of the text as relatively autonomous arguments; second, to read each sections in conjunction with other related sections found throughout the text, not merely those which immediately precede and or following it; third, to 'identify clearly the familiar phenomenon Hegel is studying and make clear exactly what he wants to accomplish with it' (2).

Just how fruitful this method is can be judged from Russon's analysis of 'Force and the Understanding', where his concentration on the phenomenon of Understanding throws definite light on one of the most perplexing sections of the *Phenomenology*. For the remainder of Russon's book, however, it can often appear as though the third element of his method or procedure has dropped out entirely, particularly when the phenomenon Hegel is pointing to seems to belong to some previous historical period. It is only when one comes close to the end of the work that Russon announces the over-riding motivation behind his often strange readings, and arguably its real method. Russon argues that once 'one has identified with the very principle that is responsible for producing the text that one now understands ... one is no



longer simply bound to the particular text one has understood, but one can instead vary one's texts, behaviors, or examples to make what is now *one's own point*' (180). Russon's approach is not so much focused on understanding Hegel's texts and his arguments as showing how the text can be appropriated and comprehended, how it can be *used*. Thus he reads 'Consciousness' as demonstration of the fact that theoretical consciousness is grounded in the practical life and existence of the concrete human body (5) and uses 'Hegel's analysis in the self-consciousness chapter to develop an Hegelian epistemology' (6).

Because Russon's work is a sort of second-order reading of the *Phenomenology* it is ultimately grounded in a very particular and peculiar understanding of what Hegel's work is about and what its main arguments are. For Russon, Hegel's philosophy is to be understood as sort of Existential and Phenomenological Hermeneutic pluralist. Although the 'Hermeneutic Hegelian' reading of Hegel seems to be gaining some ground and support in recent Hegel scholarship, it is still rather controversial. At the very least such a reading must demonstrate how Hegel's system could be reconciled with open-endedness without either fundamentally altering and transforming the character of Hegel's system itself, or ignoring large sections of his texts and argument. The need for a justification and defense of Russon's reading is felt all the more acutely given his claim that, on his reading, there is no 'significant difference between the philosophical methods, goals, or results of Hegel's philosophy and the philosophies of such figures as Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and Derrida' (3). Unfortunately, due to the nature of Russon's second order and the rather selective reading, a direct confrontation with precisely those passages which would at least on the surface seem to conflict with his reading never occurs. This will certainly leave the less sympathetic reader unconvinced that Russon's reading is an extension and development of Hegel's arguments rather than simply a distortion and perhaps violent misappropriation of the text. It is also rather curious, to say the least, that Russon (and not only he) feels it necessary on the one hand to support an open-ended reading of Hegel's system while on the other hand denying that anything of philosophical significance is to be found outside that system anyway.

Nevertheless, regardless of how one feels about Russon's overall interpretation of Hegel's philosophical position, the book offers an excellent example of how the arguments of the *Phenomenology* can be drawn upon in contemporary discussions over the nature and role of the body, theory and practice and the manner in which the inter-subjective community forms both the background and arena of action of ethics and knowledge, interpretation and reciprocal recognition.

Despite the fact that both *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit* and *Reading Hegel's Phenomenology* claim to offer an overview of Hegel's entire work, their selective focus means that the beginner looking for help in understanding particular points of Hegel's text would do best to look elsewhere. On the other hand, both Hegel scholars and those who are interested in



examining how this work can contribute to contemporary debates will find tantalizing suggestions and excellent examples in both books. It may be hoped that these works will contribute to gaining a wider English-speaking audience for Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*. If there is anything to complain about on this count it is that neither work (beyond a single essay by Asmuth on Hegel and Chisholm) directly address particular thinkers from the analytic tradition. This seems especially regrettable given the dominance of this tradition in the English-speaking world. It also seems, from an Hegelian standpoint, rather one-sided.

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**Jacques Derrida**

*Eyes of the University: Right to Philosophy 2.*

Trans. Jan Plug and others.

Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press 2004.

US\$49.50 (ISBN 0-8047-4296-0);

US\$19.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8047-4297-9).

**Jacques Derrida**

*Rogues: Two Essays on Reason.*

Trans. Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas.

Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press 2004.

US\$55.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-8047-4950-7);

US\$19.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8047-4951-5).

Derrida's sad death in October 2004 has meant that his latest and final books have been all the more keenly anticipated, especially for those of us who have been affronted by the way in which his death was heralded in the Anglo-American media by a lamentation of his polysyllabic obscurity and ethico-political irresponsibility. Two of his latest texts, *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason* and *Eyes of the University: Right to Philosophy 2*, help to show the unjustness of such a view.

Following *Who's Afraid of Philosophy? Right to Philosophy 1* (Stanford 2001), the release of Derrida's second volume concerned with the 'right to philosophy', *Eyes of the University*, is especially timely in this regard. While overdue in the sense that it has been published in French for some time as *Du droit à la philosophie*, it collates quite a lot of material that has been available elsewhere in English for some time — most notably the essays, 'Mochlos or The Conflict of the Faculties', 'Punctuations: The Time of a

Thesis' and 'The Principle of Reason: The University in the Eyes of its Pupils'. These are very important essays in Derrida's *oeuvre* and it is good to see them collated here along with previously untranslated material, including a few interesting essays on translation itself. They show Derrida's ongoing concern and involvement with the institution of the university and the practice of philosophy — something that many obituaries have ignored.

For me, however, it is the English translation of *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason*, which has been the more keenly awaited book, partly because I was under the incorrect impression that it was to be a substantive monograph, rather than a compendium of two lectures that Derrida gave on the themes of democracy, auto-immunity, rogue states, and nation-state sovereignties. This book is notable and important in that there are some prescient summaries of his major recent works and their relation to his earlier work (for example, Derrida denies any discontinuity, or that he made any 'ethico-political turn' — R 39), as well as of his major themes, especially the idea of democracy 'to come', which he once more stridently distances from any resemblance to Kant's conception of the regulative idea (R 77, 83). He also responds to criticisms and misconstruals of his key ideas, as well as the charge of his lack of immediate political relevance. It seems that Derrida was drawing his *oeuvre* together, aware of his health difficulties.

In the 'Preface', for example, Derrida begins by acknowledging that 'no politics, no ethics, and no law can be, as it were, deduced from this thought [of deconstruction]. To be sure, nothing can be done with it ... But should we then conclude that this thought leaves no trace on what is to be done — for example in the politics, the ethics, or the law to come?' (R xv) Clearly his reply to this rhetorical question is in the negative, and rightly so. Derrida suggests that his emphasis upon justice 'to come', democracy 'to come', etc., might in fact be considered to be 'ultra-political' (R 39). As with much of his recent work, he continues to insist that incalculable ethical absolutes (e.g., justice) need to be put to work in contingent political calculations that are irretrievably context bound (e.g., law). What is needed, above all, Derrida suggests, is a mutual contamination of the political and the ethical.

Oriented around the theme of rogue states (*état voyou*), *Rogues* also makes clear that all nation-states are rogue states, although this does not preclude judgments of degree. Against the idea of nation-state sovereignty and of what he calls 'ipsocentricity', Derrida returns in great length to the theme of auto-immunity, first explored in his earlier essays, 'Faith and Knowledge' and 'Autoimmunity: Real and Symbolic Suicides'. Taking this term from its biological origins, where the self attacks a part of its own defence mechanisms or puts a partial end to itself in order to live on, Derrida argues that democracy is a political system that is notable for preserving this auto-immune and suicidal risk. Firstly, democracy is fundamentally paradoxical in that, as has been widely acknowledged long before Derrida pointed it out, there are at least two competing aspects to democracy: it is premised upon public voting and the view of the majority, in which we are treated the same as everyone else (equal) and are theoretically substitutable for anyone else,



but democracies should also be concerned to respect and look after singularities, or the particular heterogeneities and differences (as well as liberties and freedom) of those who don't happen to be in the majority (R 65). Second, and more significantly, Derrida also insists that, rather than it being certain 'others' that democratic countries and citizens need to guard against (other countries, foreigners, perhaps Bill Clinton and George Bush's 'rogue states', 'outlaw nations', and 'pariah states'), this autoimmune risk of the self attacking another part of itself in order to live on is something fundamental to democracy itself and against which there is no reliable prophylaxis (R 150-1). Unlike any other political system, one can democratically vote against democracy; democracy is thus the only regime open to its own historical transformation.

For Derrida, with the events of September 11 2001 we have also seen the way in which the threat comes from within democracy (not from its other) in multiple different senses. To gloss his analysis, not only were the attacks from within, in that they were both aided (through training) and sometimes perpetrated by US citizens rather than by members of other nations, but the attacks were also made possible by certain democratic principles of relatively open borders (as well, of course, as the numerous historical examples of democratic violence, such as the 1980s attempts by the US to preserve itself in the Cold War era, which meant arming Iraq, Afghanistan, etc., and risking eventual reprisals). In various different ways, democracy risked and threatened *itself*, and for Derrida the post-September 11 reaction of the US and many countries around the world has obeyed a similarly paradoxical and auto-immune logic — there was a *shutting down of selected democratic freedoms to ensure the survival of democracy*. For Derrida, that the demos (the many, the *voyoucracy*, the rogues) should attack its own defence systems is constitutive of democracy. But, as Derrida points out, this auto-immune risk of the self tearing down its own barriers, or threatening its own principles, is not simply a bad thing. On the contrary, auto-immunity is ambiguous. It might be negative, as Derrida seems to contend is the case with the US in the post-September 11 reaction, but it may also be positive, in that auto-immunity undermines the ipseity of the self and hence involves an opening to alterity. In the latter respect, auto-immunity is the only chance for an exposure to life that is neither blocked by totalitarianism nor sanitised against all that might do harm, and it is what ensures the democracy is always an open project, perfectible, rather than something that could, once and for all, be completed.

In the final essay of the book, 'The "World" of the Enlightenment to Come (Exception, Calculation, and Sovereignty)', Derrida examines what he contends are the dual and competing demands of rationality. In an important passage, he suggests that we have to 'think together two figures of rationality that, on either side of a limit, at once call for and exceed one another' (R 149). Roughly, these two figures of rationality are calculability and incalculability, politics and ethics, law and justice, equality and freedom, and Derrida argues that we must think both the heterogeneity and the inseparability of all these



pairs. To do this, he argues, is to bear witness to an 'auto-delimitation that divides reason' (R 150). In other words, there is an auto-immunity at the heart of reason itself and he insists that both calculation and the incalculable (unconditionals such as absolute hospitality, absolute forgiveness, etc.) are necessary. Derrida advocates a perilous transaction between these polarities and suggests that, 'what is reasonable is the reasoned and considered wager of a transaction between these two apparently irreconcilable exigencies of reason, between calculation and the incalculable ... between human rights and unconditional justice' (R 151). Discussing the particularities of human rights, calculating which modes of distributive justice are more or less likely than others to ensure equality is an important thing to do, then, but we also need to continue to deconstruct in the name of the incalculable and in the name of justice. While it seems to me that this analysis is exactly right, it remains the case, at least on my view, that Derrida and deconstruction tend to side with the incalculable, with ethics, and even with a freedom that is not linked to sovereignty or autonomy (which is on the side of the incalculable) over equality (which is on the side of the calculable). Even if this could be justified, some important questions remain. How does Derrida think that we should calculate, accepting his suggestion that we must? There is little indication of this in his work. Except in the most general terms, he never really engages with the key theories of distributive justice (of political calculations in the narrow sense). While he does discuss the different ways in which we might add up, or calculate (e.g., according to number, according to merit, etc.), there is little consideration of the relative merits of these different kinds of addition, some of which may be more apt in our contemporary context(s) than others. This is, I think, work that remains to be done, and it may take the form of a *rapprochement* of analytic political philosophy and post-structuralism, but it is clear that such work must not betray the enormous significance of Derrida's inestimable contribution to philosophy and thought.

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**John Dillon and Lloyd Gerson**

*Neoplatonic Philosophy: Introductory Readings.*

Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing

Company 2004.

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US\$47.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-87220-708-0);

US\$18.95 (paper: ISBN 0-87220-707-2).

Over the last fifteen years there has been a renewed interest in Plotinus and Neo-Platonic studies, an interest evidenced in the English-speaking world during the last decade of the twentieth century by the publication of the *Journal of Neoplatonic Studies*. While the texts of Plato and Aristotle have been widely available in critical editions and translations stretching back into the nineteenth century, the same cannot be said of Plotinus. The first French translation of the *Enneads* of Plotinus was done by M-N. Bouillet and published in Paris in 1857. E. Brehier issued the bilingual Budé edition of Plotinus in the 1920's. It was not until the 1950's, however, that the Paul Henry and E-R. Schwyzler critical edition of the Greek text, *Plotini Opera*, appeared. Only later in the 1960's did R. Harder edit the bilingual edition *Plotins Schriften* for Felix Meiner publishing house in Germany. More recently the French press Flammarion has been issuing a valuable paperback translation with detailed notes under the direction of Brisson and Pradeau — an activity paralleled by the French publisher du Cerf under the direction of Balaudé. The standard English translation that most classicists and philosophers are familiar with is that of Stephen MacKenna, which appeared in the late 1920's and which was reprinted in 1956. There are partial summaries and selections of Plotinus by others that appeared in anthologies of Greek philosophy or of Plotinus himself. Good examples would be the texts of O'Brien (which was perhaps the only available inexpensive access to Plotinus for a long time). However, even the more recent compilation of Plotinus' excerpts by Dillon in the Penguin series relied on the MacKenna translation. Of course, the bilingual Loeb edition by Armstrong cannot be overlooked and it has left its mark on the current translation. However, its multivolume format makes it not as portable as the O'Brien and Penguin editions. Texts by writers other than Plotinus are even harder to come by in translation. Phanes Press in the 1980's started to publish or reprint translations of individual works by such Neoplatonists as Iamblichus and Porphyry, works that had previously not been in wide circulation. The more recent Neoplatonic anthology by Gregory from Routledge is probably the only anthology of the period, although it has by no means the scope of the current volume by Dillon and Gerson. For, in the publication of this latter work, we are presented with a fresh translation and new selection of texts — not only those of Plotinus but also a selection from others such as Porphyry, Iamblichus, Proclus. Not only is the publication of this anthology by these two eminent scholars of Neo-Platonism welcome, it is almost something that was expected given the important publications of these two men: Dillon's work



on *Middle Platonism* and Gerson's recent Routledge publication *Plotinus* as well as his edition of the *Cambridge Companion to Plotinus* give evidence of their competency to produce a translation that would not disappoint.

