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Table of Contents · Table des matières

Stanley Cavell, *Disowning Knowledge in Six Plays of Shakespeare* 203
Alex Neill

Camilo J. Cela-Conde, *On Genes, Gods and Tyrants: The Biological Causation of Morality* 205
Charles Ripley

D.S. Clarke, Jr., *Principles of Semiotic* 207
John J. Fitzgerald

Robert Ginsberg, ed., *The Philosopher as Writer* 210
Clarence Sholé Johnson

A.C. Grayling, *Berkeley: The Central Arguments* 213
Walter E. Creery

Kent Greenawalt, *Conflicts Between Law and Morality* 215
Steven J. Burton

Agnes Heller, *Beyond Justice* 218
Oliva Blanchette

Leo Katz, *Bad Acts and Guilty Minds* 221
R.A. Duff

John King-Farlow and Sean O'Connell, *Self-Conflict and Self Healing* 223
Mike W. Martin

David Krell, *Intimations of Mortality: Time, Truth and Finitude in Heidegger's Thinking of Being* 226
Kah Kyung Cho

Mitchell Miller, *Plato's* Parmenides*: The Conversion of the Soul* 228
Kenneth Dorter

Thomas V. Morris, ed., *The Concept of God* 231
Murdith McLean

Julian Roberts, *German Philosophy: An Introduction* 234
Peter Preuss

John Sallis, ed., *Deconstruction and Philosophy: The Texts of Jacques Derrida* 238
Peter Caws

Evan Simpson, ed., *Anti-Foundationalism and Practical Reasoning: Conversations Between Hermeneutics and Analysis* 240
Garry M. Brodsky

Robert C. Solomon, *Continental Philosophy since 1750: The Rise and Fall of the Self* 234
Peter Preuss

John Wilson, *What Philosophy Can Do* 243
Elizabeth Boetzkes

MAILED IN AUGUST 1988

Stanley Cavell.
Disowning Knowledge in Six Plays of Shakespeare.
New York: Cambridge University Press 1987. Pp. x+226.
US$34.50 (cloth: ISBN 0-521-33032-7);
US$10.95 (paper: ISBN 0-521-33890-5).

The central concern of this collection of essays (as well as something of their style) is marked by Cavell's insistence that 'Shakespeare could not be who he is – the burden of the name of the greatest writer in the language, the creature of the greatest ordering of English – unless his writing is engaging the depth of the philosophical preoccupations of his culture' (2). Three of the essays have appeared elsewhere: 'The Avoidance of Love,' his reading of *King Lear*, (in *Must We Mean What We Say?*); 'Othello and the Stake of the Other,' (which constituted the concluding section of *The Claim of Reason*); and '*Coriolanus* and Interpretations of Politics,' (in his recent collection *Themes Out of School*). The remaining three are published here for the first time: an Introductory essay which concludes with a reading of *Antony and Cleopatra*; 'Hamlet's Burden of Proof'; and 'Recounting Gains, Showing Losses: Reading *The Winter's Tale*.'

Cavell's guiding intuition is that 'the advent of skepticism as manifested in Descartes's *Meditations* is already in full existence in Shakespeare, from the time of the great tragedies in the first years of the seventeenth century, in the generation preceding that of Descartes,' that 'Shakespeare's plays interpret and reinterpret the skeptical problematic – the question whether I know with certainty of the existence of the external world and of myself and others in it' (3). In his subtle and audacious readings he brings out the ways in which some of the central concerns of epistemological skepticism, particularly the concepts of proof, justification and evidence, are brought into focus in these plays. Nonetheless, to those who know them the claim that the 'issue' of these plays is 'how to live at all in a groundless world' may seem, to say the least, somewhat exaggerated. The characters Cavell discusses are after all in no doubt as to the existence of the external world or of those around them; as Cavell puts it: 'But Othello certainly knows that Desdemona exists! So what has his more or less interesting condition to do with skepticism?' (137) If it is philosophical skepticism that is in question, can it plausibly be said that in *Othello*, for example, 'we have the logic, the emotion, and the scene of skepticism epitomized' (128)?

Part of the achievement of these essays lies in the challenge they present to the assumptions concerning the relationships between philosophy and literature, and between philosophical and literary

criticism, which underlie this question. Cavell writes that his resistance to earlier suggestions that they should be put together as a book was based largely on a concern that his project would be taken as 'the application of some philosophically independent problematic of skepticism to a fragmentary parade of Shakespearean texts, impressing those texts into the service of illustrating philosophical conclusions known in advance' (1). The concern is understandable; when philosophers do turn their attention to literature it is usually as a source of well worked out examples with which to illustrate or clarify points independently formulated: recall, for instance, Hume's use of the story from *Don Quixote*, in 'Of the Standard of Taste,' to illustrate the idea of delicacy or refinement of taste. Cavell's approach to these plays, however, is of a different and more challenging order: he takes the plays to be representations or interpretations, rather than illustrations, of skepticism; as he says, 'sympathy with my project depends ... on unsettling the matter of priority (as between philosophy and literature, say) implied in the concepts of illustration and application' (1). He argues that 'the study of tragedy can and should entail reconceptions of what drives skepticism – of what its emotion is, of what becomes of the world in its grip, its stranglehold, of what knowing has come to mean to us' (6). Shakespeare's plays 'test, as well as test themselves by, philosophy,' and 'philosophy's own interpretation of skepticism (or skepticism's self-interpretation, namely as discovering that we cannot achieve certainty in our knowledge of existence on the basis of the senses alone, hence on no human basis) is denied privilege' (4); they 'keep suspicion cast on what it is we take to express skepticism, and here especially by casting suspicion on whether we know what it means to know that another exists' (138).

Cavell thus reads these plays as offering a diagnosis of epistemological skepticism, as studies of the motivations which underlie it, and of its consequences. 'Lear's "avoidance" of Cordelia is an instance of the annihilation inherent in the skeptical problematic' (6); 'Othello's violence studies the human use of knowledge under the consequence of skepticism' (9); in Leontes, we have 'a portrait of the skeptic at the moment of the world's withdrawal from his grasp ... in comparison with which the philosopher's portrait of the skeptic as not *knowing* something, in the sense of being uncertain of something, shows as an intellectualization of some prior intimation' (206). Cavell suggests that this intimation is of our 'metaphysical finitude,' our separateness from the world and from others; a fact about the human condition which philosophy obscures by misguidedly interpreting it as 'an intellectual lack,' but which is brought into focus and perspective in these plays. Since 'true recovery [from skepticism] lies in reconceiving it, in finding skepticism's source' (198), by showing us what motivates it the plays can also indicate 'a path of recovery' from skep-

ticism, a path which Cavell traces in his discussions of the idea of marriage in *Antony and Cleopatra* and *The Winter's Tale*, and which involves acknowledgment: 'the acceptance of a repetition that includes endless specific succumbings to the conditions of skepticism and endless specific recoveries from it, endless as a circle, as a serpent swallowing itself' (30).

As that quotation indicates, these essays do not make easy reading. Cavell's warning that 'in looking for words for Shakespeare's interpretations of skepticism I may well from time to time, in my experimentation, speak incredibly or outrageously' (5) is to be taken seriously, and at times he seems to go out of his way to make his already difficult ideas about these difficult plays as inaccessible as he can. That said, these essays are well worth the effort they demand; they represent an exciting and original perspective on Shakespeare and on philosophy, and should not be missed by anyone who cares about either.

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Camilo J. Cela-Conde.
On Genes, Gods and Tyrants: The Biological Causation of Morality.
Norwall, MA: D. Reidel 1987. Pp. xii+201. US$59.00. ISBN 1-556-08024-7.

This book would be more aptly subtitled, 'The Causal Influence of Biological Factors on Morality.' For Cela-Conde the mechanisms necessary for moral decisions are biologically produced, but moral decisions do not have biological causes in any simple way. He rejects sociobiology's simple equation of ethics with altruism: for one thing, most ethical theorists are not altruists; for another, altruism, in ethical contexts, has no apparent connection with reproductive output.