Disappoint it does not indeed. Quite the contrary, it fills a real need in the area of Neo-Platonic teaching and research. In reviewing this, as in reviewing any anthology of translations, three factors emerge as critical in the analysis: first, the choice of the texts; second, the quality of the translations; and third, the 'equipment' accompanying the volume. The largest number of selections are taken from Plotinus himself. Proclus also merits considerable attention in terms of the amount of text taken from his work. Porphyry and Iamblichus then follow each with approximately the same amount of space dedicated to their works. In the case of the latter three authors one is dealing with excerpts; in the case of Plotinus there are excerpts as well but some of the selections from the *Enneads* are complete: *On what is the Living Being*; *On Beauty*; *On the Nature of the One*; *On the Descent of the Soul*; *On the Three Hypostases*; *On the Generation and Order of the Things that come after the First*. All of these are to be found in the earlier anthology of Dillon and some of them in that of O'Brien. However, in addition to the generous selections from Plotinus, the book includes a wealth of selections from the other ancient writers mentioned. What is especially useful about the selections is their metaphysical and epistemological emphasis that should entice philosophers to explore the very serious side of later Greek philosophizing. From Iamblichus, Proclus and Porphyry there are excerpts of their commentaries on the *Parmenides* and the *Timaeus*, as well as sections of Porphyry's *Commentary on the Categories*, of Iamblichus on the *Phaedrus* and *Philebus*, and of Proclus' *Elements of Theology* and *Platonic Theology*. As far as the quality of the translations, both an initial as well as a studied consideration of the texts leaves one impressed. Not only is there a good flow and consistency in the translations, but there is also a real care and accuracy in rendering the Greek into English. A sample of the Plotinus text shows this. Where Armstrong's version in the Loeb renders '*pathe(mata)*', '*hexeis*' and '*paschein*' as 'feeling(s)/affection(s)', 'states', and 'to be touched by', Dillon and Gerson respectively read 'state(s)/experience(s)', 'habits', and 'to experience'. Not only does one overcome the obsolescence of the older rendering of *pathe* but the sense of the term here and in other compounds (as shows up in the treatise on *Happiness*) is better preserved. Further, there is a stronger consistency in D&G's usage, which shows up in the parallels that Plotinus sometimes draws. Occasionally Armstrong's rendering still seems preferable, e.g., the use of 'power' for '*dunamis*' rather than D&G's 'potentiality'. Nonetheless, the work displays an admirable ability to display meaning clearly and consistently — even the elimination of verbal forms in favor of nominalized ones and vice versa is carried off very well. Finally, the volume includes informative footnotes providing linguistic and literary references, far more abundant than those in the Armstrong text, although not as extensive as in the multivolume French and German editions noted above. There are short explanatory introductions to each selection that provide historical and philo-



sophical insights to the relevant passages. The book also has an English-Greek glossary and an index.

In addition to being a wonderful addition to the library of any classicist or historian of philosophy, the book can be used as a challenging text for an undergraduate specialized course in later Greek philosophy and even as a major text in a Graduate course in the same area. The academic world has been well served by this intelligently designed volume and both Dillon and Gerson deserve a heartfelt thanks from the students of ancient philosophy.

**Joseph A. Novak**

University of Waterloo

**Phil Dowe**

*Galileo, Darwin, and Hawking.*

*The Interplay of Science, Reason and Religion.*

Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans

Publishing Company 2005.

Pp. viii + 205.

US\$21.00. ISBN 0-8028-2696-2.

Religion and science are often seen as standing in conflict. Science is believed to have shown important religious beliefs to be false, whereas religion in form of the Church has tried to block the success of the scientific worldview. Phil Dowe argues in his book *Galileo, Darwin and Hawking* that these are misconceptions of the relation between science and religion (or natural theology providing philosophical arguments and interpretations of central Christian doctrines). On the one hand, Dowe starts from a systematic account of what the relation between science and religion might be, and on the other hand he discusses in detail the context of three well-known cases of supposed conflict (i.e., the cases mentioned in the book's title).

Systematically the relation between religion/natural theology, which Dowe often does not clearly distinguish, and science can be one of conflict or no conflict, called 'harmony' by Dowe. 'On the conflict view, science and religion are seen as competing attempts to come to grips with one domain of human discovery and thought' (2). The conflict view thus presupposes some minimal realism, which requires that there can be only one true account of the world. A typical example of the conflict view is provided by proponents of a version of naturalism which claims that there are only the objects dealt with by science, and that the events in which these objects participate are completely explained by science. The contrary conflict view consists in a literal reading of the Bible (especially the book of Genesis). The harmony

view divides into two subtypes. On the independence view religion and science do not stand in conflict, since they deal with completely independent domains. An example would be the Fideist view that religious talk expresses religious feelings and does not claim to explain the natural world. On the interaction view science and religion are not only compatible, but there is genuine interaction between them, mostly in the form of some religious view promoting a line of research or some scientific worldview. An example would be Newton's attempt to discover the laws of motion of the heavenly bodies starting from the idea that these laws were designed by God (and therefore possible to understand).

Dowe sees the specific philosophical work in clarifying the issues by setting out the detailed structures of the arguments involved and by considering what alternative philosophical perspectives could be developed (e.g., in the three cases under consideration). Dowe does not deny that historically the Church or related social forces have tried to regulate science, but this should be kept separate from the philosophical analysis whether there should have been a conflict at all. 'With this distinction firmly in mind we find remarkably little philosophical conflict in our case studies' (192).

Going through the historic cases and considering some further philosophical options (like an anti-realistic reading of either science or religion), Dowe comes to the conclusion that the relation between science and religion is best seen as one of harmony — once again he focuses very much on natural theology (i.e., philosophical exposition of belief) in contrast to a religious practise based on the belief in revelation. And further on the relation is rather of the interactionist kind of no conflict in which we find a considerable amount of interaction between the two fields. The interaction occurs in two prominent forms. On the one hand religious ideas (mainly the idea of a designed world and the idea that man was made in the image of God, and so is able to understand the workings of the world) have led scientists, including Galileo, trying to describe and explain the laws and events of the natural world. On the other hand one basic principle — Inference to the Best Explanation — operates both in science and (natural) theology. Scientists could understand the theological doctrine of man made in the image of the Creator as insurance to the possibility of their endeavours. Theologians could take scientific findings that contradict the literal reading of the Bible as decisive reason that a metaphorical reading or a reading stressing the ethical perspective of the story told is the appropriate reading. This theological harmony view goes back, at least, to Augustine. Further evidence for the interactionist view Dowe sees in the case of miracles, which, in the manner of Schlesinger's theory, should be accepted if that is the best explanation.

The independence form of harmony is ruled out by Dowe by arguing against instrumentalist views of science and anti-realist views of religion. Instrumentalist views of science fail, according to Dowe, on the principle of inference to the best explanation, since they — in contrast to the scientific realist's view — cannot account why the theoretical predictions turn out true. Anti-realist views of religious language (like the expressive view of the later

Wittgenstein) fly in the face of the self-understanding of religion, which claims that God (really) did create the world, ... .

The conflict view is ruled out by considering in detail what Galileo, Darwin and Hawking claim and whether this is really in conflict with (Christian) religion. Galileo himself proposes a harmony view based on the idea that because there is one God behind both scripture and nature there can be no conflict once science is properly done and scripture properly interpreted. This accords as well with the proper understanding of the Council of Trent. Darwin took his clues from design arguments, and refutes the biological case for design, as made by Paley, only. Whether Hawking and contemporary cosmologists in physics are successful in circumventing a cosmological design argument by Hawking's 'no boundary' model of the universe and/or the assumption of a multitude of universes can be doubted for two reasons. Firstly, Hawking starting from a realist point of view later on develops his model using imaginary time and expressively switches to an anti-realistic understanding of this theory/model, which makes it useless against the religious claim of God having created the universe (by initiating the Big Bang). Second, the assumption of the multitude of universes, made to answer design arguments starting from the fine tuning of physical constants, works only if all possible worlds really are out there, but we just have no independent evidence for this. Here Dowe seems to acknowledge the force of some argument from natural theology.

Dowe's book provides an easy to read but also analytical overview of the discussion of the relation between science and religion, including recent philosophy of religion. Two hundred pages cannot cover all issues, but Dowe is successful in making a strong case against conflict views concerning theistic world views and contemporary science.

### **Manuel Bremer**

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### **Silvia J. Falco, ed.**

*Feminist Interpretations of Machiavelli.*

University Park: Penn State University Press 2004.

Pp. iv + 423.

US\$95.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-271-02388-0);

US\$39.50 (paper: ISBN 0-271-02389-9).

Silvia J. Falco, the editor of *Feminist Interpretations of Machiavelli*, states that these thirteen essays reveal 'how feminists have generally been responding over the past few decades to the "modern" (or "protomodern") approach



to political thought that [Machiavelli's] work represents.' The book 'demonstrates how at least these feminist have viewed, reacted to, and in some instances adapted for their own purposes those political and ethical aspects of Machiavelli's thought that they have found most crucial to their understanding of their own time and place' (2). This is exactly, too, how the editor defines the task of the interpreter, which includes both adapting the text to our situation and 'understanding ourselves by looking to the past' (28).

My difficulties with this book stem from the very idea of a feminist critique of Machiavelli. How could it be any different, essentially, from a Christian interpretation, or a Marxist, Fascist, or even a Straussian one? Feminism consists of a system of social, moral, and political ideas, one assumes, which, when it intersects with the texts of Machiavelli, illuminates very predictably certain aspects of his thought. Are they aspects of any particular significance to Machiavelli? The ideological analytic cannot tell us; it can only represent Machiavelli through the prism of feminism, revealing, not surprisingly, a feminist Machiavelli, if you will, for whom questions of gender, sexual politics, active-sadist and passive-masochistic dichotomies, and the stereotyping of male-female symbolisms were foreground issues, crucial to any interpretation of his writing. Such underscoring of particular questions, however, does not proceed inevitably from close readings of the texts; nor are these questions noteworthy for the bulk of mainstream Machiavelli scholarship. So, even before we come to consider what contributions the present volume of feminist essays on Machiavelli makes to our understanding, we must acknowledge that the volume was intended 'to add another dimension to the discussion, namely that of feminism' (the 'discussion' in question being the 'range of accusations, denunciations, and praises — running the gamut from protofascist to protoliberal — to which Machiavelli has been subjected' [2]).

This is a difficult book to review. It is far more a contribution to feminist political theory *per se* than it is a contribution to Machiavelli studies; the editor may have intended this, since the purpose underlying the project was 'to collect every strand of feminist thought on *la questione di Machiavelli* ...' (2). How successful it has been in capturing these strands of thought is beyond my capacity to say, but what does seem clear is that it addresses questions of its own, independently of the concerns that otherwise occupy Machiavelli scholars. And, when these feminist authors do turn to those more widely discussed issues, it is with a perspective peculiarly their own. Some of the same issues of importance to Machiavelli studies in general appear here, as well, but packaged in discussions more centrally concerned to explore Machiavelli's misogyny (or, ironically, the lack of it), his psycho-sexual state, whether his thinking was or was not a product of the times (and whether we can reproach him, regardless), ambiguities in his conception of gender and its consequences, and reducing, in several instances, the key concepts of *fortuna* and *virtù* to code for 'female power' and *machismo*, respectively.

The essays contained in this volume mostly disparage Machiavelli for his resistance (direct, indirect, implied, ambiguous, and subliminal) to the place

of women in politics, particularly republican politics. When he is not under attack in this way, he is faulted either for failing to make good on his own assumptions or, in a couple of instances, the effort is made to redeem Machiavelli from the implications of his own writings, making him into a 'protofeminist'. A good way of situating the diverse arguments in this volume is to view them as disparate reflections on Hannah Pitkin's influential observations in her *Fortune is a Woman: Gender and Politics in the Political Thought of Niccoló Machiavelli*, where she wrote:

Machiavelli's writings never transcended the conventional misogyny of his time. Like the other men of Renaissance Florence, he had virtually no experience of women as citizens or peers, though he had at least some significant experience of the exceptional woman *virago*, notably in his disastrous early diplomatic encounter with Caterina Sforza. This chapter has tried to show that his failure to deal with the "otherness" of women as a worldly, realistic difference rather than an uncanny and threatening mystery is not merely unfortunate for women — whose cause he might otherwise have given some early, though doubtless futile, assistance — but also has profound consequences for his teaching about men, about humanness, politics, and autonomy. Because he could not think (or at any rate, did not write) about women as fellow citizens but instead rested even his republican politics on a misogynist ideal of manliness, his own metaphors and images constantly cast doubt on what he most wants to teach. Two great failures of mutuality, one might say, flaw his best vision of political relationship, the one a sin of omission and the other of commission. The one is the exploitation of — his failure to challenge — the misogyny of his time; the other is his militarist imperialism, his failure to extent into international relations the vision he fashioned of political life within a community. (70)

Earlier, in a review of *Fortune is a Woman*, Falco had identified the ideas expressed in the above quotation as the ideas that most contributed to the book's 'standing as a "classic" today': '[T]hat even when one takes "Machiavelli at his best" and admits that he almost succeeded in sublimating his own personal and political fears and needs to produce a truly liberating theory of the citizen republic, his misogyny vitiated whatever validity his approach may have had toward resolving the problem inherent in modern society, of creating the "mutualistic" society that respects and incorporates the autonomy of the individual' (*Hypatia*, Summer 2002, 274).

That Machiavelli's misogynous manner of distinguishing between the sexes undermined his political theory of inclusion is the argument, in various guises, that recurs right across *Feminist Interpretations of Machiavelli*. Today, Pitkin's work figures centrally in the bibliography and critical apparatus of nearly every important study of Machiavelli (not merely feminist interpretations) since *Fortune is a Woman* was published.



The issue is this: the ideology of feminism represented is an ideology of inclusion, and so the essayists here find fault, by and large, with Machiavelli, who they in many ways otherwise appreciate. The ideological purchase dominates these readings. Both strictly textual and historical-intentional criticism fall by the wayside. These essays are more concerned to register a reaction to Machiavelli than to wrestle with the problem of deciding what, in fact, his texts had meant. Interpretation always entails exchange, of course, and the job is to construct a more readily available version or equivalent of the text. Interpretation completes the activity of reading. It is destructive of reasonable expectation to substitute the interpreter's perspectives and purposes for those of the text and author. Moreover, it needs to be explained just how textual evidence and an explicit theoretical account of the process of interpretation work to produce an intelligent and defensible reading of an inherently ambiguous piece of writing; otherwise, at the worst, we deceive the reader, and, at best, leave the false impression that one need do no more than 'read' this regional sixteenth-century author as if he were writing today.

Iknew a professor of English whose approach to poetry was to construct dictionaries of symbolic correspondence, so that when some particular poet wrote X we would always know that he meant Y. The essays in this book seem to me to be interpretations of this sort; the authors somehow just glimpse the concealed meanings of Machiavelli's major terms, concepts, images, historical allusions, instrumental logic, and so on: thus *virtù* means machismo (or, less perjoratively, manliness); *fortuna* means woman, female power, and the enigma of the feminine; Machiavelli's stress on war, military principles, and martial virtue equal 'protofascism'; the 'meanings' of *Man-dragola* and *Clizia* alternatively undermine, refine, or echo the meanings of *The Prince*; the struggle between *virtù* and *fortuna* disclose a deep psycho-sexual conflict between sadistic and masochistic impulses; Machiavelli's criticism of irresolution among the princes of Italy in his day reveal ambivalence on Machiavelli's part regarding the nature of masculine and feminine; the central political image of imposing form on matter becomes a sly way of talking about the sexual conquest of women by men; the body politic is a female body; and the sexually based and bawdy comedies are not only veiled discussions of real politics, but also manifestoes of 'liberal feminism'.

In the end, and echoing Pitkin's cue, these essays all call for us sometimes to overcome Machiavellian politics, sometimes to go beyond Machiavelli, and sometimes simply to fulfil his already latent, but frustrated feminist promise. Perhaps it would have worked better had equal attention been devoted to getting at what Machiavelli, in his own terms, was most likely saying. It is as if Quentin Skinner had never been born.

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## **Antony Flew**

*God and Philosophy.*

Reprinted, with a new introduction.

Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books 2005. Pp. 210.

US\$18.00. ISBN 1-59102-330-0.

After decades campaigning for atheism, Antony Flew now seems to have become a deist. While continuing to criticize established religion, he is reported (in items easily accessible on the web) to be flirting with the idea that the universe was created by an intelligent being, one blameless for the misery and mayhem that has occurred since the job was done. While Flew has not explicitly admitted shifting his ground, it is difficult to shake the impression that shift it he has.

Before the appearance of this reprint of *God and Philosophy* (first published in 1966), Flew responded to questions regarding his religious beliefs with a promise to set the record straight in a new Introduction to the book. Unfortunately, however, he hasn't come through. In a brief seven-page discussion he mainly devotes himself to listing considerations 'any intending successor to *God and Philosophy* would need to take into account.' Such a book would, he avers, have to address a couple of points sometimes thought to give aid and comfort to the religiously inclined, specifically the claim that the universe is only part of what there is and the argument that human life would not have been possible had the fundamental constants of physics been ever so slightly different. Flew professes himself 'delighted' that a third point — that there is no negotiating the gap between animate and inanimate matter — seems to have been taken care of by 'protobiologists'. Moreover he suggests that a successor work would have to examine Varghese's 'extremely extensive presentation of the inductive argument from the order of nature to God as its Intelligent Designer,' Conway's revival of the classical philosophical conception of the universe as 'the creation of a supreme omnipotent and omniscient intelligence,' and Swinburne's 'radically new and extremely comprehensive case [in *Is There a God?*] for the existence of the Christian God.'

Presumably Flew mentions these 'developments' because he thinks they spell trouble for the atheism of the original text. But he keeps his cards so close to his chest it is hard to know where he stands, still less whether he is, as has been alleged, attracted to the argument from design (and Varghese's argument for an Intelligent Designer). He is even cagey about Swinburne's argument for the existence of a Christian God, referring to it as one a believer 'may very reasonably see as further and very strong confirmation of [his or her theistic] conclusions.' This is all very puzzling. Flew has never been one to hedge his bets, and I can only conjecture that he tempered his views in response to the 'peer review (pro and con)' to which his remarks were submitted (in his 'Publisher's Foreword' Paul Kurtz states that the Introduction went through four drafts). In any event the final result is surprisingly bland and unhelpful.

In the original text (reprinted here without modification), there is none of the reticence of the new Introduction. Flew questions the coherence of the

Christian concept of God, stresses the problem of evil, pillories the ontological, design and cosmological arguments, discounts the idea that there would be no meaning or morality were there no God, pooh-poohs arguments for the existence of God based on religious experience, miracles and faith, and dismisses attempts by Pascal and others to inveigle us into believing in God. The only snag is that these topics have been thoroughly discussed many times, before and since, and much less laboriously. Flew rounds up the usual suspects and sends them packing mostly for the usual reasons. Worse — as critics of the original edition were quick to point out — he does not select the strongest opponents, rarely considers what the theist might say in response and has little to say to religious thinkers who discount 'rationalistic' arguments for the existence of God. Indeed, even died-in-the-wool atheists are likely to find themselves wanting to defend the other side. There are, nonetheless, some nice paragraphs, for instance one on the shibboleth that 'science tells us *how*, never *why*' (108).

Whether or not Flew has become a deist, he doubtless remains committed to much of what he wrote in *God and Philosophy* some forty years ago. He is, I suppose, as antipathetic as ever to the Christian God — and 'the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel' (21) — and just as unconvinced by the alleged deliverances of revelation and religious experience. But if he now believes that features of the universe are inexplicable in the absence of a deity, he can no longer repudiate the concept of God as incoherent and accept all his criticisms of natural theology, especially not everything he says about order and design. Beyond this, however, one can only guess that he would want to bring the original text into line with the new Introduction and, among other things, iron out the conflict between his description of Einstein as espousing 'atheism ... decked out in theist clothes' (79) and his present view of the great scientist as an Aristotelian deist (13). Nor, I might add, is it clear that a book expressing Flew's new position would find many takers. It is easy to poke holes in the theory of Intelligent Design and one can well imagine the mincemeat that Flew in an earlier incarnation would have made of the notion of a God beyond good and evil.

*God and Philosophy* is reasonably priced and well-produced (though lacking an index). Whether it warrants reprinting, however, is another matter (it has already been reprinted once). The original text is too academic for a polemic, too opinionated for a work of scholarship, and the additional material only muddies the water. (And why, I ask myself, the snide swipe at Rawls' 'apostles' in footnote 11 of the new Introduction?) It would be different if Flew had a new or special angle and the thinkers from the 1950s and 1960s he targets continued to be seriously discussed, but he doesn't and they aren't. If one is looking for 'a classic in the philosophy of religion' (6), there are much better books — by Hume or Russell for example.

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**Benjamin Hutchens**

*Levinas: A Guide for the Perplexed.*

New York: Continuum 2004.

Pp. viii + 191.

Cdn\$100.00/US\$85.00

(cloth: ISBN 0-8264-7282-6);

Cdn\$36.95/US\$21.95

(paper: ISBN 0-8264-7283-4).

A guide for the perplexed presumably renders that which is perplexing less so; it illumines what is obscure and mysterious, helping those caught in obscurity out of confusion. However, that which perplexes does so for a reason: because it is — intrinsically — perplexing. Thus, a true guide for the perplexed never trivializes; in effect, it brings the would-be perplexed firmly into perplexity — not to confuse but to problematize. A guide for the perplexed is at once a guide *out of* and *into* perplexity. As such, writing a guide for the perplexed is both demanding and highly noble, as it offers the inexpert a space to enter troubling and important thought.

The work of Emmanuel Levinas definitely warrants a guide for the perplexed. Put differently, Levinas is thoroughly perplexing. Levinas' writing is almost impenetrable — and became more so the more his thought matured. As Hutchens repeatedly tells us in *Levinas: A Guide for the Perplexed*, Levinas' writing is hyperbolic to the core. But for Levinas, hyperbole is not gratuitous; it is necessary, or at the very least needful. Levinas' work at all times tries and say the unsayable; it approaches in thought and speech — a speech that is forever imprecise and *non-adequate* (not inadequate) — that of which no cognition is possible. Levinas wants to think the absolute Other, God, Infinity, that which is otherwise than Being, and that is all truly perplexing. With the aim of clarifying a writer who resists clarity, Hutchens' *Guide* appears to help us and perplex us simultaneously.

'It is my task in this book to teach in the presence of an absent master' (1). For Levinas, to learn from the teacher is not to be imparted with information or knowledge. In effect, teaching is non-thetic; it is to enter into an encounter with that which cannot be thematized, that which resists the student's attempt to render with conceptual perspicacity. To learn is to be jarred, to be extricated, against one's best wishes, out of primitive isolation and selfish egoism (for Levinas, contra Rousseau, *amour de soi* is already a lamentable *amour propre*). In other words, to be taught is not to know; it is to think and love in the presence of and on the occasion of a disempowering Other, a teacher who is also a master.

Hutchens' pedagogical strategy is to render Levinas' writing less oblique. Rather than taking an exegetical approach, Hutchens provides a basic summary of Levinas' central ideas — a quasi-thetic recasting of an explicitly non-thetic discourse. Putting it this way may make Hutchens' teaching seem opposed to that of the master. That might be true, but there is at least some ground for justifying a non-Levinasian teaching of Levinas. In order to open



up a space where good perplexity will be possible, it may be helpful — or so Hutchens' attempt seems to imply — to do some harm to the perplexing master. After all, the *Guide* is not targeted at the follower of Levinas, but at the person who is not yet ready to follow, the person who may otherwise simply turn away from Levinas and his attempt to speak the otherwise, the Other, etc.

Hutchens ventures a seemingly exhaustive presentation of disparate themes in Levinas' work. Each theme is set forth as a conjunction of two concepts, seemingly — yet not explicitly — making reference to Levinas' own imperative to think two ideas at once: for instance, one must think totality along with infinity in order to avoid the all too common tendency to reduce all otherness to the Same, all infinitude to totality. The themes Hutchens considers are: freedom and responsibility, violence and the self, language and dialogue, scepticism and reason, time and history, good and evil, suffering and obsession, justice and law, God and atheism, technology and the world, art and representation, eroticism and gender. A brief perusal of these chapter headings alone indicates immediately that Hutchens is concerned with Levinas as an ethicist, as the thinker of the originarity of ethics itself: 'his is no mere ethics among competing ethics but an "*ethics of ethics*", that is, very roughly, the study of the manner in which foreignness, inexplicability and unpredictability shape the human condition despite the often arrogant demands of rationalism' (16). Although Hutchens is at times suspicious of Levinas' contribution to normative theory and philosophical ethics, the *Guide* highlights Levinas' turn to ethics as first philosophy. For Levinas what is first in thought is not Being or sameness; rather, what precedes all possible human knowledge is the Other, a commanding presence which cannot be grasped conceptually and which is the source of all ethical obligation. In other words, it is in the face-to-face encounter with another person that the self is called to obey and behave ethically. In short, the self is called to respond to the Other, is made responsible for and to the Other. This, according to Levinas, is the origin of ethics.

Hutchens ends his text with a brief examination of some possible criticisms of Levinas, including objections by Ricoeur, Žižek and Badiou as well as some of Hutchens' own reservations. What emerges from this chapter is the worry that Levinas is too ambiguous and ostensibly inconsistent to be valuable for moral theory or even for everyday life. Here it seems that Hutchens is trying to perplex; instead of simply stopping with a less opaque restatement of Levinas' writings, Hutchens tries to remind the reader that the master is indeed fallible. Though the nobility of Hutchens' project shines through at this moment, what equally shines through is the inadequacy of the *Guide* as a whole. Unfortunately, and against the proviso set above, Hutchens too often trivializes. That's not to say that a critical assessment is necessarily trivial. In fact, it is difficult to see how a reader could take a text seriously without being critical. However, critical assessments must always, especially when they are invitations to the inexpert, assess on the author's terms. Critical reading is by its nature intellectually charitable. To take

Levinas to task for being too ambiguous is in effect to take Levinas out of Levinas, to be uncharitable with him; it is to remove him from his own perplexing world and into a thoroughly thematizing one, one where Levinas is perhaps summarized and critically assessed but not made perplexing.

**Edvard Lorkovic**

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**James Kirwan**

*The Aesthetic in Kant: A Critique.*

New York: Continuum 2004.

Pp. vii + 200.

US\$120.00. ISBN 0-8264-7198-6.

It is scarcely disputed that every human being has a desire for beauty. But it is another matter whether humans can agree over a precise object that is beautiful. For example, is beauty primarily found in an object of nature or an object of art? What about the beauty of a bird song or the poetry of the Prussian Frederick the Great? How does Kant in particular justify these two as examples of beauty? Kirwan's book answers these questions through an 'attempt to show how Kant's *Critique [of the Power of Judgement]* implies, through the very inconsistencies and obscurities for which it is notorious, a consistent theory of taste' (4).