For Cela-Conde, the relation between biology and morality is complex. He distinguishes four distinct 'moral levels': The *alpha-moral* level has to do with moral character – whether people are innately altrustic or egoistic, for instance. The *beta-moral* is the domain of moral decision on the basis of criteria. The *gamma-moral* comprises moral codes and empirical normative rules within groups; and the *delta-moral* has to do with questions of ultimate ends. He insists that

all of these levels must have a place in an adequate theory, and that none of them can be reduced to the others in any existing system.

After a discussion focussing chiefly on Darwin, Cela-Conde concludes that the alpha-moral level is biologically determined. On the beta-moral level he finds two extreme possibilities: determinism and rational autonomy. Rejecting the former, he sets out to find theoretical space for the latter. In the first place, he holds that although the capacity for moral decision, like linguistic capacity, is biologically produced, this is not true of specific decisions. He adopts the Chomskian hypothesis that ethical judgment depends upon innate structural elements. On the basis of Popper's fourfold classification of uses of language (expressive, releasing, descriptive and argumentative), our author suggests that the beta-moral level is biologically determined, in part, through the releasing function of evaluative words such as 'good.' He gives an example of an 'innate releasing mechanism': when a tadpole first becomes a frog it tries, with a flick of its tongue, to trap everything that flies. Moving objects serve as a key stimulus to release conduct which we must regard as innate. In Cela-Conde's view we are ethically pre-programmed through releasing mechanisms directly connected with the world of moral discourse. These, in conjunction with the descriptive and argumentative functions of language, give rise to 'open programmes of conduct' – Mayr's term for lines of conduct, genetically fixed, among which the individual must choose.

Conflict between moral levels is possible; for instance one's son might be attacked by an animal which one's society holds to be sacred, so that one must decide between alpha and gamma level obligations. Under moral relativism such a dilemma could not arise since, according to Cela-Conde, relativism 'demands a gamma-moral imposition on beta conceptual practice' (118). In his view, although moral decisions are made within the context of the standards, customs and attitudes of a given society, these gamma factors do not impose specific decisions.

On the delta-moral level, Cela-Conde distinguishes between two perspectives for judgment: the *emic*, the standpoint of a given tradition, and the *etic*, a standpoint outside it. He grants that all etic judgments about, say, Zande customs, are made from within some non-Zande context and are, from the latter point of view, emic; but he denies that to admit this is to be committed to relativism. He holds that it is possible to defend judgments of preference between ethical codes and to speak meaningfully of moral progress.

Towards developing a theoretical basis for this measure of objectivity, Cela-Conde reiterates his earlier conclusion that, on the beta-moral level, there is innate moral knowledge which is given specific content by historical circumstances. Addressing the hypothesis that

the concept, 'good' has, as its a priori content, fairness or obeying the impartial interest of all, he argues that a society has survival value insofar as it follows this principle. So moral progress consists in an increase of fairness in the norms of a society, and judgments between ethical codes can be made on the basis of their relative fairness. The book concludes with an application of its theory to two moral issues, the right to excellence and distributive justice.

This book is a plausible attempt to reconcile what the moral philosopher takes morality to be with what science tells us about the genesis of human behaviour. This is surely the proper path for philosophy to follow, as opposed to either reductionism or rejection of the incursion of scientific themes into humanistic contexts. Given the complexity of this book and its broad scholarly base, the merits and demerits of Cela-Conde's theory must be considered in greater depth and at greater length than is possible in a review.

Charles Ripley
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D.S. Clarke, Jr.
Principles of Semiotic.
Toronto and New York: Methuen Publications 1987. Pp. x+164.
Cdn$45.00: US$25.00
(cloth: ISBN 0-7102-0981-9);
Cdn$17.95: US$9.95
(paper: ISBN 0-7102-1136-8).

Clarke proposes a general theory of language arising from a semiotic approach. Semiotic, on his view, seeks to discover the necessary conditions for a sign and through that the necessary conditions for language. To carry out this general approach to signs he distinguishes different vertical levels of signs – natsigns, comsigns and lansigns. Methodologically we are to start from language, which is more familiar to us, and discover the analogies between language and the other more primitive levels of signs. This will enable us to construct a general theory of signs and to recognize more clearly what is proper to language itself.

The category which he calls natsigns are events in the world which come to function as signs where there is no intention to communicate. The category is much narrower than the traditional classification

of natural signs, since Clarke excludes any sign whose interpretation would involve a linguistic generalization. Clouds would not be a natsign of rain; an animal's interpretation of an odor as a sign of danger would be a natsign. The second level of sign is what he calls comsigns. For an event to be a comsign there must be an intent on the part of the sign originator to use the event as a sign and there must be a recognition of that intent on the part of the interpreter. A bird call would be an example of a comsign. The third level of sign is a lansign. This is any combination of morphemes capable of performing a communicative task.

In order to appreciate Clarke's program it will be helpful to follow his discussion of a single topic through the various levels of signs. The paradigm sign in a language, our starting point, is a singular sentence. Such sentences have significance, reference and interpretation. I will focus on reference. An example of a natsign is lightning as a sign of thunder. While it makes sense to speak of the thunder as the significance of the lightning, it does not make sense to speak of the lightning as referring to anything. Using the analogy of language we should look for a referential function. Following up the example of lightning we can say that the occurrence of what is signified, the thunder, is a *significate occurrence.* The spatial-temporal occasion at which we recognize a significate occurrence is the *referent occasion.* Such signs depend on spatio-temporal contiguity.

At the level of comsigns, we can consider the functioning of a signal, which for Clarke is a sign produced with an intent to communicate that does not have a grammatical structure, such as an animal's warning cry. The referent of a signal is manifested by the context or a gesture of some sort. Finally, at the level of lansigns we have the subject-predicate structure of a sentence. The use of subject terms to refer gives us a much greater latitude as we can now refer to objects that are not present. The use of subject terms also enables us to store information, that is, predicates attributed to a subject in a given sentence can later be used to identify the object referred to. The upshot of these analyses is a clarification of the sense in which signs at all levels have a referential function, while making clear the sense in which a subject term in a lansign gives us greater flexibility in referring than was available at the more primitive levels of signs. Thus we have started with language, applied it to non-linguistic signs to discover their structure, and returned to language to bring out its proper features.

While the above gives an idea of Clarke's approach, it does not give an adequate sense of the range of topics he discusses in addition to reference. He has an excellent chapter on the history of semiotic which highlights developments that provide the background for the topics he discusses in the explication of his theory. He has a discussion of

images in which he basically rejects them as natsigns, the exception being shadows. There are enlightening discussions of communicative intent and conventionality.

Clarke characterizes his approach to semiotic as Peircean. While he adopts Peirce's program of searching for the necessary or quasi-necessary features of signs, he does not in other respects follow out Peirce's proposals. In fact he differs radically from Peirce on the question of indices and icons.

As noted above, Clarke rejects much of the traditional view on natural signs. This rejection seems unneccessary if one bears in mind that the question answered by the traditional category of natural signs is a different question from the one Clarke is concerned with. The traditional distinction of natural signs from others arose from asking how the sign is or came to be related to its object. Clarke seems to be working with the question of how the interpreter is able to process the sign. We might expect different and not necessarily conflicting answers where different questions are posed.

I note one final critical remark bearing on his methodology. Working from the familiar to the unfamiliar by analogy seems to be the proper approach to any subject. In using the technique, however, one must take care not to manufacture points of analogy. Specifically, Clarke refers to the *referent occasion* of a natsign. It seems to me that the referent occasion turns out to be the sign itself, and not one of the functions of the sign. Consider again the example of thunder and lightning. While it makes good sense to speak of the expected result of lightning to be a *significate occurrence*, there is such an expectation of that because of the occurrence of the lightning which is not any different from the so called *referent occasion*, so the latter is just another name for the sign itself.

Overall the book is very interesting and is clearly written. It is a worthwhile contribution to the current discussions on the nature and status of semiotic.

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Robert Ginsberg, ed.
The Philosopher As Writer.
Selinsgrove, PA: Susquehanna University Press 1987. Pp. 245.
US$32.50. ISBN 0-941664-25-2.

We generally regard as distracting, perhaps even inimical to the activity of philosophising, the use of literary devices such as metaphor, irony, sarcasm, imagery, repetition, rhetoric, – in short, those mechanisms, predominant in literary works, the purpose of which is to arouse the reader's emotion of the written word. Even such an elegant writer as Russell complained about the sloppiness and ineptitude of ordinary language as a vehicle of conducting philosophy, hence his choice of the language of formal logic. He hoped that the rigour of such a language would enable him to at least avoid ambiguity in advancing his philosophic view.