This book is a difficult read in more ways than one, as can be seen by the following brief summary. In Chapters 1-3, Kirwan argues in support of Kant's claims that judgments of taste are immediate, necessary, and based a priori in the supersensible substratum of all our mental faculties. However, Kant's requirements that judgments of taste be disinterested, universal, and without reference to any concept are not tenable according to Kirwan. Chapters 4-5 argue that judgments of the sublime, which Kant exempted from judgments of taste, are really judgments of dependent beauty. Chapter 6 describes the 'anatomy of an aesthetic idea' and reaches the conclusion that the desire (for beauty) is ineffable or 'ultimately unintelligible to th[e] subject' (10). Chapters 7-8 are further reflections on the notion of an 'aesthetic idea', particularly with reference to free and dependent beauty, and here Kirwan focuses in detail on Kant's twin examples of the bird song and Frederick's poem (the beauty of which has been disputed by everyone but Kant). In Chapter 9, Kirwan concludes that Kant's vain and fantastic desire to ground



judgments of taste universally is the ground of the pleasure he took in the idea of free beauty.

There are two basic problems for Kirwan. First, the distinction that Kant makes between free and dependent (or adherent) beauty is not justified. In a footnote, he mentions twenty critics of Kant (163-4), none of whom were able to justify this distinction. In a nutshell, a bird song is an example of free beauty because, unlike a human song, the bird song does not point to any external or internal concept. Dependent beauty, however, would depend on or is attached to a concept for its beauty. For Kirwan, this distinction involves a problem of misattribution since one could only recognise the freedom of free beauty when one hears someone mimicking the song of a bird. This same problem plagues dependent beauty, or what Kirwan calls 'aesthetic merit'. The key difference between Kant's and Kirwan's view lies in the presence of a concept, which, for Kirwan, seems to actually *cause* the bird song to be pleasurable. Kirwan seems to agree with Kant over the fact that taste 'cannot be co-opted to serve the interests either of the cognitive or the ethical' (11), and is thus essentially 'autonomous'. But Kirwan disagrees with Kant in holding that free beauty is only an ideal created through the repression of a 'fantastic desire'.

What Kirwan finds problematic in Kant's account is that the subject cannot be conscious that its judgment is disinterested without using a concept. For without consciousness of the factors affecting the subject in a judgment of taste, one knows not whether one is disinterested. On the other hand, if consciousness is involved and one *knows* that one is disinterested (i.e., the judgment is not one of the agreeable or the good), then a concept is required for this. However, according to Kant's theory of taste, these judgments are primarily understood as occasioned by immediate relations to objects in which a subject feels pleasure. This type of cognizance in the case of beauty must of *necessity* be independent of any interest in the object itself. Interests that Kant has in mind include those of usefulness, agreeableness, goodness, etc. However, Kirwan's critique is not perfectly convincing, since it is not clear that Kant ever claims that we must have conceptual knowledge of our disinterestedness in order to have an experience of beauty or to form an aesthetic judgment. Indeed Kant suggests many times that we never really know if our judgments are truly disinterested, and this *precisely because* judgments of beauty cannot be determined by concepts. And while Kirwan's interpretation of the bird song is certainly clever, it is far from decisive.

A brief response to the problems that Kirwan raises would be that this book does not sufficiently flesh out what Kant means by a concept or by dependent beauty. It might be that the latter *adheres to*, and does not *necessarily depend* on a concept (see Paul Guyer's 2002 article in *The British Journal of Aesthetics*, unmentioned by Kirwan). The concept places a restriction on but is not the primary cause of the pleasure. The desire for beauty, we would suggest, is perhaps more complicated for Kant than it is for Kirwan. In the final pages, Kirwan admits that 'the nearest parallel phenomenon to



the aesthetic ... is probably the neurotic symptom as described by Freud' (154), and this points to the fundamental nihilism of his aesthetics as well as its lack of form. It also explains why Kirwan attempts throughout the book to interpret Kant's notion of free beauty as the repression of pleasure actually based on a concept.

Finally, Kirwan himself says that this book is written in a 'monochrome' style, rather than the 'colour' of his earlier book, *Beauty* (156). Whereas we found the latter book more enjoyable, *The Aesthetic in Kant* is more rigorous. It is neither a book for undergraduates, nor a scholarly summary of the third *Critique*. And if there are problems in Kirwan's exposition on taste, there are deeper problems in his interpretation of the sublime, which is why we have chosen not to discuss the latter here. Although this book has led us to ponder some of the internal problems in Kant's exposition, and certainly puts forward an interesting theory, it does not fulfil its intention of replacing Kant's account of beauty with a better one.

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**Michael P. Levine and Tamas Pataki, eds.**  
*Racism in Mind.*

Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press 2004.

Pp. ix + 304.

US\$49.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-8014-4231-1);

US\$22.50 (paper: ISBN 0-8014-8878-8).

There is surprisingly little consensus among philosophers on the nature of racism. For some, racism is primarily a matter of cognition — holding beliefs such as that members of a particular racial group are inferior in some respect. For others, racism is a matter of affect — disliking people because of their (ascribed) membership in a racial group. In addition, philosophers differ on related questions, such as: is racism necessarily irrational, or may it be rational? And, perhaps most relevant to the volume under review, what kind of evidence is necessary to clarify the nature of racism? That is, is such clarification a matter of conceptual analysis, or are empirical theory and data required as well? *Racism in Mind* addresses all of these questions, and many more. One of its distinctive features is its interdisciplinary character, as its contributors include philosophers and psychologists. The quality of the contributions is uniformly high, and the result is a volume that is perhaps the best single resource available for obtaining a sense of the current state

of the discourse on the nature of racism in these disciplines. The volume is divided into three parts, treating respectively the conception of racism, the psychology of racism, and the morality of racism.

In recent years Jorge Garcia has been the major proponent of the view that racism is not fundamentally about beliefs but rather concerns affect, and his chapter in the first part of this volume develops this view and serves as a point of reference for several other chapters. Garcia's view is that racism is, as he puts it elsewhere, 'rooted in the heart,' that is, it is a form of vicious disregard and ill-will. Garcia's view seems compelling for a number of reasons, foremost among which is that it is consistent with the intuition that racism is necessarily bad and with the observation that the belief in, say, racial inferiority, may in some cases be 'innocent epistemic error' (38). Still, Garcia's view must confront at least two problems — first, that it is psychologically naive since it relies on a clear distinction between beliefs and feelings; and, second, that it cannot account for non-individual forms of racism, such as institutional racism — or it must reduce institutional racism to individual feelings or motivations. The first problem is explored by Michael Levine in his chapter, where he calls the split between affect and belief 'an archaic and artificial dichotomy' (80). Critiques of Garcia focusing on the second problem are developed by Sally Haslanger and Lawrence Blum in their respective chapters. Haslanger argues for 'a "mixed" approach that does not attempt to reduce either agent or structural oppression to the other' (107). Blum argues against what he sees as 'Garcia's moral monism about racism' (75n22). He recommends that we recognize 'the plurality of forms of race-related disvalue' (66) and 'that we take our task to be an account of the diversity of racial phenomena that constitute moral ills' (77).

The chapters in the second section of the volume focus on the psychology of racism. The discussions offered here are extremely rich and suggestive, though to some (particularly philosophers?), many of the claims may appear to be rather speculative, as Elisabeth Young-Bruehl admits at the end of her chapter (157). Racism may be (seen as) a form of 'manic defense', as argued by Neil Altman and Johanna Tiemann in their contribution, or as an expression of envy, as is suggested by Tamas Pataki in his chapter. My personal favorite among the discussions in this section is by Lawrence Lengbeyer. Lengbeyer assumes (contra Garcia) that racism is a matter of false beliefs and asks how we might best combat racism. He argues that it is a mistake to try to achieve a purity of mind (and heart) by the pursuit of the elimination of false racist beliefs because such beliefs tend to persist and have an influence on our thinking even after we have rejected them. 'The aim should be management of one's racist ideas, not their absolute elimination,' Lengbeyer urges (171). The model that Lengbeyer suggests for such management is that of controlling unruly desires: we do best by not attempting to suppress them, but rather by finding ways to check them. Similarly, we should not attempt to rid ourselves of every vestige of racist beliefs, but should develop ways of recognizing when such rejected beliefs are nevertheless influencing our thinking.

The third section treats the implications of race for moral theory. Laurence Thomas argues that race presents a challenge to Kantian moral theory because the kind of equality required by the categorical imperative does not include seeing others as social equals in all respects. Kantian theory cannot accommodate the affective sense of equality across racial lines that a truly non-racist society would require. Similarly, Cynthia Willett argues that the phenomena of race and racism show the limits of liberal theory, which in her view rests on a particular ontology that cannot take account of the essentially social nature of humans or of the importance of social space. This is a familiar line of argument, going back at least to Marx, and was recently revived in the 'liberal-communitarian debate' that received so much attention in the late 1980s and early '90s. This critique, however, may rest on a caricature of liberalism, underestimating its theoretical resources, and forgetting that liberalism is first and foremost a political doctrine, resting on no particular ontological or epistemological foundations.

In his chapter, Bernard Boxill argues that it is a mistake for philosophers to argue (or assume) that race is a social construction. Most philosophers, he suggests, are simply not qualified to make an independent judgment on the empirical question of whether race exists in a scientifically meaningful sense. Instead, Boxill argues that philosophers should apply themselves to exploring why the idea of race is so dangerous, and he devotes the bulk of his chapter to offering a tentative account of this. The chapter is vintage Boxill in its clarity, its persuasiveness and its refusal to respect what is for many a sacred cow — the idea of race as merely a social construction.

Some of the chapters in this volume draw upon and develop arguments that the contributors make elsewhere; this is the case with the chapters by Garcia, Young-Bruehl, Boxill, and Willett. Still, one of the virtues of the volume is that it provides a window into these fuller accounts, and directs the reader to them. The bibliography is extremely useful — a great service to readers by the editors of the volume. The contributions themselves are extremely varied, engaging, and subtle, and a brief review can do no more than to scratch their surface. The volume is highly recommended, and will richly repay close reading.

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**Neil Levy**

*What Makes Us Moral?*

*Crossing the Boundaries of Biology.*

Oxford: Oneworld Publications 2004.

Pp. 256.

US\$19.95. ISBN 1-85168-341-0.

If you are looking for a good introduction to current questions about evolution and ethics, for you or your students, this book will provide it. The big issues are all well discussed, as well as some of the important technical details that go into understanding what, exactly, is at issue. Starting with the historical context of the current debates at the turn of the last century, the book explores the questions of whether human morality might be the product of human evolution, whether evolutionary psychology might be right about the existence of evolved brain structures that would significantly constrain progressive social policy, and whether the possibility of positive genetic engineering might be a serious threat to human equality, if not human nature itself.

While the book's discussion of these questions is not at the leading edge of the mushrooming literature on evolution and ethics, Levy does lay out, carefully and succinctly, the main lines of the current debates, and in addition, he enters into the debates in interesting and important ways. To take an example I will return to, his discussion of the evolutionary origins of morality draws heavily on the work of Richard Dawkins, Michael Ruse and Robert Frank, passing over the more currently important work of William Rottschaefer, Frans de Waal, and Herbert Gintis. Although these omissions affect Levy's own conclusions, they are to be expected in a book of this nature, one that does what it does quite well.

Levy's first chapter takes us, wisely, back to the moral and social implications of the scientific revolution heralded at the turn of the last century by Darwin, Spencer, and the survival of the fittest. Following close on the heels of scientific progress, the Social Darwinists advocated for a scientifically respectable response to poverty: allow the impoverished to perish, as nature clearly intended them to. Upping the ante considerably, the eugenics movement advocated for a more active approach to nature's genetic mistakes: forced sterilization and, finally, Auschwitz. Levy's discussion of this kind of thinking, then and now, is illuminating. He ends the chapter with the spectre of eugenics as it now confronts us at the beginning of our own century in the form of genetic engineering. Current criticism of genetic engineering cuts across right/left divides, with thinkers as diverse as Francis Fukuyama and Allen Buchanan raising the worry of deepening social inequalities based on biologically different classes of human beings.

In his final chapter Levy responds to this worry at length, filling in some useful technical details along the way. His first main point is that there are not, in any real sense, genes for things like intelligence; rather, there are strands of DNA that, in the presence of various environmental factors at the

genetic, cellular and even social levels, result in differences in phenotypic traits. His second main point is that these environments matter just as much as, if not more than, the strands of DNA. So to the degree that we are worried about possibly unalterable inequalities that might arise through changes to our DNA, we should be even more worried about the potentially more far-reaching differences in the physiological and social environments of those developing humans who are currently socially disadvantaged. As Canadians know from the pioneering work of Fraser Mustard, brain development depends crucially on the physiological environment of the uterus and the social environment of the first four years of life.

Levy brings a similar argument to bear against the currently overblown claims of evolutionary psychology. Taking aim at the widely discussed examples of female sexual selectivity and the propensity of males to rape, particularly in times of war, Levy makes the point that we are natured to be nurtured, that is, that our biological nature requires nurturing for its realization. On the basis of a fully interactionist model of nature and nurturing, Levy argues that the alleged psychological differences between men and women are better accounted for by the nurturing part of the model.

More promising for Levy is current work on the moral emotions. Here he follows the current line of argument that the moral emotions evolved as part of successful cooperation. In situations where cheating seems rational, the moral emotions motivate us to act irrationally. But because the possibility of cheating undermines cooperation, this sort of irrationality is in fact rational. The problem is that this reduces morality to disguised self-interest. Levy responds to this problem by suggesting that humans also evolved to be able to reason impartially, and impartial reason is what makes morality genuine, not the moral emotions. Though he doesn't notice it, this puts him closer to Huxley than he might like: nature made us selfish, but luckily for us, our reason enables us to rise above our biological selfishness.

A better alternative may be to locate impartiality directly in our moral emotions, following the work of Rottschaefer and de Waal. In its simplest evolutionary form, impartiality may simply be the ability to feel the pain of others. In some recent work with an MRI (Singer et al., *Science* 303 [20 February 2004]), neuroscientists have observed that when someone feels pain, two parts of the brain seem to be involved, one associated with the sensory experience and one associated with the affective, or subjective, aspects of that experience, such as anticipatory arousal and anxiety. If you are sitting next to the person getting the painful stimulus, depending on your level of sympathy, your brain may be active in the second area but not the first.

The response seems automatic. As such, it may be the most rudimentary form of what Thomas Nagel calls the view from nowhere, a view that enables us to register negative and positive experiences, regardless of where these experiences are actually occurring. Although this primitive emotional form of impartiality does not involve the more sophisticated ability to see the world from another's perspective, or from no perspective at all, these various forms



of impartiality may all lie on a developmental curve. From the point of view of evolution and ethics, the curve may be what is fundamentally important, not its current endpoint in human cognitive sophistication.

**Michael Stigl**

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**Peter Machamer and Gereon Wolters, eds.**

*Science, Values, and Objectivity.*

Pittsburgh/Konstanz: Pittsburgh University Press/Universitätsverlag Konstanz 2004.

Pp. 317.

US\$44.95. ISBN 0-8229-4237-2.

This book marks the Pittsburgh-Konstanz Axis in the history and philosophy of science and is a pretty good indication of the state of the art. For those already familiar with this art, the contributions of Larry Laudan, Barry Barnes, Peter Weingart, Heather Douglas and Helen Longino will be of interest, though they do more to make clear targets of their positions than to say something altogether new. While it is a simplification, the relevant tradition might be understood as continuing the work of Carnap and Reichenbach, through that of Carl Hempel after it had been interrupted by Thomas Kuhn. That is, the central concerns of this anthology stem from the traditional problems of modern philosophy of science as it emerged from the work of the logical empiricists (8).

The book acknowledges the challenge posed by increased awareness of the social conditions under which science is done and tries to take the philosophical consequences. The first chapter, for example, written by Larry Laudan, faces this problem head-on in a critique of the rational reconstructions of scientific practice that reduces the philosophy of science to applied analytic epistemology. He argues that what we know about how science is done ought to lead us to study it very differently, namely, less epistemologically, more 'cognitively'. Another interesting development, though not unique to this book, is the shift from a focus on theoretical physics to one seemingly more interested in biology, including evolutionary theory (Mark Bedau) and the ethics of biotechnology (Felix Thiele). This shift should also motivate more interest in the work of Tara Smith, who provides a succinct statement of the relation between values and life itself.

The book proceeds from the insight that 'values enter into science', construing this as a paradigm shift away from the 'value-neutrality' of

positivism. Many of the contributions echo this sentiment in various forms, always urging moderation. Defining this sense of measure is the purpose of the book, which has both a descriptive and prescriptive dimension. First, philosophers now more readily admit that values *do* inform scientific inquiry (in non-pathological ways) and the philosophy of science ought therefore to have more to say about them. Second, and relatedly, philosophers are more likely to *accept* the presence of values in science, even to support it. This shifts the normativity of the philosophy of science from a negative commitment to keeping values *out* of science toward a series of positive commitments to particular values that are assessed in terms of the kind of science that would be done in their pursuit. Much of the argument in the book is constituted by negotiations about how this concession to post-Kuhnian developments in the History and Philosophy of Science should be made. Or, more precisely, the authors seem to be very concerned to convince themselves and each other that 'social values' are a respectable concern of the philosophy of science, either because they are 'epistemic' or 'cognitive' (when they are not 'trivial'), or because their 'nonepistemic' effects are part of the broader interest in 'science' when construed as a social or cultural activity. This indicates a need for a kind of social philosophy of science, which Helen Longino, for example, provides.

Let there be no doubt that this is a book of philosophy. While it mentions the sociology of scientific knowledge (and even includes a notable from the Strong Programme, Barry Barnes), sometimes respectfully, sometimes condescendingly, it does so mostly in passing. There is even the obligatory jab at the 'counterfactual trivialities' of constructivism (174). Max Weber's version of the fact-value distinction is given no mention at all, which is an interesting fact about this book. After all, positivists began with an interest in the material facts and tried to keep science safe from disturbing social influences. These now have to be 'let in . . . in [their] proper place,' as Hugh Lacey puts it, warning us of the 'unsavory characters' that might try to sneak by as we open the doors (47). But if the positivists took facts to be valuable, Weber started with science embedded in social institutions. He took values to be a fact and went on to construct whatever 'objectivity' was available on this basis if science was to be practiced as a civil occupation or 'vocation'. By leaving out this approach, one gets the sense that this book is a document in the (painfully slow) learning process that analytic philosophy is currently embarked on to make sense, in its endearingly cantankerous and uncharitable way, of what is certainly the established consensus in the rest of the science studies community. Science is a social activity that produces knowledge. *Italicize whatever words you like.*

In terms of typesetting and copy-editing the book is generally well done and the writing conforms to the standard, distinctly masculine style of analytic philosophy. Conceptual territories are 'mapped out', doors are 'slammed' on undesirables, 'strategies' are proposed and 'constrained', and there is some 'appertaining'. There are a few minor typographical errors, but all the chapters are readable and well-referenced.



The structure of the book, however, is odd in a number of ways, which are no doubt easily explained by the way it was made. The preface tells us that the papers were presented at a colloquium in 2002, and the range of approaches that it presents under the same banner is indicative of taking the contributions people send to such conferences as a point of departure. Thus the title's 'science', 'values', 'objectivity' are best seen as *words*, not *concepts* and the principal criteria for being included in the anthology has obviously been the presence of these words (and attendance at the colloquium), rather than a commitment to any particular (range of) interpretation(s) of them. Each author seems to have been given more or less free reign in defining what they mean by them and what the point of bringing them together might be.

This is not in itself a problem. One can easily imagine a good book that works on this principle; nor is this an especially bad book. But the introduction is an oddly programmatic and normative statement about the meaning of 'science', 'values' and 'objectivity', given that its authors (i.e., the book's editors) have not enforced its definitions in choosing the contributions that fill the remaining pages. Indeed, these contributions are not mentioned in the introduction at all and it therefore turns out to be no such thing; it is neither prescriptively or descriptively indicative of what is to come. One explanation for this is found in its footnotes, which are prefaced by a remark telling us that the introduction is really a paper that had been written and presented six years before the book was published (four years before the colloquium was held). One gets the sense that the editors have not read the book they are here introducing, a sense which is accurate to the extent that, at the time much of it was written, they hadn't.

This becomes especially striking in Chapter 4, which is co-authored by one of the editors, Peter Machamer. The first four pages of this paper were obviously written with a knowledge of the contents of the rest of the book. In fact, it is as if they belong in the introduction, as they lightly touch on the central concerns of the major contributions to the book, chapter by chapter. Such a survey would have been useful at the outset, allowing the uninitiated reader a way of gauging the significant tensions that define work in this field.

The editors might also have done more to indicate the very different aims of the individual contributions. The first four chapters are basically conceptual exercises intended to tease out the differences between 'epistemic', 'cognitive', 'social' and 'scientific' concerns, and are of a classically philosophical orientation. The next three are about situating science in its cultural context and, to an extent, about how then to study it (beyond conceptual analysis). This is followed by two chapters which in a sense invert the problem that sets up the central tension in the book (almost threatening to dissolve it) by asking how values themselves might be 'objective' features of the world. The last six chapters are essentially case studies, or thematic essays, each addressing specific fields of research or presenting empirical results (albeit with very different 'empirical' orientations, ranging from computer simulations to historical reviews). There are overlaps and shades

of grey in this grouping and, to the editors' credit, the papers are arranged in an order that reflects their 'family resemblances'. But the chapters are by no means seamlessly part of the same project, and nothing suggests reading the book in order. Here, again, an introduction more geared to guiding one's reading of the book would have been helpful.

Moreover, the editors could have asked the authors to focus their papers to either avoid overlapping positions or more explicitly engage with them. One of the disconcerting things about reading a book like this is that the disagreements are all collected in the same place; they are represented by the people who are in the best possible position to resolve them and who have even been gathered in the same place to discuss them; but they seem nonetheless entirely at loss as to what to do with the subtle conceptual distinctions each of them have been allowed to make (as to the meaning of 'scientific', 'epistemic', 'cognitive', 'social' and 'objective' pursuits, for example). One need only wonder what someone like Tara Smith or Helen Longino is supposed to do with the formalism of someone like Hugh Lacey, who 'know[s] no simpler way to make the argument' (26), or the evolutionary simulations of Mark Bedau. At most they seem to practice a kind of tolerant coexistence.

Perhaps the editors had hoped that a single coherent statement about science, objectivity and values might emerge. This has not happened. Instead, there are a number of interesting statements by prominent figures in a proud, but somewhat marginalized philosophical tradition, conveniently collected between the covers of a high-quality hardcover book.

### **Thomas Basbøll**

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### **Roland Omnès**

*Converging Realities: Toward a Common  
Philosophy of Physics and Mathematics.*  
Princeton, NJ: Princeton University  
Press 2005.  
Pp. xvi + 264.  
US\$29.95. ISBN 0-691-11530-3.

Theoretical physicist Roland Omnès has long been concerned with interpretation in quantum mechanics. Recent works have considered philosophy of quantum theory. In this book, Omnès advances a thesis that mathematics is determined by the laws of physics, a thesis he calls 'physism'. The laws of



physics are foundational, and the correct axioms for logic and mathematics follow from those laws. The book is narrative in style, with a series of mathematical and physical vignettes intended to give the conclusions. Omnès clearly knows that of which he speaks. While I can't in the end recommend this book, it has many brief sections of real interest that provide worthwhile insights for philosophy of mathematics and physics.

Part One presents thoughts on ancient philosophy of mathematics, the grasp of the human brain on reason and laws of science, and development of mathematics from the early nineteenth century to the beginnings of quantum mechanics. Here as elsewhere, Omnès attempts to summarize large stretches of past mathematical thought despite lacking the space to do so in any adequate way. Many statements seem distorted or oversimplified. The book would have been better served by explaining just how the vignettes serve as evidence for the conclusions. But this crucial connection never is made in *Converging Realities*.

The core of Omnès' evidence is in Part Two. There is an accessible introduction to the Feynman histories formulation of field theory, though the details of how amplitudes are obtained will be beyond the beginner. Commonly, this formulation is learned only by advanced graduate students, but the presentation here shows that this is not owing to any complexities intrinsic to the concepts involved. The stock example, a chess board with impassible barriers and spaces representing quantum states, is excellent and intuitive. Omnès comes back to this example numerous times in the book.

The theory of Hilbert spaces has pride of place in Omnès' physical evidence. The definition of inner product given (84) is formal. It is not clear that the beginner will be able to grasp its importance to the cases considered in the crucial seventh chapter. There, Omnès presents key results of Hilbert spaces with physical interpretations necessary for quantum mechanics as it is usually understood. He notes that the axiom of choice or its consequences are needed to get the usual interpretation of vectors as quantum states and the inner product squared as a probability. Omnès offers this and similar results as evidence for physism. At places Omnès seems to realize, at other places not, that they serve equally well as evidence for mathematical realism. Realism is confused with Platonism here as elsewhere.

Chapter Ten deals with decoherence, a recent concept of physics that shows promise for resolving the notorious measurement problem. In this and in later chapters, decoherence is held to save the possibility of macroscopic observations having a bearing on reality. Omnès defends this interpretation in earlier works, and we can expect that numerous works to come from scientists and philosophers will bring additional insight to this potential intellectual breakthrough.

Consistency also is important to Omnès' views: he calls it the 'crux of physism' (211). Consistency is 'not explained': this seems to mean that consistency is indefinable and needed for any possibility of understanding whatever. It is necessary for any determination of truth to be possible (215).

Part Three states Omnès' views regarding physical laws. He sees them as universal (143), necessarily consistent (146-7), and timeless (152). We have better evidence for them than any other general rules that we know. They are not causal agents, but mathematical forms (156-7). There is not a lot of argumentation for these points, but as with Omnès' view on consistency, they are perfectly reasonable hypotheses.

Part Four draws the conclusions. I had expected to see a series of points linking the physical evidence to the conclusions, but this is not done. Omnès compares physism to some other theses in philosophy of mathematics. Some theses, such as intuitionism, are rejected because they fit his data worse than does physism (229). Overall, the best insights of the classic theses of philosophy of mathematics are held to be comprehended by physism.

It is not clear that Omnès needs to, or should, include logic under the rubric of reality furnished by the physical laws. Consistency is a bedrock principle for him, but there are those that think logic simply *is* an expression of consistency (for example, Wilfred Hodges in his textbook *Logic*). Whereas logicism is less popular than it once was, few people would object if Omnès helped himself to a separation of logic from mathematics in his argumentation. His attitude towards such a separation is not clear (247).

This is a book in search of an audience. Often, a fresh look at the issues from someone outside academic philosophy is valuable, and lack of familiarity need not matter so long as a clear argument is made. But for a professional philosopher, this book as a whole is not worthwhile because its theses are not clearly stated in most places, and there is no clear chain of argument linking the many physical and mathematical considerations cited to the conclusions drawn. The presentation of philosophy of mathematics is insufficiently systematic for an interested beginner: comparison of opposing theses is always in passing, never detailed. For other students and amateurs interested in fundamental physics and mathematics, the book is likely to be of limited value because the level of presentation is highly various. Some passages are too elementary to help those who already know some field theory; other parts are too difficult without a fairly solid background.

A thesis similar to physism is that physical reality requires our mathematics to be of the form it takes because otherwise it could not describe reality as it is. This is genuinely distinct from realism and perhaps comprehends what Omnès is trying to tell us. I have not seen a recent detailed treatment of this thesis. Defending it would require a considerably more systematic analysis than that on offer in *Converging Realities*. Such a treatment, combined with Omnès' deep knowledge of physics, would make for a formidable and convincing read.

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**Kim Ian Parker**

*The Biblical Politics of John Locke.*

Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University  
Press 2004.

Pp. ix + 201.

Cdn\$/US\$59.95. ISBN 0-88920-450-0.

This book aims to address the largely neglected subject of the relationship between the nature of humanity provided in the book of Genesis and Locke's views on political order. Parker argues 'that the Bible was an important component in his political outlook and, far from providing Locke with only a semblance of orthodoxy, it provides him with the pre-eminent account of human nature'(1). Parker wades into difficult waters in his attempt to work in history, theology and philosophy simultaneously. The final result is a unique perspective for Early Modern scholars in all three disciplines.