Against this kind of background *The Philosopher As Writer* is a salutary work. Essentially, it advances the view that the use of literary devices is central to the philosophy of some eighteenth-century figures such as Rousseau, Hume, Pope, and Shaftesbury, to name a few. Moreover, to understand some of the views of these philosophers requires attending closely to their use of metaphor, irony, rhetoric and other literary devices.

The book commences with a general introduction to eighteenth-century writing, in which Ginsberg traces the use of literary techniques in philosophising as far back as Parmenides, Plutarch and Seneca, all of whom wrote in verse, to Plato who wrote mainly in dialogue-form, and later still to the Renaissance philosophers, such as Montaigne, who popularised the essay- and letter-forms. Each of the book's nine chapters then provides a study of the literary techniques of one or more eighteenth-century figure(s), beginning with Rousseau. I will comment on those I find most stimulating – the chapters on Rousseau, Hume, Leibniz and Kant – and make a few observations about the others.

In the chapter on Rousseau's *Two Discourses*, Lester G. Crocker effectively shows that Rousseau's success as a philosopher depends more on his style than an argumentation. Crocker rightly observes that, as far as argumentation goes, there is very little to recommend Rousseau: the thesis which Rousseau tries to defend, at least in the first of the *Discourses*, namely that progress in the arts and sciences causes moral degeneration, is scarcely supported with arguments. All Rousseau does is give examples of moral corruption and then claim that these are the effects of improvements in the arts and sciences. In other words, Rousseau begs the very question in dispute. But this lack of argumentation is augmented by Rousseau's use of three main

literary devices which give the *Discourses* their strong appeal: strategy, rhetoric and authorial presence. Strategy concerns the method Rousseau uses to present his view. Rousseau first acknowledges the merits of the position he wishes to attack and then produces a barrage of the unpleasant consequences of the position. Complementing the use of the above strategy is Rousseau's use of rhetoric. Rhetoric involves, among other things, emphasising the putatively obvious and posing questions the answers to which are self-evident. Authorial presence helps Rousseau to win the assent of the reader. Crocker shows that Rousseau, by using pronouns such as 'our,' 'us' and 'we,' seeks to solicit the reader's direct involvement. At times Rousseau adopts the stance of the obtrusive narrator by directly addressing the reader in the first person (16-26). Citing these and other literary techniques such as tonal variation, comparison and contrast, Crocker argues convincingly that Rousseau succeeds in great measure in arresting the attention of his reader and possibly in persuading him/her to accept his view. The use of these devices gives fluidity to Rousseau's writing and shows him to be, as Crocker puts it, 'a great literary artist' (44).

A similar concern with artistry rather than with syllogistic reasoning informs the popularistic essays of Leibniz and Kant, according to John McCarthy, in 'The Philosopher as Essayist' (ch. 2). McCarthy notes that a distinctive characteristic of these essays is that they exhibit process-thinking: instead of a neatly packaged syllogistic reasoning terminating in an 'inalterable conclusion,' each philosopher uses rhetoric, comparison, contrast, and other such devices to unfold his thought-process to the reader. The reader thus witnesses, and responds to, the dynamism of the thought-process itself (51-2). Excepting a completely irrelevant first paragraph, McCarthy's analysis of the selected essays of Leibniz and Kant is quite good.

The author's concern with the response of his readership is also the focus of Robert Ginsberg's study of Hume's 'Of the Standard of Taste' (ch. 9). Ginsberg argues that Hume's aim in the essay is to invite the reader to share in the aesthetic experience he (Hume) describes. To that end, says Ginsberg, Hume uses allusions, word-order, comparison and contrast, anecdotes, repetition etc. Ginsberg offers both an incisive analysis of Hume's style and a brilliant discussion of his philosophy in the essay on taste.

I cannot say the same about Donald T. Siebert's interpretation of aspects of Hume's philosophy in the *Treatise*, although his analysis of Hume's writing style is highly commendable (ch. 8). Siebert provides a lucid account of the style of Hume's *Treatise*, demonstrating that the work was poorly received because of Hume's unconventional manner of writing. Hume's style is offensive to the orthodox; it is 'careless' and extravagant (193); Hume's examples are unorthodox,

even plainly bad; and Hume shows arrogance in dismissing peremptorily rival views (185). Siebert rightly attributes all this to Hume's lack of proper judgment as a youth. But Siebert's interpretation of the conclusion of *Treatise* Book One is highly suspect. He claims that the various tones we have toward the end of Book One reflect Hume's various psychological disorders at the time. These range from depression, bewilderment and anxiety, to ecstatic discovery. Moreover these disorders form 'a pattern informing Hume's philosophy.' The evidence Siebert adduces for this view, however, the well-known letter to Dr. Arbuthnot in which Hume is supposed to have diagnosed his own nervous breakdown, is at best circumstantial. Siebert considers a passage where Hume raises such questions as 'Where am I, or what? From what causes do I derive my existence ...?' and *suggests* without any evidence that Hume 'could very well' be addressing these questions to Dr. Arbuthnot (180-2). These and much more are purely speculative and conjectural.

The above philosophical deficiencies, together with the discussions on Herder's craft of communication (ch. 4) and Shaftesbury's *Characteristics* (ch. 6) which I find arid, are the only serious drawbacks of the book. But these are off-set by the exemplary discussions in the other chapters, some of which I have already considered. Others include 'The Style of Kant's *Critique*' (ch. 3), in which Stephen Barker elucidates Kant's use of metaphor and imagery. This chapter is highly recommended as a preliminary reading to the study of the *Critique*. Harry M. Solomon's 'Reading Philosophical Poetry' (ch. 5) draws an interesting parallelism between the philosophical outlooks of Pope in the *Essay On Man* and Kant in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Both Pope and Kant, adopting different strategies, seek to provide a complete vision of reality. Pope uses metaphor regulatively, to transcend and synthesise what are generally perceived as logically atomistic levels of experience. Kant posits a noumenal world alongside the phenomenal. Finally, Laurie A. Finke's essay on Wollstonecraft (ch. 7) reminds one of the kind of difficulties facing the contemporary woman in the corporate world where the rules are set by men and the top executives are men. To function in such a male-dominated world, a woman has to adopt a facade she may despise, notably the dark suit and briefcase. Finke argues that Wollstonecraft, writing in a period when the rules were set by men and the judges were mainly men, had to adopt the combative style of a 'masculine reasoner' (160), a style supposedly symbolic of male superior intellect, while endeavouring to subvert that style and all it represented. The variations of style in Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* reflect these demands.

The Philosopher As Writer satisfactorily establishes that the supposed dichotomy between philosophy and literature (or between

philosophical methodology and literary medium) is more artificial than natural. As such, I recommend it as a valuable reference source for interdisciplinary studies involving philosophy and literature.

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A.C. Grayling.
Berkeley: The Central Arguments.
La Salle, IL: Open Court 1986. Pp. xii+218.
US$26.95. ISBN 0-8126-9037-0.

This study of Berkeley's central themes will most certainly become a standard commentary. An extremely wide range of current issues are considered, many of them in a fresh and novel light. Grayling holds that many of the central epistemic and metaphysical theses of *Principles* and the *Three Dialogues* have a live philosophical importance for contemporary philosophy of mind, but with certain reservations. Grayling wishes to clearly distinguish between Berkeley's central theses, several of which he supports, and 'Berkeleianism,' with which he finds several difficulties. The latter is, according to Graylings' characterization (viii), a system or theory 'which ... is extraordinarily tightly-knit and consistent, which is in fact its greatest weakness, for it rests on metaphysical commitments without which its internal consistency and plausibility cannot be sustained.' Roughly, those theses entailed by the *esse* is *percipi* principle, and the principle itself, Grayling finds acceptable and important, whereas the *esse* is *percipere* thesis and many theses entailed by it are doubtful. With respect to the latter, the difficulties Grayling singles out for critical attention are those connected with the classical notion of an infinite mind; and in particular minds, whether finite or infinite, as active entities. Most commentators will certainly agree that Berkeley's account of agency is sometimes tantalizing, but more often than not, naive and baffling, and not sufficiently articulated to provide a coherent and intelligible theory of the self, agency, or volition. In these circumstances at least two options are open to the commentator: where the text is incomplete, or not fully intelligible, an attitude of reticence might be adopted; or one might attempt to conceptually enlarge, or 'adjust' the central principles, adding theses if needed for consistency and completeness. This produces a number of alternative 'texts' and additional problems of interpretation. Grayling takes the

first course, but at the same time, while noting the standard objections and difficulties in the concept of agent causality, he has a number of interesting suggestions for the analysis of volition (192) which mitigate the exclusion of some aspects of 'Berkeleianism.' The major objection is against Berkeley's conception of God, and in particular the conception of the deity required for the metaphysical coherence of the philosophical system and the classical Christian conception; these are conceptually incompatible, and indeed, Grayling is arguably correct in the suggestion that they cannot be reconciled.