During Locke's formidable years, England was in a state of constant religious struggle and the years of the civil war, and later the Glorious Revolution, defined the religious culture of England. Parker begins with an explanation of Locke's early life, focusing primarily on his father's role in the English Civil War and Locke's relationship with the Earl of Shaftesbury that led to his exile in Holland and his later involvement with the Glorious Revolution. Chapters Two and Three explore Locke's religious and political views, most notably his competing political theory against Sir Robert Filmer's patriarchal argument supporting the divine right of kings. Parker highlights their fundamental differences on the nature of human order — Filmer's view that one's identity is established at birth and is unchangeable is challenged by Locke's belief in our alterable nature and our ability to take responsibility for our actions based on our learning from historical precedent. Utilising the Bible as a primary source and not as a deflection 'away from his rational secular politics,' (119) Parker contends that Locke engages in a direct debate about biblical interpretation and political order. While such an analysis runs counter to previous interpretations of Locke (e.g., by C. B. Macpherson and Leo Strauss), which have now been largely abandoned by Locke scholars, it seems that Parker's interpretation does have the merit of reinforcing the need to treat both *Treatises of Government* as continuous by stressing how Locke's dismissal of Filmer is important for Locke's own political views expounded in the *Second Treatise*.

In Chapter Five, Parker claims that the 'same biblical bedrock' (144) used in the *First Treatise* is found in the *Second Treatise*. Parker asserts, 'while it is true that natural law supplied the philosophical foundation for Locke's ideas of freedom and equality, it is also true that Genesis provided the theological foundation of the doctrine of natural law' (144). Parker concludes that Genesis was central to the development of Locke's writings and not merely as a distraction or as a rhetorical tool, as some writers have suggested.

According to Parker, Locke uses Genesis as a source for contradicting widely held patriarchal views and for the development of his own views of political order. Some readers might find this claim questionable given some of Locke's views concerning the status of women in his writings (e.g., the natural subjugation of wives). Furthermore, while it would be difficult to find textual evidence to deny that Locke was a proponent of natural law theory in politics and the close affinity between natural law and divine law that was thought to exist in the seventeenth century, by focusing primarily on Locke's political texts Parker neglects to deal with the familiar problem of how Locke proposes we come to have knowledge of these divine laws (especially the issue of Locke's notion of moral ideas as mixed modes). If we are to interpret Locke as understanding the Bible as a repository for political ideas and obligations, this is a fundamental issue that needs to be dealt with.

When done well, interdisciplinary work elucidates the links between our various disciplines and how much we have to learn from each other. Working in several disciplines at once, however, can also have its pitfalls. One victim of Parker's efforts is a full explanation of the complex religious climate of seventeenth-century England; the lack of which seems to undermine his efforts. Parker's brief first chapter and a possible underestimation of the importance of religion in the daily lives of seventeenth-century Englishman does not do enough to undermine more secular interpretations of Locke. Parker's references to Locke's personal library as having an unusually high percentage of theological works as evidence of his sincere interest in religion seems a bit off base. Some scholars would estimate that half the works published in England in the seventeenth century were religious in nature, and therefore Locke's library was not only unrepresentative of such publications but also under-representative of the number of religious works in the seventeenth century. Religion was at the core of life in that period, and Parker may have benefited greatly from the countless histories of the period, including those by John Morrill, Daniel Szechi, Kenneth Fincham and Peter Lake in explaining that to a non-theological audience.

Parker's attempt to draw a synthesis between Locke's theological and philosophical views, unfortunately, does not come close to the significance and sophistication of Jeremy Waldron's recent *God, Locke, Equality: Christian Foundations in Locke's Political Thought* (Cambridge University Press 2002). Although Parker's account for the ultimate importance of Locke's theological views to his political philosophy does address many of the textual and conceptual issues Waldron discusses, Parker's concern to illustrate the relevant interconnections between philosophical, political, theological and historical issues prevents him from fully developing why this interconnection should lead us to think about Locke and his philosophical views in a new light. While there is much that is engaging in this book, those interested in the philosophical aspect of Locke scholarship will not likely find this volume to challenge or improve existing philosophical interpretations beyond what is presently available. What they will find, however, is an



intriguing example of the importance of examining philosophical ideas and texts in the context in which they were produced.

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**Mario Perniola**

*Art and Its Shadow.*

Trans. Massimo Verdicchio.

New York: Continuum 2004.

Pp. xx + 78.

US\$120.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-8264-6242-1);

US\$29.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8264-6243-X).

**Mario Perniola**

*Sex Appeal of the Inorganic.*

Trans. Massimo Verdicchio.

New York: Continuum 2004.

Pp. vi + 147.

US\$110.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-8264-6244-8);

US\$33.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8264-6245-6).

One of Italy's finest theoreticians in the field of aesthetics, Perniola, in these slim but rather dense books, explores two topics that constitute the focus of his most recent reflection, namely, neutral sexuality, and the modalities of art's survival in a milieu of mass communication and reproduction. Given their density, both works can be approached from a variety of angles. One approach, which I found helpful but by no means exhaustive, is to read them as attempts to think such experiences as sexuality and philosophy, but also art, independently of the notion of subjectivity, and in relation to the notion of 'thing'.

In *Sex Appeal of the Inorganic*, Perniola argues that Western speculation has always conceived the place of the human as the intermediate ground between the divine and the animal. One either spiritually ascends toward God or physically debases oneself in descending toward the animal. Perniola contends that the time has come to consider a different movement — a movement towards the thing, which lies neither above nor below the human, but besides it. What does it mean to move toward the thing, or, more provocatively, to become thing? Is it enough to refer to things, the realm of the inorganic, as merely the sphere of the absence of feeling? Perniola does

not think so. In fact, for him the thing and feeling are precisely the remainder that cannot be assimilated in the clarity and distinction of Cartesian self-consciousness: 'something opaque, indeterminate and open which is not self-evident and is not a machine. Maybe it feels? But what does it feel?' (9).

Neutral sexuality, or the sex appeal of the inorganic, may be described as the sexual attraction proper of the thing that feels; or, a thing that feels is precisely what is experienced in neutral sexuality. The book as a whole, in fact, can be read as an exploration of what it means to be a thing that feels, or of how the subject is transformed into a thing that feels. Pleasure, which is introduced very late in the work, is a key to understanding what Perniola has in mind. Against the desexualized view of pleasure that he attributes to Plato, Aristotle, and Epicurus, Perniola sides with the Cynics and the Stoics as he advocates a kind of sexuality that is not naturally and consciously directed to orgasm, a sexuality that is not only disconnected from pleasure, but is contrary to it: neutral sexuality. However, it is a sexuality that does not amount to pain, but to 'an effort, an enterprise, an exercise, a training, a performance' (142). *Sex Appeal of the Inorganic* is a series of descriptions of precisely such a performance, which Perniola repeatedly links to the philosophical enterprise.

So, for instance, one approaches the status of the thing that feels in the experience of drug addiction: a status that resembles that of vice because it does not aim at anything but itself, thus introducing us 'into a movement without time and without purpose, sufficient unto itself, which asks only for its continuation' (17). Similarly, one becomes a thing that feels through philosophy understood as a practice that creates an addiction close to that of drugs. Or, in creatively retrieving Kant's understanding of the nuptial bond, Perniola argues that what is realized in the sexual encounter is the excessive craving to possess the other as a thing to be treated as one pleases. This excess is mirrored in the cognitive craving typical of philosophical speculation, a craving for which the university is introduced as the curbing factor, just as marriage is introduced as the practice to inhibit the sexual longing. Excess, patent in the appetite to experience all that is given as thing, is what is most precious in the parallel experiences of neutral sexuality and philosophy, for in them emerges a contact with 'a more radical alterity than the divine and the bestial' (5). For this reason, Perniola believes that what aims at limiting such excess, should be seen 'on the side of evil' (19).

One cannot help noticing the destructive direction toward which a thinking of this kind may lead. However, if the book is worth reading, I believe, it is because Perniola is not content with merely stating the necessity of promoting the excess with respect to neutral sexuality and philosophy, but because he also identifies experiences of excess that, rather than falling on the side of the sex appeal of the inorganic, appear to be the ultimate consequences of the prejudicial favoring of the realm of life over that of the thing. For example, he thinks that sadism and masochism do not fit the notion of neutral sexuality, for both end up in the cul-de-sac of a desire for a surplus while never actually bringing about the experience of an excessive



sexuality freed from subjectivity, or the neutral sexuality originating 'from the unconditional approval of the unlimited space opened up by the disappearance of the subject' (44). Devoid of subjectivity, neutral sexuality is also freed from desire, and thus is 'prey to an excitement that perpetually is nourished on the thought of giving itself as a thing that feels' (101). Masochism and sadism, instead, presuppose the subject, and in fact would disappear altogether if they were to deal solely with things.

Now, this experience of transformation of the subject into a thing that feels, described in terms of the sex appeal of the inorganic, is also indicated in *Art and Its Shadow* as a crucial idea (others being the *neuter* and *epoché*) by which a departure from the traditional aesthetic concepts of works and pleasure is made possible. Perniola remarks that it is only recently that the traditional understanding of aesthetics in terms of harmony and organic unity has been confronted with the problematic of difference. In connection with this problematic, modern aesthetics privileges feeling and disturbing experiences, which can hardly be harmonized by the reconciling tendencies of traditional aesthetics. Once again, Perniola is careful in not allowing the logic of excess proper of modern aesthetics to take refuge in experiences of mere disgust and abjection. 'The poetics of *trash* and abjection restore indirectly precisely what the thinking of difference is fighting against. If the human being is just garbage, this means that the only one to shine is the transcendental' (24).

What makes Perniola's discourse worth reflecting upon, I maintain, is the fact that it indicates the possibility of a completely different direction for aesthetics: neither upward, toward harmonious beauty, nor downward, toward a mystification of its apparent opposite (i.e., ugliness and abjection), but towards the 'beside' of the thing. It is this direction that allows him to avoid the blind alley of banality in which contemporary aesthetics seems to have trapped itself. If art is still worth pursuing, it is because it can be reduced neither to the mere work of art nor to bare life. Rather, the artistic experience is precisely that which cannot be encompassed completely, but is always accompanied by an ungraspable shadow. 'It is not *above*, in the Empyrean of aesthetic "values" and even less *below*, in the dark depths of popular and ethnic values, that one finds a remedy to the banalization of art, but *to the side*, in the shadow that accompanies the exhibition of works of art and artistic-communicative operations' (xvii-xviii).

In this sense, the experience of art is an experience of excess analogous to those of neutral sexuality and philosophy to which I referred earlier. It should not come as a surprise, therefore, that Perniola repeatedly hints at intersections where these experiences may meet. In the fourth chapter of *Art and Its Shadow*, for example, he speaks of the possible encounter of philosophy and the cinema. What he seems to advocate is not a kind of cinema where the primacy is to be assigned either to concepts (e.g., by showing images functioning as accidental, i.e., substitutable, illustrations of an essentially conceptual narrative expressed through words) or to images (e.g., by completely doing away with words, as in the silent movie), but rather an experience in

which the creative use of both makes for the access to a dimension where images, words, and silence enhance and support one another.

Ultimately, the shadow of art (and that of philosophy) is the feeling of difference that constitutes the very remainder of art that one can encounter in the artistic experience when art is not reduced to something else, be it the mere work of art or sheer life. It is something that one is never able to grasp thoroughly and that opens up an ulterior dimension. This, however, is not a flight into a realm of pure transcendence, for the remainder, like the shadow, exists beside rather than beyond the artistic and philosophical experience. To this extent, the remainder is an indication leading beyond both the mourning and the melancholia that followed the nihilistic proclamation of death of God. In Perniola's own image, the remainder is like a crypt, 'which preserves as if it were dead something that is still living and secretly working' (68).

On a critical note, one may ask whether the path Perniola indicates toward the thing, or toward a desubjectivized view of sexuality and philosophy, is the only way out of the impasse posed by (a certain understanding of) subjectivity. Less implicitly, one may wonder whether a retrieval of subjectivity is possible which, while not fully subsumable under the heading of self-consciousness, allows for a 'beside' that one would have a hard time understanding in terms of thing-hood.

However, on the whole *Sex Appeal of the Inorganic* and *Art and Its Shadow* are very much worth reading, although anyone who is not familiar with Perniola's work may find them rather difficult and would do well turning first to earlier works such as *Enigmas*, *Ritual Thinking*, or the stimulating, although not yet translated, *Twentieth-Century Aesthetics*. One would also hope to read a sequel providing the reader with further indications on how to foster attitudes that enable us to approach the remainder and practice cryptic incorporation.

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**Wayne Proudfoot, ed.**

*William James and a Science of Religion:  
Reexperiencing the Varieties of Religious  
Experience.*

New York: Columbia University Press 2004.

Pp. vii + 138.

US\$34.50. ISBN 0-231-13204-2.

This volume is a collection of six papers presented at a colloquium sponsored by the Center for the Study of Science and Religion at Columbia University in 2002 to commemorate the centennial of James' *Varieties of Religious Experience*. The collection includes contributions from two philosophers, a psychologist, a historian and two theorists of religious studies.

As Proudfoot observes in his introduction, philosophers interested in James' contributions to pragmatism and the ethics of belief generally pay little attention to *Varieties*. On the other hand, scholars of religion, in whose canon *Varieties* has found a home, often fail to appreciate its relationship to James' earlier and later philosophical writings. The present collection of essays goes a long way toward bridging this gap.

Several papers in the volume distinguish between two different strategies employed by James to defend the legitimacy of religious faith against nineteenth-century scientific agnosticism, and to resolve what David Hollinger describes as the tension between the cultural Protestantism to which James was heir and his commitment to the scientific norms of empirical observation and intersubjective verification. Hollinger himself interprets *Varieties* as 'a product of the particular phase in James' career when he was shifting from one strategy to another' (10) in his pursuit of these objectives.