Grayling's discussion of the mind-idea relation is novel if controversial. The *distinction* principle, *inherence* principle, and *identity* principle are now commonly thought to form an inconsistent triad. Minds and their ideas are, according to some texts, entirely distinct, and Berkeley suggests in several places that this is a categorial distinction; on the other hand, ideas, being inert, passive, and dependent must have some kind of support or base and it is plausible to suppose that the relation is at least that of inherence; again, there are many texts where Berkeley seems to be clearly saying that an idea is no different from its being perceived. The usual response by commentators is that at least one of the principles must be discarded and while most would agree that it is the distinction principle that has to go, there are certainly other options. Grayling argues that the inconsistency is apparent only. Since Berkeley is emphatic with respect to all three principles, 'conceptual adjustment' rather than abandonment of one or more of the principles should be attempted first. Once Berkeley's intention with respect to these principles is correctly understood the inconsistency disappears. 'Inherence' is a misleading term for it need not suggest, or be taken to suggest some version of the Aristotelian concept of substance. Similarly, 'identity' is misleading, if understood in a Leibnizian property characterization, and in fact in this context Berkeley has no need for a concept of numerical identity. It is Grayling's view that while Berkeley is quite explicit that ideas are not modes of a mental substance, he is also committed to the view that they are not attributes or properties either. The most that the inherence principle can be said to assert is only that ideas *exist* as mind-dependent. While he insists that Berkeley has little use for identity, he is not suggesting that Berkeley has no need for some concept of identity. He argues incisively and very persuasively that at least some species of qualitative identity is required to describe the relation between the sensible ideas produced and perceived by God and a finite mind. '... That the ideas perceived by God are the archetypes of which our ideas are the ectypes ... [and] on this view what God perceives and what we perceive are qualitatively identical, in the sense that he perceives this ashtray on my desk just as I do – more completely perhaps, in that he may have all its qualities

in all their aspects immediately and simultaneously present to him – and that he causes in me the idea of at least part of the ashtray whenever my other ideas are such that I am sitting here striking matches and so on' (99). That this is the only coherent account of the finite-mind infinite-mind perceptual relation is surely correct, but it also seems clear that a concept of the numerically identical must be theoretically required within the scope of the qualitative; from the perspective of some finite mind these ideas are numerically and not just qualitatively identical. There are wide-ranging background difficulties with the theory, for there is then the possibility (at least theoretically) that two or more finite minds will themselves be numerically identical – and this brings to the forefront the difficult problem of the differentiation of finite minds. There is much to be said in favour of Grayling's resolution of the three principles fundamental to the mind-idea relation. It can perhaps be argued that such a restricted use of the terms is Berkeley's intention; but it is by no means a simple matter to determine just what Berkeley's semantic, metaphysical, and conceptual intentions were, and it is very likely there will be considerable disagreement over this type of solution.

The citation of texts is impeccable and always to the point. It might also be added that scholars would do well to adopt as standard Grayling's abbreviations and above all the method of citation within the body of the text.

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Kent Greenawalt.
Conflicts of Law and Morality.
Don Mills, ON and New York: Oxford University Press 1987. Pp. xii+383.
Cdn$44.95: US$29.95. ISBN 0-19-504110-0.

This latest addition to the Clarendon Law Series is a rich survey of the many issues that can arise when the positive law and morality provide conflicting guidance to citizens and officials. It is not a conceptual analysis of law, morals or their relationship to one another. Nor is it just a lawyer's nibble on some philosophical chestnuts. Greenawalt offers a philosophically-informed guide to practical problems by way of identifying many of the considerations that might be taken into account and weighed on various occasions of conflict. The

variety of ways in which the philosophical questions can seem to arise in practice is striking by comparison with exclusively conceptual treatments of some of the same general topics.

The book is an interesting and successful blend of legal and philosophical techniques. The main questions are framed conceptually, but general arguments and answers are withheld while considered judgments are offered in answer to more particular questions. The discussions are mostly organized around hypothetical problem cases in the classic manner of the law professor. This highlights the variability of results stemming from normative standards across their range of application, rather than the truth of the standards themselves. Throughout, philosophical resources are used capably in treating the main and subsidiary questions.

The largest part of this book is an impressive effort to review and digest the philosophical literature of mainly the last twenty years concerning the obligation to obey the law. The central thrust of this literature has been to deny that there is a general prima facie moral obligation to obey the law just because it is law. Greenawalt joins in this view after reviewing the possible grounds for such an obligation – consent or promise, utilitarian and other consequentialist considerations, fair play, and a natural duty to obey based in benefit, need or duty. His emphasis on the recent literature is justified by the richness of the work stimulated by R.P. Wolff, M.B.E. Smith, A. Simmons, and others. Unlike some 'philosophical anarchists,' however, Greenawalt believes that the cumulative effect of various grounds of obligation is that people often have powerful moral reasons for obeying the law.

The more novel part of the book traces implications of accepting that there are various obligations to obey the law as such in many circumstances. Greenawalt's treatment of justifiable disobedience is timely because the best literature on this problem was written in the 1960s on the assumption that there is a general prima facie obligation to obey, which must be overridden. The justification for disobedience might vary depending on the kind of obligation, if any, that is to be overridden in situations of conflict. This part of the book does not, however, leave a strong impression of the implications for justifiable disobedience of abandoning the assumption that there is a general obligation to obey the law.

A stimulating feature of the book is an examination, with attention to the U.S. legal system, of institutions of amelioration in case of a conflict between law and morals – the defense of necessity, exceptions for conscientious objection, prosecutorial discretion, jury nullification, sentencing discretion, parole, executive pardon, etc. In a reformist spirit, Greenawalt suggests that the law should expand and generalize institutions of amelioration so as better to recognize con-

flicts between law and morals and to respect the moral actor. There seems to result a legal principle that morality in general, and a person's deep moral convictions in particular, can trump the rest of the law.

Greenawalt's suggestions are worthy of serious consideration at greater length. This might be the pioneering effort to join issues of amelioration together for comprehensive consideration as such. There are important implications that might flow from this insight, for both law and the philosophy of law.

First, Greenawalt underemphasizes the institutions of amelioration on the civil side. For example, the recently enhanced role of judges in settlement allows extenuating circumstances to justify results comparable to reduced or suspended sentences on the criminal side. Structural litigation, moreover, begins and ends with talk of rights, but the litigation is often concerned polycentrically with the good. The structural remedy is often similar to probation in its greater emphasis on future behavior than on mending past transgressions. Additionally, some contractual remedies now may be limited 'as justice requires,' again arguably supplanting the traditional formal relationship of legal right and remedy with a flexible remedy tailored to the case and the parties.

Second, institutions of amelioration are often ignored in discussions of the legitimacy of the law or adjudication. These discussions might need to take greater account of the systemic practice of finding a legal wrong while mitigating or suspending the legal remedy. In discussions of adjudication, for example, this might be relevant to problems raised by the tension between over-inclusive legal rules in relation to the justice of particular cases. The systemic use of techniques of amelioration, to account for the justice of the individual case, receives unduly scant attention in the literature on adjudication.

Third, a number of more philosophical questions concern the role that a concept of law plays in addressing questions of conflict between law and morals. The proposal to expand institutions of amelioration seems to imply the supremacy of morality and conscience over the law conceived positivistically. It is unclear how the law so conceived can subordinate itself generally by admitting the trumping power of other things. It might be asked whether the positive law or, rather, moral principles or the criteria of conscientious disobedience are 'the law,' as the term is used in statements identifying legal propositions within a legal system or asserting the existence of such a system.

Fourth, morality can work both to ameliorate the harsh effects of positive law and to make additional conduct wrongful. A practice of amelioration should be distinguished from a moralistic practice of policing immoral conduct generally. Such a distinction might involve the law's function in providing authoritative guidance to citizens and

officials and coordinating their actions to achieve a social good. Legal rules are supposed to endorse answers to controversial moral questions to reduce uncertainty and often to make one solution salient as a basis for coordinated action. Principles of general amelioration, however, seem to bring all the uncertainty back, undermining the authoritative guidance and coordinating function of the law.

Greenawalt's success in calling attention to the importance of amelioration stems from the marked strength of this book – its juxtaposition of a wide variety of issues that should be, but generally have not been, brought together. As might be expected, a book of such breadth is most vulnerable to criticism on the dimension of depth. In this area of law and philosophy at this time, however, the broad overview seems especially justified. Overall, this book is a fine addition to the excellent Clarendon Law Series.

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Agnes Heller.
Beyond Justice.
Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press;
New York: Basil Blackwell 1987.
Pp. vi+346.
Cdn$44.95; US$26.95. ISBN 0-631-15206-7.

The subject-matter of this book is primarily justice. As Heller indicates, the point of 'beyond' in the title is to indicate the position she has adopted in criticizing notions of justice, in arguing that all claims to justice are rooted in values other than justice, and in claiming that the good life is something beyond justice itself (v). She makes good on this last claim in the final chapter, which leaves all questions of justice behind, except as a precondition of the good life, but all of the preceding 5 chapters are devoted to justice. 'Justice is the skeleton: the good life is the flesh and blood' (273). References to the good life and righteousness are made throughout the argument about justice, but a clear separation is maintained throughout.

Discussion begins with the formal concept of justice, which is viewed as a consistent application of norms to members of a social cluster such that the cluster is constituted by that very application, and not the other way around (4,5). This *maxim* of justice is then specified

as static justice. The idea of an ethico-political concept of justice is introduced in conjunction with the ancient prophetic (Biblical) and the ancient philosophic (Greek) ideas of justice, where justice is closely associated with the social fabric of the group. It is the dissolution of this concept of justice which gives rise to the more dynamic concept of justice or, rather, the concept of dynamic justice, which is associated with modernity. Thus, what starts off as a rather formal analysis soon gives way to a more historical analysis of justice, since the concept of dynamic justice supposedly originates with modernity and, from the viewpoint of justice, sets it off from the more static justice of the ancients.

In many ways, ch. 3, on the concept of dynamic justice, is the crux of Heller's analysis. It sets up values as the criteria of justice and, more specifically for modernity, the values of freedom and life. In this she sets herself off from the analysis of a Rawls. 'Unlike in Rawls's model, life and liberty are not deduced from justice, but the reverse: a society (or constitution) is stipulated as just in so far as it ensures the life and/or liberty of citizens' (120). The reversal of perspective is significant in that it opens up the sense of justice to the moral sense, instead of reducing the latter to the former, and allows for the devalidation of some norms of justice and the validating of others as more just through rational argument according to what Heller calls a rationality of intellect. It also allows for a resolution of conflicts in the perspective of dynamic justice through discourse and negotiation rather than force.

Ch. 4 marks a break in the thrust of Heller's argument in that it deals with what are only remnants (76) of the ancient, ethico-political concept of justice in modernity, namely, retributive justice, distributive justice, and 'just-war theory,' but her critique of these partial theories posing as universal brings up notions that are important for the development of her own theory, especially her critique of Rawls with regard to distributive justice. There again she reverses the tables on Rawls, going from initial inequality in the lottery of natural endowments instead of from an initial equality, after which competition begins (199). The kind of distribution which this could entail may not make sense in terms of the 'triad' model used by Rawls and other liberal theorists, who think of inequality only in terms of income, but it can be just and fair in communities, assuming that different communities can have different norms of distribution, not just for wealth, but also for many other kinds of good such as recognition or respect.

In ch. 5 Heller finally comes to her own theory of justice as an 'incomplete ethico-political concept of justice.' As 'ethico-political' it revalidates some of the more ancient concept justice, but as 'incomplete' it takes into account the pluralism of modern society. 'A completely just society is a society where *only the static concept of justice* applies. ... The emergence of dynamic justice has transformed our regard in such a way that no society can ever again be completely just

...' (226). The juxtaposition of these two propositions tells us a lot about where Heller stands with regard to the two kinds of justice she discusses, static and dynamic. Though incomplete, however, dynamic justice is not without its universal principle in value discourse where norms, or the general will, are set through the willful participation of all. Here Heller adopts Habermas' idea of 'discourse ethics,' but makes it much more concrete by insisting on the pluralism of our cultural universe and on individual participation in practical discourse, especially in its legislative aspect. On the ethical side, she insists on a *Cartesian moment* (269) which shows a willingness to dissent in order to arrive at a true consensus about the socio-political norms for a particular group or community, all of which provides only a condition for the good life but is not itself the good life.

This sketch gives only a dim view of all the richness of this book, which is difficult to read, by reason of its density of argument, but which is also rewarding, by reason of its clarity of insight which runs through the fabric as a whole like a single thread. In the end one can only regret that it still leaves us with a kind of Kantian dualism between the good life and the just life. Better this than totalitarianism or dictatorship, to be sure. But a more complete, or at least a less incomplete ethico-political concept of justice might be developed by way of a dialectic between justice and friendship, such as can be found among the ancients, especially Aristotle, who makes it a point of introducing friendship as well as justice into ethical discourse, or to put it more in Heller's terms, a dialectic between justice and righteousness, so that ethical discourse does not stop at a merely formal imperative of preferring to suffer injustice to committing injustice, 'where "committing injustice" means infringing moral norms in *direct* relation to other people' (279), but goes on to specify more positively what is expected in the good life. Heller says that it is not for her to go beyond the concept of justice, but for the actual participants in the ethical discourse of dynamic justice. But is it not just to expect more of philosophical judgment or *phronēsis* than a purely negative injunction against using others as means? Does not friendship enhance justice or make injustice worse, as Aristotle pointed out, and does not the very concept of ethico-political justice, in its very incompletion, call for this kind of completion? In the end, perhaps, Heller remains with a still too formal conception of justice, as Habermas does, not to mention Kant, and does not show enough how participation in value discourse not only establishes norms for justice but also establishes equality among 'righteous persons,' which is at once the end of justice and the beginning of friendship to be actualized in the free exercise of communal life.

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Leo Katz.
Bad Acts and Guilty Minds.
Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1987.
Pp. xii+343.
US$45.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-226-42591-6);
US$14.95 (paper: ISBN 0-226-42592-4).

It is a common complaint against some philosophical works that they lack the kinds of rich and detailed examples which are necessary to give life and meaning to their arguments. No one could accuse Katz of this fault: he is an enthusiastic raconteur of cases (actual and fictional), of stories and histories, and of psychological or sociological experiments.

He aims, through these examples, to confront us with a number of 'conundrums' in the criminal law. Why and when should necessity or duress provide a defence (Ch. 1)? How should we set about interpreting legislative attempts to define criminal acts? How can we understand defences of automatism, or the claim that a (voluntary) 'act' is a basic requirement of criminal liability? How can we distinguish 'act' from 'omission' or 'thought'; why should the law not punish omissions, or mere thoughts (Ch. 2)? What is it to intend a result: what kinds of mistake should preclude criminal liability by precluding the ascription of the relevant intention; should I be guilty of murder if I believe that I am killing a ghost, or a witch; or if my shot misses A and kills B; or if I kill A by mistake for B? How are we to distinguish intended means from foreseen side-effects? Can we intend to bring about results of which we are uncertain? How can we safely convict people of offences of recklessness or negligence, which involve the taking of an 'unreasonable risk,' when we are clearly in general very bad at measuring or judging the reasonableness of risks (Ch. 3)? Why should it matter to us whether an agent actually causes the harmful result which she intends? Can we provide any tolerably clear account of the notion of causation, which will enable us to ascribe liability where it should be ascribed (Ch. 4)? Why should the law include, and how should it define, offences of complicity and conspiracy (Ch. 5)? Should certain kinds of 'impossible attempt' be exempt from criminal liability; if so, which, and why (Ch. 6)?