Hollinger considers the first of these two strategies, already expressed in the 1882 essay, 'Sentiment of Rationality', to be a sophisticated version of the claim that science and religion constitute autonomous spheres of experience and belief that answer to two distinct kinds of questions and concerns. The second strategy seeks rather 'to embrace in a Peircian mode the epistemic unity of all experience and belief' (10) and to evaluate scientific and religious 'hypotheses' according to the same criteria. As James shifts toward this second approach, he takes the 'medical materialists' to task for ignoring the facts of religious experience, while also challenging religious believers 'to renounce the safe harbors of the metaphysicians and to confront the materialists on their own ground, which was experience of the world' (24).

While Hollinger is mainly concerned with the chronological development of James' views, Rorty focuses instead on a fundamental ambivalence at the heart of *Varieties* resulting from James' failed attempt to embrace two irreconcilable sets of philosophical commitments, pragmatism and empiricist foundationalism. Rorty the anti-foundationalist, who does not 'see anything of value in either *Radical Empiricism* or *A Pluralistic Universe*' (96), predictably prefers the former. Whatever continuing value he does recognize in *Varieties* is due not to its philosophical merit, but to the fact that 'it is a



portion of the intellectual biography of an exceptionally magnanimous man' (96), and can help readers to cultivate this virtue in themselves.

Proudfoot, who is the author of an acclaimed book on religious experience, correctly observes that James' strict distinction between explanations of the causes of religious experiences and evaluations of their significance is problematic. James vacillates between acknowledging that whether religious experiences have natural causes is bound to affect our evaluation of them and claiming that the evaluation of such experiences ought to hinge entirely on their practical consequences in the lives of the people who have them. Whereas James' decided position remains neutral with respect to ultimate causes, Proudfoot clearly commits himself to 'the possibility of a fully natural explanation' (45). But commitment to an unspecified but fully natural explanation isn't as demanding or as gratifying as commitment to some particular one, and the non-deterministic historical naturalism that Proudfoot evidently prefers (44-5) is not spelled out here.

Whereas Proudfoot contends that James' attempt to construct a generic typology of religious experience led him to ignore historical specificity and context, Jerome Bruner maintains to the contrary that James took 'a perspectival view of religious experience' (77), that he was 'bent on describing situated realities in cultural context' (78), and that he was 'profoundly interested in *how* people construct their realities' (78). James may not have been the former-day Foucault that Bruner makes him out to be, but neither was he as oblivious to issues of historical context as Proudfoot seems to suggest. When, for example, in 'The Will to Believe', James distinguishes between 'live' and 'dead' religious options, he clearly recognizes that the same religious hypothesis that is plausible for people in one setting may be entirely implausible for those in another.

Philip Kitcher's paper, which breaks with the 'two conflicting strategies' view taken by Hollinger and Rorty, carefully reconstructs and evaluates James' argument in *Varieties* from the standpoint of contemporary analytic epistemology. Kitcher puts forward the interpretive claim 'that *Varieties* is set within the epistemological framework of "The Will to Believe" and that it tries to discharge the function of the quick-and-dirty closing section of the earlier essay' (115). Responding to Allen Wood's and Peter van Inwagen's contrasting assessments of the Clifford-James debate, Kitcher concludes that James succeeds in defending only a truncated form of religious commitment that amounts to little more than 'secular humanism with a benign gesture' (131).

According to what Kitcher refers to as the 'natural reading' (100) of the chapter on mysticism in *Varieties*, James' thesis is that mystical states of consciousness provide warrant for belief in a transcendent religious reality that is directly apprehended by the mystic. Ann Taves' well-informed discussion of James' relationship to Pierre Janet and Frederick Myers (co-founder of the British Society for Psychical Research), shows clearly how this reading falls short. Taves argues persuasively that the comparative methodology employed by James, and the theory of subliminal consciousness underlying

his discussion of mystical states, are more sophisticated and more cautious than has previously been recognized. Although in identifying his own 'over-beliefs' James clearly inclines toward the religious hypothesis, his aim in the closing chapters of *Varieties* is not to validate this hypothesis but to offer 'a theoretical explanation of how individuals might subjectively experience a presence that they take to be an external power, when such is not necessarily the case' (62). Taves contends that James' attention to similarities between religious and non-religious phenomena, his avoidance of descriptive reductionism, and his appreciation of the fragmentary nature of selfhood are features of his thought from which contemporary theorists of religion can still learn. Together with the other essays collected here, hers is likely to generate continuing interest in James' seminal study.

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### **Nils-Eric Sahlin, ed.**

*Ramsey's Ontology.*

Somerset, NJ: Transaction Books

(for Ontos Verlag) 2005.

Pp. 120.

US\$39.95. ISBN 3-937202-72-2.

Theses regarding the ultimate nature of things constituted an essential starting point on the basis of which Frank Ramsey formulated his ideas, and an integral part of his worldview. An at least general knowledge of such theses is thus one key element to a proper understanding of the contributions he made to a vast range of subjects. However, not much can be found in the literature that fosters the study of Ramsey's ontological positions. This collection of essays goes some way towards filling this gap. It is surely not a comprehensive overview of Ramsey's ontology, but it offers some interesting interpretative suggestions and critical analyses.

The starting point, and the theme around which most of the collection revolves, is Ramsey's criticism of the distinction between particulars and universals as an unwarranted ontological conclusion derived from linguistic practice, which he formulated in his 'Universals' (1925). This doesn't come as a surprise, since this is one of the most renowned of Ramsey's essays, and perhaps the only one that has an overtly ontological 'flavour'.

In the first contribution, Maurin and Sahlin examine this paper and, following a suggestion of Mellor's, claim that Ramsey's argument is best understood as a means to avoid Bradley's classical 'relation regress' (the reader is offered here a useful analysis of what distinguishes vicious from



non-vicious infinite regresses.) By denying any intrinsic difference between universals and particulars, that is, Ramsey allegedly avoids an apparently inevitable proliferation of intermediate entities that the existence of such a distinction would entail. This, Maurin and Sahlin maintain, implies that 'Universals' must be interpreted as suggesting a fact ontology, that is, that *'the world is a world of facts'* (13).

However, Maurin and Sahlin go on to argue, a fact ontology fails to steer clear of Bradley's regress, for as soon as we try to distinguish between the internal constituents of facts and/or between facts, the 'infiltration' of an infinite series of relations immediately occurs again. Indeed, if there is anything like the regress formulated by Bradley, it points towards the necessity of a conception of reality as a Parmenidean unchangeable 'One' (27).

In his complex and rich paper, Hochberg goes back one step and criticizes Ramsey's very attempt to deflate the ontological distinction between particulars and universals. He focuses on the fact that, throughout his analysis, Ramsey appears to assume the concept of 'predicable', that is, of what can be predicated of something else as its subject (32), so implicitly employing exactly the distinction he intends to reject. Not only does one have to *acknowledge an intrinsic asymmetry between what is predicable and what is not*: being predicable is simply not a purely linguistic feature. It coincides with the ontological asymmetry between what is repeatable ('multiply instantiable'), and what is not (39). Curiously, Hochberg doesn't say much on the crucial ontological notion of multiple instantiability, preferring to focus on the — prevalently linguistic — concept of predicability.

In a more sympathetic article, McBride defends Ramsey's argument from the allegedly lethal objection, first formulated by Aristotle, to the effect that only qualities can be negated, i.e., only properties have equally real contraries. He first distinguishes an ontological and a weaker, merely linguistic, interpretation of Ramsey's thesis, and shows that the Aristotelian 'dictum' is certainly ineffective, by itself, against the former, which is nevertheless what Ramsey really aimed to convey. Moreover, McBride convincingly argues that in its weaker version too Ramsey's thesis can be secured against Aristotle-like criticisms. He shows that Dummett misinterprets Ramsey's arguments, failing to correctly understand the basic point formulated in 'Universals': namely, that there is no reason to claim that names are less incomplete than predicates and, if they are not, then ontology remains underdetermined by language, and it is consequently perfectly possible to formulate a language in which subjects can in fact be negated (70). Also Geach, who appears to offer clear-cut logical arguments against the possibility of negating subjects, is shown to only demonstrate that one cannot negate subjects and accept conjunctive predicates at the same time (80); which of these two things to presuppose and make an integral part of one's language-structure, though, remains an open choice.

In his contribution, Koslow comments on an unpublished paper read by Ramsey in 1922, in which two basic interconnected ideas are presented — first, that the world is simple and there are no complexes, and second that



truth is an incomplete symbol. To provide support to the first claim, Ramsey argues against the existence of complex properties, complex propositions (as they appear, most notably, in probability calculus) and complex beliefs. More importantly, he denies that there are facts (91): facts too are complexes that can be reduced to more elementary parts (i.e., subjects instantiating properties or relations holding between individuals). This constitutes the bridge from the simplicity thesis to Ramsey's other central conclusion in the paper, namely that regarding truth: since there are no facts, truth cannot be correspondence between these and propositions, and the most plausible way of understanding it is as an incomplete symbol which is different from, but equivalent to, the identity function.

It is worth noting that Koslow's reconstruction, based as it is on the claim that facts do not exist as primitive entities, appears to directly contradict Maurin and Sahlin's interpretation of 'Universals' as relying upon (or naturally tending towards) a fact ontology. Despite the latter's claim that this shouldn't worry us, for 'at different times of his life, Ramsey tried our different positions' (13), the reader is left wondering whether this is really the case or, instead, a more consistent position can be attributed to Ramsey. It would certainly be interesting to know more about this issue.

In the last short piece, Sahlin and Kasá Palmé discuss Ramsey's well-known suggestion that scientific theories should be formulated as sentences in which the unobservable entities appear as existentially bound variables (the so-called 'Ramsey-sentences'). They clarify that, despite the use they are sometimes put to (as ways to avoid realist commitment to unobservables), Ramsey-sentences were not so intended by Ramsey, who was rather an opponent of reductive empiricism, and actually brought them into play with a view to specifying the sort of ontological commitment beyond what we are directly acquainted with that theories force upon us. The core of the paper is then devoted to showing that in dynamical contexts, based upon 'experimental semantics', there is no unique way of 'Ramseifying' a theory.

Overall, *Ramsey's Ontology* certainly provides some stimulating discussions of central themes of the Cambridge philosopher's ontological views. However, a good amount of previous knowledge is assumed, and on some issues (most patently, whether or not Ramsey endorsed a fact ontology), suggestions are given that go in opposite directions. Considering this, and also the book's limited length, the collection would have certainly benefited from a short critical introduction offering some background to the material and defining some sort of 'guiding thread' for the reader to follow. At any rate, *Ramsey's Ontology* does represent an interesting initial step towards a better knowledge of both an author and an area of philosophy that deserve more attention.

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**Russ Shafer-Landau**

*Whatever Happened to Good and Evil?*

Toronto and New York: Oxford University Press 2003.

Pp. x + 150.

Cdn\$31.50/US\$18.00. ISBN 0-19-516873-9.

In this book Shafer-Landau aims to defend moral objectivity against moral skepticism. The book is suitable for introductory students and academics outside philosophy. Indeed the argument is so admirably organized and given such clear expression that many non-academics would benefit from reading it. Shafer-Landau includes an index, a glossary and a synopsis of the major arguments. Academics may be disappointed at the lack of a bibliography and an extreme paucity of references to current philosophical literature. While a work with many references can be intimidating to newcomers, even the uninitiated would appreciate some guidance toward further reading. This book is nevertheless an excellent overview of important material and would make a very useful introductory text.

*Whatever Happened to Good and Evil?* is organized into three parts. In the first, Shafer-Landau provides an account of moral skepticism, clarifies some terminology and makes some distinctions. In the second part he argues that moral skepticism fails to be acceptable in a variety of ways. In the third, he defends moral objectivity against the criticisms of skepticism.

He distinguishes three kinds of moral scepticism — Moral Nihilism, Ethical Subjectivism, and Ethical Relativism. Nihilism denies the existence of any moral truths. The other two do not, but the subjectivists claim that moral truths are completely determined by each individual and the relativists claim that they are determined by each culture.

The second part begins with the problem of accounting for moral errors within conventional moralities. How can one explain our tendency to consider some moral views mistaken? One way to account for moral error is to accept the existence of an objective morality, beyond the conventional moralities, which can serve as a standard by which to judge those moralities. Skeptics must reject this account. The only other account of moral error, adopted by some moral nihilists, holds that every moral claim, and so every conventional morality is mistaken. This account allows that the terrorists are morally mistaken, but only at the cost of admitting that everyone else, including oneself, is also mistaken. Other skeptics must deny the possibility of moral error (except that due to inconsistency).

Thus moral skepticism implies moral equivalence: 'the basic moral views of any person, or society, are no better than any other' (18). Moral equivalence may be defended on the basis that no one's perspective is privileged. But not just moral opinions depend on perspective. All other areas of inquiry assume that regardless of the absence of privileged perspective, some opinions will be true, others false. Equivalence is very different, holding opinions are either all true or all false. Shafer-Landau questions whether people really



believe in moral equivalence when thinking about actual cases. From skepticism's commitment to equivalence, an inability to plausibly account for moral progress follows.

Moral skeptics accuse moral objectivism of promoting dogmatism, whereas smugness about something that is just considered a human invention is more difficult. Shafer-Landau responds that objectivists, in allowing for error, have more reason to avoid arrogance. On the skeptics' view, no one can be more correct about morality than yourself. So why not be dogmatic in your moral views? Thus, contrary to popular opinion, moral objectivists are better positioned to claim that intolerance is wrong. For nihilists the claim is false. For subjectivists and relativists the claim is often false. For subjectivists it is false whenever one does not believe in tolerance and for relativists whenever one is in an intolerant society.

Next Shafer-Landau notes that skepticism implies that all moral beliefs are arbitrary: not adequately supported by good reasons. Thus our deepest commitments would lack rational bases. Moreover, subjectivism and relativism produce contradiction. Whenever two people or societies disagree, slavery, say, both is and is not acceptable. The contradictions can be avoided by claiming that 'is acceptable' always means 'is acceptable for X' where X is some individual or society. But avoiding contradiction this way destroys the possibility of moral disagreement. Two claims do not really disagree when referring to differing individuals or societies. Nihilists do not have this problem of contradiction. Moreover, non-cognitivists can account for moral disagreement as emotional disagreement. Still, people do not always seem to back their moral judgements emotionally. Relativists, however, have an additional contradiction problem given one can be a member of two societies at once. Shafer-Landau admits that moral skepticism need not be self-refuting. But it often is; specifically it is, if supported by global nihilism, global subjectivism or global relativism.

The third part addresses the following problems brought against objectivism — the absence of universal and absolute moral laws, the persistence of disagreement even between open-minded well-informed individuals, the absence of God or proof thereof, the absence of any other author of morality, the absence of a role for morals or values in scientific explanation, the absence of a procedure to acquire moral knowledge, and the absence of rational motivation to be moral.

These arguments range from simple to complex. Shafer-Landau argues that objectivism does not require universal endorsement, nor must every moral rule be universally applicable, nor does it require absolutism. Next he points out that moral skepticism itself is subject to persistent disagreement even among open-minded well-informed people, thus skeptics cannot consistently use this standard. He rejects the claim that objectivity requires God or any author. Moreover, like other kinds of normative fact, e.g., logical rules, moral facts need not play a role in scientific explanations. Again, moral knowledge need not meet higher standards of justification than any other philosophical knowledge. For moral skepticism is a philosophical position



and consistency will require that it also be rejected, if the standard of justification is too high. Finally, by rejecting rational egoism, he denies any absence of rational motivation to be moral; he holds we can have reasons to do things even when nothing is in it for us.

In the end, the arguments are more complex than a short review, or even a short book, can do justice, and Shafer-Landau admits as much, maintaining a good balance in defending moral objectivity.

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**Kwong-Loi Shun and David B. Wong, eds.**

*Confucian Ethics: A Comparative Study of  
Self, Autonomy and Community.*

New York: Cambridge University Press 2004.

Pp. vii + 228.

US\$70.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-521-79217-7);

US\$25.99 (paper: ISBN 0-521-79657-1).

In contemporary China Confucianism has experienced a dramatic fate. It was first undermined in the May-Fourth Movement of 1919 and then by the Communist government after 1949. It was only after the economic boom of the four Asian tigers in the 1970's that Confucianism was able to attract the attention of scholars. Some scholars have tried to explain the success of economic growth in East Asia in terms of Confucian ethics. They argue for an equivalent function between Confucian and Protestant ethics. But, with the recent economic flu in East Asia, the negative influences of Confucian ethics have become a new focus of discussion. Given such a complication in its contemporary reception, a clarification of Confucian ethics is necessary. This volume is a scholarly work on the essential features of Confucian ethics.

What makes this volume significant is not only the fact that its authors are experts in the field, but also that it aims to create a dialogue with Communitarianism. In opposition to Liberalism, Communitarianism grants a priority to the community over the individual. The majority of the authors in this volume entertain the consensus that Confucian ethics is community-centric. There is then, accordingly, an affinity between Confucian ethics and Communitarianism.

Structurally, this volume consists of three major sections. While the first section is concerned with the issues of rights and community in Confucianism, the second focuses on the problems of the Confucian conception of self

and moral cultivation. The final section is a commentary written by Alasdair MacIntyre, one of the major founders of Communitarianism.

In the first section, Craig Ihara argues that the absence of individual rights should not lead to an undermining of Confucianism. In contrast, David Wong claims that an individual's right to speak is not entirely foreign to Confucianism. Henry Rosemont tries to develop a Confucian critique of modern Western Liberalism. According to Rosemont, Confucian ethics is superior to Western right-centred ethics for it can promote, in a better way, values that enable citizens to be effective in self-governing. Finally, Chad Hansen analyses the methodological problems in comparative ethics. For Hansen, comparative ethics enables one to recognize the existence of alternative moral systems. The rise of comparative ethics shows us a way to allow for a pluralism of moral values in our age of globalization.

In the second section, Joel Kupperman tries to explore the role played by tradition and community in the formation of a personal self. In Confucianism he discovers a rich moral psychology in expounding such a process of formation. In explicating the Confucian conception of selfhood, Cheng Chung-ying further argues that in replacing an *Emergence model* for the *Transcendence Model* of morality one can construct a Confucian moral metaphysics in the form of process philosophy. He concludes that there is no conflict between *xing* (nature) and free will in Confucianism. Bryan Van Norden discusses the significant role of shame in the Confucian doctrine of moral cultivation. Finally, Kwong-loi Shun warns us that there is always a danger in using Western notions when discussing Confucian thought. For example, the idea of a mind-body distinction is never found in the Chinese tradition.

In his commentary, MacIntyre offers an open-minded dialogue with the above contributors. This constitutes the first direct encounter between Confucian and Communitarian thinkers, though Tang Junyi (1909-1978), a leading figure in contemporary Neo-Confucianism, was able to develop a position that is close to Communitarianism.

All in all, the authors of this volume help to develop the following picture of Confucian ethics. As a community-centred ethics, Confucian ethics is primarily concerned with the common good. The Confucian 'self' is understood as a member of a community rather than an autonomous individual. For Confucianism, apart from social interactions, no self is possible.

Critically, one must point out that this volume concentrates more on the doctrines of the early Confucian ethics in the Pre-Qin period and hence neglects some internal conflicts in its later development. As pointed out by Mou Zongsan, Zhu Xi must be criticized for his ethics of heteronomy. In his emphasis on cultural heritage, Zhu Xi shows an enormous respect for traditional norms, but his position gives rise to an authoritarianism that suppresses the autonomous will of individuals. Mou Zongsan therefore identifies the realistic Zhu Xi as a heretic. Although one might not agree with Mou Zongsan's typology, one cannot ignore the problem of a possible undermining of the individual will in the development of Confucian ethics.



At the same time, one should be aware of another danger found in the idealistic trend of Confucian ethics. By absolutizing the individual mind, for example, in the form of Wang Yangming's *liang zhi*, Confucianism would turn into an individual-centric ethics. The publication of this volume can contribute to a correction of such a subjectivist trend in Confucian ethics. Nonetheless, since this volume does not thematically address the problem of overcoming the ethics of heteronomy, it is necessary to introduce some new resources to deal with it. Particularly, one could turn to Habermas' discourse ethics for help. As also noted by MacIntyre, it is possible for a society to become oppressive. Therefore, one has to introduce the distinction between a reasonable and an oppressive community. A synthesis of Confucian and discourse ethics might help to work out the conditions for the realization of a reasonable society.

In his commentary, MacIntyre raises two important questions on p. 211: (1) 'What conditions must a form of political and social community satisfy, if it is to be accounted genuinely Confucian?' (2) 'On what terms and through what relationships should Confucians confront the institutional demands of the modern state and the pressures exerted on producers and consumers by present-day national and international market economies?' On the way towards finding satisfactory answers for these interesting questions, one can definitely make use of the contributions of this volume as a stepping stone.

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**Christine T. Sistare, ed.**

*Civility and Its Discontents: Civic Virtue,  
Toleration, and Cultural Fragmentation.*

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Pp. vii + 310.

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For many, life seems increasingly unpleasant, fraught with petty irritations and anxiety-producing news reports. A trip to the mall is stressful, given the person who tailgates us on the way, the driver who grabs the spot in the parking lot that we were waiting for, and the teenager who pushes ahead of us in the line-up for coffee. We hear racist or sexist comments, the media report on MPs insulting one another, and reality TV shows demonstrate the multitude of ways in which people will humiliate themselves. More ominously, security experts warn that western democracies are threatened by

terrorists, some of whom are fellow citizens. These examples, and the values and attitudes that underlie them, suggest that incivility is growing.

Liberalism articulates and defends a particular understanding of the just state and its institutions. It covers both the state's relationship to citizens, as well as how citizens should interact with one another. Respect for individuals is central. Liberals believe that individuals flourish when they have the freedom to explore ideas and lifestyles, and the social space to put those explorations into practice. Most liberals believe it inappropriate for the state to impose ways of life on citizens, and hold that, as long as the choices people make are not harmful to others, their actions, beliefs, and practices are not the business of the state. Given these commitments, liberal societies will structure themselves so that their members can decide for themselves how best to live.

However, these explorations are not merely private, but also take place in public space, space shared with other people; since those people will be pursuing their own ideals, ideals which may collide with ours, the possibilities for social conflict are immense. My love of hunting clashes with your commitment to PETA, your religiously-based concerns about legalizing same-sex marriage seem ridiculous to me, given my belief that such legalization respects a fundamental human right.

The civic virtues of civility and tolerance come into play in these encounters: they are virtues that provide the glue that holds liberal societies together and make life within them pleasant and rewarding. Tolerance encompasses my willingness to recognize that others should be allowed to live in ways which I think immoral or think things I believe false; civility demonstrates a commitment to make public encounters, despite differences, as courteous and non-abrasive as possible. Civility and tolerance are based on respect for others, and these civic virtues allow citizens to share public space, pursue political ends, and engage in discourse about the common good. These capacities are virtues, because they are habits, dispositions, or character traits. Liberals, then, need to be concerned not only with the structure of the institutions of the state, but (paradoxically, given the usual emphasis on individual freedom and state neutrality) with the structure of the liberal citizen, who must display particularly liberal civic virtues.

*Civility and Its Discontents* is a timely and interesting collection of papers organized around three themes introduced by Sistare — civic virtue, toleration, and cultural fragmentation. While the essays articulate a variety of perspectives, the writers share both a commitment to liberal ideals, and a concern that civility and tolerance are decreasing. Consequently, life in liberal societies is becoming 'less pleasant, less rewarding, and the business of public life is becoming ever more difficult' (11). Indeed, as the concern with cultural fragmentation demonstrates, at its most extreme, this decline might lead to the collapse of particular liberal societies.

In a useful paper, Schonsheck distinguishes three broad categories of incivility — rudeness, rasp, and repudiation. *Rudeness* is the impoliteness exhibited by everything from tailgating and pushing in line, to verbal insults;



while not in itself posing much threat to the functioning of a liberal democracy, rudeness makes encounters with others difficult, and indicates a disturbing lack of civility. *Rasp* is more serious, particularly since liberal democracies are increasingly multicultural: 'it is the friction of jostling political, moral, religious, and ethnic groups that is inevitable' (169) in such societies.

*Repudiation* is the most serious form of incivility: it manifests itself in a rejection of liberal values themselves. The recent bombings in London, by so-called 'homegrown' bombers, is an example of repudiation, a rejection of both the private virtues of liberal citizens, as well as of the public values of the liberal society. These values include a commitment to pursue disagreements through public discourse, the courts, and the political institutions of the state. While not employing Schonsheck's terminology, the authors concern themselves with identifying rudeness, rasp, and repudiation, their causes, and possible solutions to their development and spread.

In addition to a commitment to liberalism, the writers assume a liberal audience, work within a liberal context, and consider liberal responses to the problems they identify. Consequently, a number of the contributors focus on the role laws can (and should) play in reducing incivility. For instance, Peard and Fischer consider whether the law should be used to regulate hateful speech; Mahn and Ellin consider 'Bad Samaritan' laws; Smith argues that the law can be used to limit exploitation; and Sistare and Reidy tackle the issue of how to deal with hate crimes. While some interesting positions are advanced, the lines of argument are relatively familiar. These discussions also focus primarily on U.S. laws, and take as their context particularly U.S. political concerns. Robison, for instance, considers tensions in the U.S. constitution evidenced in the Dred Scott case, while Anderson considers the religion clauses of the First Amendment. Indeed, with exceptions of Gray's piece on the Canadian Supreme Court's ruling on Quebec succession and Mazor's discussion of tensions in contemporary Germany, all the essays are 'grounded in the cultural, intellectual, and political contexts of the United States' (ix).

As Mazor usefully out, 'the prevalent discourse, situated as it is within liberalism ... tends to mark out a certain range of approaches that are considered acceptable' (283). The turn to legal responses to the problem of incivility is one of them. However, a case can be made that this approach is insufficient, and that liberalism has additional resources at its disposal that should be explored.

The legal approach employed here narrows the scope of the discussion to concerns about specific U.S. laws rather than extending it in ways that increase its relevance for non-U.S. readers. More importantly, this approach raises several acute questions: is civility best cultivated through legal means, or does the law most appropriately come into play when incivility is demonstrated in particularly serious ways? And, if incivility is on the rise in liberal democracies, why is this, and what can be done about it *before* it manifests itself in actions that appropriately fall under the purview of the law? (Note

that many of the incivilities most regularly encountered are more akin to 'bad manners' than to 'crimes', and may require non-legal remedies.)

In terms of these questions, McGregor's essay stands out. She states, '[p]ublic discourse tends to be sharp, short, and angry. Ironically, the "in your face" attitude is often applauded in pop culture ... and thus encouraged and perpetuated' (25). McGregor then asks a question that could have constituted the focus of the book: to what extent does liberal theory itself contribute to incivility and intolerance? Is there 'a connection between our contemporary society's commitment to political liberalism, with its preoccupation with individual rights and autonomy, and the deterioration of civility, the decline of democratic participation, and the overemphasis on individuals' self-interest' (25)? Given the importance of civility for liberal theory and practice, this is an area that might have been explored more fully.

Finally, papers by Gill and Sellers suggest other avenues of examination. An obvious answer to the question of how civic virtues might be encouraged is through public discourse and public education. Sellers considers the ideals of public discourse, and connects them to the articulation and preservation of the common good; this vision seems sadly absent in much public discourse today. While the role that the education system should play in teaching values is a matter of theoretical debate, education, not law, may be best able to deal with rudeness, rasp, and repudiation. Gill's paper on civic education in the liberal state makes a good start at tackling some of the issues surrounding educating for citizenship. In addition, like McGregor, Gill shows a refreshing willingness to question common liberal assumptions: 'We must avoid ... a cultural aggressiveness that, in its zeal to inculcate the virtues of tolerance and mutual respect, violates their spirit' (44).

*Civility and Its Discontents* is a book that addresses a very current problem within liberal societies, as well as suggesting areas worthy of further exploration. It is a volume that would be of interest to those concerned with the state of liberal democracies, and with the theoretical and moral commitments that underpin them.

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