This list of topics may give the impression of a breathless rush through a variety of disparate problems; and this is part of the impression which the book leaves. Katz claims (306-7) that two central philosophical problems unify many of these issues: the problem of intentionality, which relates to problems of legislative meaning, of the relevance of mistakes to intention, and of the intentions of one engaged in an 'impossible attempt'; and the problem of possible worlds, which relates to issues of causation, of the distinction between act

and omission, of the distinction between intended means and foreseen side-effects, and of the relevance of mistakes to liability (since all involve counterfactual questions of the form 'What would have happened if ... ?'). These philosophical problems do indeed figure in these contexts; and one of the merits of the book is that it shows their relevance to these legal problems. But I was left in some doubt about the aims of the book. Does Katz want to cast doubt on some of the central elements of the criminal law: should we abandon attempts to define mens rea in terms of intention, belief, recklessness and negligence; should we 'eschew laws that make guilt dependent on consequences,' and instead 'draft prophylactic rules that impose liability so long as the defendant has behaved in certain criminal ways, regardless of the damage he has wrought' (251)? Or is his aim rather, and more modestly, to show that familiar principles of criminal liability, though their meaning and application is clear enough in a large range of core cases, have an inevitably vague and uncertain penumbra of problem cases?

This unclarity about the book's aims reflect a pervasive problem with its content; that the stories which are meant, presumably, to carry a large part of the philosophical argument too often take on an independent life of their own. They are often far longer than is necessary for their purpose – and may thus distract both author and reader from that purpose: striking examples are the accounts of Rudolf Hess (108-10), Alfred Redl (211-15), and Hans van Meegeren (296-9); contrast these with the admirable and relevantly detailed discussion of the killing in *An American Tragedy* (201-8). Too often Katz seems so keen to get on to his next story, and his next problem, that he leaves the philosophical issues which he has raised hanging in the air, or offers only sketchy and radically underdeveloped suggestions for their resolution: for instance, having asked how far we should extend the defences of duress and necessity, and given examples of ways in which we can be pressured into doing what we would not normally do, he leaves the issue, and the implications of his examples, hanging in the air (69-80); having discussed a number of cases of automatism (and offered the bizarre suggestion (120) that 'for most of his history man has survived without consciousness [by which he seems to mean self-consciousness] altogether') he offers us a simple-minded version of a volition theory of action (127), without pausing to confront the philosophical objections to which it is open; having noted the extent to which our assessments of risk are inconsistent, he says nothing about what should follow from this for offences of recklessness or negligence (192-201); having discussed the problems involved in giving an adequate account of causation, he suggests that we should generally prohibit conduct rather than the bringing about of specified consequences (251), but has nothing to say about the implications

of this radical suggestion; having given an admirably clear account of conflicting views on 'impossible attempts,' he abandons any attempt to assess these views, and instead offers us a three-page account of van Meegeren (296-9) which adds nothing to the argument.

There is much that is interesting, provocative and stimulating in the book (and a number of detailed claims which are at best, though highly arguable, almost unargued): but how much better it would have been if Katz had been able to curb his desire to 'give pleasure' by means of 'enticing' and 'intriguing' stories (7), in favour of a more thorough discussion and development of the philosophical issues which he raises.

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John King-Farlow and Sean O'Connell.
Self-Conflict and Self Healing.
London and New York: University Press of America 1988. Pp. xiii+253.
US$28.50 (cloth: ISBN 0-8191-6794-0);
US$14.25 (paper: ISBN 0-8191-6795-9).

This book is a fascinating experiment, bold in aim and format, 'like a "self-help" book' (xvi) but rich in theoretical detail, replete with insightful suggestions for confronting inner conflicts. Co-authored by a philosopher and a psychologist, it expands King-Farlow's earlier contributions to ethics and philosophy of mind with empirical detail from O'Connell's clinical work. The authors defend a model of persons as clusters of subselves and apply it to both conceptual and practical issues concerning psychological conflict, weakness of will, guilt, self-deception, psychological and moral growth, and abnormal states of multiple personality. Despite moments where theory and self-help prove uneasy companions, the book succeeds as a deeply rewarding cross-disciplinary collaboration, suffused with caring, informed by an uncommon degree of common sense, and containing therapeutic exercises designed to bring us to 'accept and celebrate the diversity of selves' within each of us (197).

The 'central theme is that *intra*personal conflict, struggle within the self, should be treated much of the time like *inter*personal strife' (xiii). Even when there is not psychic conflict, persons are best understood as organized collections of *Personae*, i.e., subselves or subpersonalities which are clusters of emotions, desires, preferences, and

patterns of reasoning, speech and action. One *persona*, the *Master Self*, is the locus of value commitments to morality, rationality, happiness and inner harmony (70-1). As such it has the authority (the right and responsibility) to govern the other *personae*, akin to how a benevolent ruler governs a state. A person is very much like a community of persons: unified insofar as the Master Self is in control, at war with itself insofar as the constituents disagree and try to manipulate each other and the leader.

Are *personae* real, or mere metaphors? They are not real, if that means they could exist by themselves independently of a person – they are only 'person-like' aspects of a person. But they are metaphors which should be taken seriously as having metaphysical import: 'what is at present empirically observed warrants our giving persons and *Personae* a place in a wise ontology' (60). Intriguing parallels and contrasts between normal and multiple personalities are drawn (Chap. 3). The therapeutic meditations and exercises, often involving one subself conversing with others, combined with an argument favoring personal authority in matters of therapy and moral growth (Chaps. 1 and 2), manifest the authors' conviction that *Persona* Theory offers a road to self-transformation.

Special attention is devoted to weakness of will and self-deception. First, how can people voluntarily act against their own best judgment? The usual answer, that they do not make a sufficient effort, is true but inadequate (144). Deeper understanding comes by applying *Persona* Theory to explain why sufficient effort is not made: viz., because of subselves rebelling against the authority of the Master Self, and the Master Self lacking sufficient wariness, skill, and conviction in its dealings with its psychic constituency.

Second, how can people deceive themselves, specifically by purposefully persuading themselves into believing what they know is false? There are many forms of self-deception, and it is allowed that *Persona* Theory may not elucidate them all. Yet the book would benefit from a fuller discussion of some of the following questions, going beyond reasserting King-Farlow's earlier (valuable) critique of Herbert Fingarette's views on guilt and the moral status of self-deception.

Fingarette (in *Self-Deception*) defined self-deception as disavowal of aspects of one's personality and life which conflict with one's preferred identity. Cast in terms of *Persona* Theory, one linguistically-dominant *persona* refuses to spell out (become explicitly conscious of) and identify with one or more other *personae*; hence one self deceives itself (about a subself), rather than deceiving another subself. By contrast, in their explicit applications of the *Persona* Theory to self-deception, King-Farlow and O'Connell view the Master Self as being deceived by other *personae* who confuse, mislead, block from inquiry, or in other ways distort its efforts at rational governance (82-5). Thus,

in a case of a disturbed woman who is ashamed of her Ukrainian descent and who deceives herself into believing she has a Scottish ancestry, subselves manipulate and gain control over the rational Master Self. Yet why not say instead that the woman lacks a developed Master Self and that her *personae*, seeking happiness over truth and without inner conflict, deceive themselves by engaging in the psychological tactics specified in the example: selective attending, ignoring, and self-pretense? (If only a normative claim is being made – that she ought not to deceive herself – then where is the self-conflict?)

Also consider later examples designed to show that self-deception can be good. Thus, a benevolently-motivated man takes a second job in order to pay family medical bills. In order not to upset his family who might see through his lies to them, he deceives himself into believing that the second job is good for him (175-6). Again, it may have been rational for some people during World War II to keep their hopes alive by deceiving themselves about the prospects of defeating Hitler. Such cases suggest 'there can be wisdom, and even a great moral strength associated with this strange business of deceiving oneself for a good purpose' (181). But how does *Persona* Theory help us to understand them? Is there self-conflict involved, of the sort the Theory is designed to elucidate? Isn't the Master Self fully in charge, rather than manipulated and deceived by a subself? Doesn't it simply deceive itself, acting on its view (shared by King-Farlow and O'Connell) that it is rational and good to engage in self-deception on this occasion? But then *Persona* Theory merely restates, rather than resolves, any puzzle about a self deceiving itself; it does not further clarify the use of the self-deceiving tactics – selective focusing on evidence, rationalization, denial, etc.

Or in such cases is the Master Self perhaps itself divided? After all, the Master Self is said to have multiple commitments, including commitments to 'clarity, consistency and acceptance of what truth entails' *and* to happiness, hope, and inner harmony (70-1). When difficult situations hamper its efforts to pursue all its commitments simultaneously, does it sometimes opt 'against itself' to sacrifice truth for what Ibsen called 'Vital Lies'? If so, what are the theoretical and therapeutic implications of a divided Master Self? In other cases, is the Master Self merely ideal, and not 'real,' something like a *potential* for being rational and moral, and hence instead of self-conflict, there is a simple failure of moral and rational aspiration?

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David Krell.
Intimations of Mortality: Time, Truth and Finitude in Heidegger's Thinking of Being. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press 1986. Pp. xiv+201. US$22.50. ISBN 0-271-00427-4.

Krell tells us that much of the material in his book appeared before, but 'in somewhat different form.' In the present volume, eleven chapters are organized around four subthemes which are already indicated by the title and subtitle of the book. These subthemes are: I. Intimations of Time and Being; II. Intimations of Truth and Turning; III. Intimations of a History of Being, and; IV. Intimations of Mortality. The intended unity of this newly-arranged publication is at once apparent in the refrain of 'intimation,' which is inspired by Heidegger's key word '*Anklang*' in the latter's *Contributions to Philosophy: 'On Ereignis.'* In Heidegger's case, intimation is that of Being, the flight of which has heralded our age of nihilism, but which, in its absence and oblivion, continues to provoke the thinker through its 'merest intimations.' Although hardly any one of the above four subthemes would appear less important than the others, Krell's selection of the fourth theme to represent the whole book accentuates the 'poetic' thrust of his interpretation of Heidegger.

In Krell's view, Heidegger's intimation is also a poetics of Being, but he would like to 'continue and enrich Heidegger's efforts' until the truth of his poetics is revealed as 'intimations of mortality.' This does not mean, of course, that Krell somehow looks at Heidegger's work as an unfinished torso. Quite the opposite is the case. Though Heidegger is not known as a systematic philosopher in the ordinary sense, Krell sets out to map Heidegger's tracing of *ens absconditus* with the knowledge of something approaching 'a massive fugue indeed, a Tocata and Fugue in F Major' (106). In its 'provenance and its project,' notes Krell at the beginning of his book, Heidegger's *Being and Time* was already a highly complex work (2). This remark comes from a scholar who is singularly equipped to discuss the entire sweep of Heidegger's philosophy, from its earliest to the latest phase of development. Thus the complexities at which he marvels are not just those of architectonics, conceived historically, hermeneutically or otherwise, within the thematics of *Being and Time*. Rather, his point is that, in spite of frequent changes of mood, Heidegger's thought has kept, throughout its whole career, 'an unexpected unity,' against which even Heidegger's 'ostensible turning' cannot be held as a counterproof.

Since Heidegger's announcement in *Letter on Humanism* that he was distancing himself from 'fundamental ontology,' his later stand-

point has often been interpreted as a 'reversal' (*Kehre*) of the previous position, which was identified as 'existentialist' or more formally as *Dasein*-centered. Krell offers a searching analysis of what he prefers to call 'turning' in Heidegger's movement. He affirms that in fact there was a continuous turning, but it means only 'a step back' to the fundamental experience that underlies *Being and Time* and not any repudiation of it. That fundamental experience was the 'oblivion of Being.' Heidegger 'began to think about certain elements earlier than we ever imagine he ever could have' (105). Specifically, we should neither 'misconstrue' Heidegger's earlier analysis of *Dasein* by taking it to be 'an ontology that is secured in the transcendental ground of metaphysical subjectivity' (110), nor should we forget that the later thought of Heidegger, according to which it is Being that now 'founds *Da-sein*,' still has 'to do with the abyss or radical absence of grounds' (107). Not only against those who see in *Kehre* a turning away from 'existentialist trappings of *Dasein*,' but also against Ricœur, who registers in Heidegger's talk of 'releasement' (*Gelassenheit*) the change of mood toward a more 'contemplative' life, Krell upholds the view that existential 'anxiety' pervades Heidegger's later thought unabated, and that the releasement does not mean 'release from the situation of anxiety' (7). Heidegger's 'letting be' implies tenacious holding on to this anxiety as the true issue of thinking, and to that extent, Krell argues, the thought of 'releasement' was already manifest in *Being and Time*, in the mode of anticipated death, as 'letting the death be' (155ff.)

As early as 1953, Walter Schulz laid to rest much erroneous speculation about the 'reversal' in an article (*Philosophische Rundschau*, 1953/54, Vol. 2/3) that met Heidegger's approval. Krell somehow ignores it, although he did take note of both Allemann and Löwith, who wrote about the same time as Schulz. But far more important than the question of formal unity or logical consistency in Heidegger's development is its relationship to the history of Being, and where this relationship, as sustained anxiety in the face of man's finitude, eventually gravitates to.

Wasn't the ubiquitously accompanying mood of anxiety to undergo some mellowing effect in 'releasement?' After all, has not Krell treated Trakl more preferentially than Hölderlin, Rilke and George, in order to erect a monument, not to any living or hidden gods, nor to any region of the holy, but to the mortality of man? If 'letting be' allows for another, more differentiated reading, and that turns out to be being 'let into' (*eingelassen*) the essence of truth, truth of the planetary phenomenon of technology, truth of *things* and the openness to the 'unity of the Fourfold (earth and sky, mortals and divinities), then the anxiety may be the necessary condition for such readiness, but certainly not the sufficient condition for the contemplative

poetical life. Should the tragic, if not 'herostratic' sense of existence be so resolute as to remain impervious to the intimations of *Da-sein* as a 'gift,' even if one of burdensome stewardship?

This is not to say that Krell failed to 'overcome' in some way the existential anxiety and together with it the 'end of philosophy' syndrome evoked by Heidegger's speculative ontotheology. His intention was to continue and enrich Heidegger's thinking, a task he proved himself to be worthy of, with élan and subtlety. His expositions of historical materials, where they relate to the manifold meaning of 'truth,' to the notion of 'clearing,' to Hegel and Nietzsche are superb, although the latter's cosmological ruminations that point beyond man and history should have been duly noted.

Ambiguous, suspended and therefore without any final results as Heidegger's thinking was, his attachment to the tradition of metaphysics and its rethinking, i.e., thinking of what it has left unthought, was seen by some as one grand, futile effort to *continue* that tradition. Why not 'attack our present troubles' instead? To those who see philosophy end with Heidegger and draw pragmatic conclusions from his lesson, Krell's reply that 'all courageous and forthright decisions to abandon metaphysics result in naive reduplications of its patterns of thought' sounds utterly Heideggerian and yet, in this case, unambiguous.

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Mitchell Miller.
Plato's Parmenides:
The Conversion of the Soul.
Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press
1986. Pp. xiii+299.
US$30.00. ISBN 0-691-07303-1.

There have been several books in recent years devoted in whole or large measure to the *Parmenides*, the dialogue on which, more than any other, rests the embattled question of whether Plato revised his theory of forms so as to abandon the 'separateness' claim that distinguishes it from the Aristotelian version. In 1983 R.E. Allen published a translation of the dialogue with extensive commentary, and in the same year Kenneth Sayre published *Plato's Late Ontology: A Riddle Resolved,* which consisted primarily of extended studies of the

Parmenides and *Philebus*, together with shorter discussions of other dialogues relevant to the theory of forms. This year another commentary on the *Parmenides* has been published by Robert Sternfeld and Harold Zyskind, and I know of yet another one in progress.

Where Sayre's book (which presents an innovative defense of the 'revisionist' thesis) has an impressively panoramic scope, and Allen's (which interprets the enitre dialogue as the unfolding of a single argument) has an elegant simplicity and dialectical (as well as historical) sweep, Miller's book gives a more persuasive account of the dialogue precisely by eschewing such dramatic claims. Perhaps because he is less influenced by a preconception of what will be found in the dialogue, his reading shows more attentiveness and sensitivity to the text than do the others. Sayre, for example, follows other revisionists in pointing out that at 135b-c, where Parmenides appears to endorse the theory of forms despite his earlier critique, nothing is said about the *separation* of the forms, and he concludes that Plato still believes in the existence and universality of the forms but no longer in their separateness from the physical world (22). But he does not notice the speech immediately preceding (135a) in which Parmenides had said, 'Only a man of very great natural gifts will be able to understand that everything has a class and an essence itself-by-itself' (αὐτὴ καθ' αὑτήν, a phrase which is generally taken to mean 'separate,' and which Sayre elsewhere translates as 'in and by itself'). And in Part II Sayre takes as a *reductio* of the separation of forms the fact that hypotheses I and VI together entail that, whether unity exists or not, if it is separate from other things it will have no characters (46); but he does not notice that this is balanced by a contrary *reductio*: hypotheses II and V together entail that if unity is *not* separate it will have every contradictory character. With R.E. Allen's overarching thesis, too, the claim that all the argumentation is an unfolding of the first argument is frequently difficult to reconcile with what one actually finds in the text.

Miller's interpretation grows much more naturally out of the text than do either of the others. Like Allen, Miller argues against the revisionist view. The *Parmenides* is not a repudiation or adjustment of the earlier theory of forms, but a deepening exploration of it:

> The *Republic* represents the first beginning, in which the philosopher addresses himself to nonphilosophers, giving them only images for what is, nonetheless, the ultimate turth. ... The *Parmenides*, in turn, offers a second beginning for those who have taken up the first. The youthful Socrates' task is to appropriate fully, by critical and conceptual inquiry, what was given to Glaucon and Adimantus more in the manner of authoritative pronouncement and in the modes of image and analogy. [p. 20]

Miller sees the primary problem of the dialogue as the lack of an adequate distinction between the nature of forms and things, a lack displayed in the first part of the dialogue by the young Socrates (98-9, 112) and in the second part by Aristoteles (157). Accordingly the arguments of the first part are meant to expose the consequences of the failure to separate adequately the forms from things (not the consequences of *making* them separate), and those of the second part are meant to provide a more adequate conception of this separation.

Miller shows that one of the factors that makes the second part so confusing is that sometimes Parmenides puts forth his own view, while at other times he exposes the consequences of Aristoteles' defective view. Another factor, however, is that 'Parmenides has *all along* been applying the predicate 'one' to forms and to things with (implicit, to be sure) systematic ambiguity' (77, emphasis in original). Thus in hypothesis I 'one' refers to the separate form, while in II it refers to the form as immanent in things (120). Seen in this way the arguments of part II no longer appear as sophistries that cancel one another out and are ultimately inconclusive. '[Hypotheses] III-IV explore the particpatory relation of form and things; V-VI address the intelligibility and being of forms; and VII-VIII review the status of things' (123). In addition, part II as a whole develops our powers of abstract, non-analogical thinking.

Space does not permit discussion of the details of Miller's interpretation, but let us consider briefly his general claim. What does he mean by saying that part II is a corrective to analogical thinking about the forms? Does it (1) correct the misunderstandings to which such thinking leads, (2) reveal the limitations of analogical thinking generally and indicate the ideal to be aimed at, or (3) actually provide a non-analogical way of conceiving the forms? Miller's book argues very persuasively for the second of these claims, and he accepts the first as well. At times I had the impression that he also accepts the third, but this was not clear. In his acceptance of the first claim Miller believes that young Socrates is not merely uncertain about the theory of forms, but fundamentally confused (a representative perhaps of such confusion among Plato's students in the Academy), so that he conceives of participation on the model of relations among spatial things. Accordingly, when Socrates uses the analogy of 'the same day' to explain how the same form can be present to many things, Miller takes day to mean day*light* rather than a unit of time, and thus to be a spatial model. It need not be so taken, however, and I did not find Miller's arguments convincing here, nor his defense of the first claim generally. If Miller also endorses the third claim, that the dialogue not merely aims at but makes available an alternative to analogical thinking, this will be difficult to reconcile with the first hypothesis, which argues that if the 'one' (which Miller takes to refer

to the form) is conceived only in its own terms, then nothing can be said about it. But his may not be what Miller means.

Miller's commentary is an impressive achievement, combining extensive scholarship with unusual sensitivity to Plato's nuances, both literary and discursive. Both for its imaginative interpretation of the larger issues, and its careful analysis of the details, it will be of great value to anyone with an interest in this bewildering dialogue.

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Thomas V. Morris, ed.
The Concept of God.
Don Mills, ON and New York: Oxford University Press 1987. Pp. vi+276.
Cdn$44.95; US$25.00
(cloth: ISBN 0-19-875077-3);
Cdn$19.25; US$9.95
(paper: ISBN 0-19-875076-5).

In recent years philosophy has been, perhaps not kinder, but less automatically sceptical than previously, concerning religious claims and concepts. That is borne out in this addition to the *Oxford Readings* series. Like its companions, the volume is aimed at providing a classroom resource. Six topic headings are listed in the 'Contents,' each discussed in a pair of papers, all of which have appeared in prominent journals or books within the past ten years. The subjects reflect a direction of interest away from traditional arguments concerning God's existence and toward questions in philosophical theology. Contributors share a perspective from within what Morris calls 'perfect being theology'; the assumption that however, in detail, God is conceived, he/she is understood to be maximally perfect.

In a section labelled 'The Attributes and Existence of God: Some General Concerns,' William Alston argues that functionalism in philosophy of mind provides a model for understanding the use of creaturely language to speak about a transcendent God, without resorting to analogical or other non-univocal theories of predication. The interest of this suggestion is reduced by the discovery that Alston apparently means only to establish that 'terms ... can be devised that apply in just the same sense to God and to creature' (32); not, it seems, that our current talk of God is illuminated by functionalism. Robert

Merrihew Adams contends that the standard dismissal of God's metaphysical necessity is ill-founded, especially given how little we really understand the notion of 'necessity.' It is possible that he proves too much, for one is left wondering what advantage there might be in applying the notion to God in our present state of ignorance.

'God and the Physical World' comprises papers by Robert Oakes and William Wainwright. In the former, it is argued that asserting, as traditional theology does, the impossibility of things existing apart from God's conserving them entails that they are 'aspects or modifications of the conserver,' which adds up to what Oakes considers pantheism. Wainwright considers several ways in which God might be thought of as embodied, concluding that the only version with potential is the idea that the world is God's body, but that this would require a non-traditional or Platonic view of the relation between persons and bodies. Surprisingly, Wainwright fails to consider the possibility that the relation between God and the world might be sufficiently like that between persons and bodies, but enough different, to have it both ways.

Adams' second paper is first under the heading 'Divine Goodness.' He provides an interesting and (to me) convincing argument that an all-good, omnipotent God need not create the best of all possible worlds; specifically that he need not create the best of all possible beings. His argument is based, in part, on the claim that to do wrong, one must violate an obligation to some actual person or evince some defect of character. Morris follows with an article of his own in which he argues that the traditional theist is committed to a notion of *de re* necessity in God's goodness, but that this renders God's doing his duty of no moral consequence. His alternative is to say that God's acts accord with, but are not done out of, duty. Others may find this as theologically implausible as I did.

'Omnipotence' is dealt with first of all by Anthony Kenny, who maintains that standard definitions of this attribute involve either ascribing more power to God than is coherent or less than the theist will wish. He proposes that instead of thinking in terms of the power to do all that it is logically possible to do we resort to the possession of all those powers it is logically possible to possess. Thomas P. Flint and Alfred J. Freddoso share Kenny's scepticism about received formulations of omnipotence, but do so because they fear it renders impossible any combination with impeccability. There follows a forest of argument, in which the trees are often dauntingly prominent, aimed at producing a notion of 'maximal power' subtle enough to allow the conjunction. While some may question the solution, others will query the need of it. Flint and Freddoso reject without argument Pike's insistence that distinguishing between what God is able to do *qua* person, and *qua* bearer of the title 'God,' will suffice to solve the problem.

Under 'Omniscience,' Alvin Plantinga tackles the venerable difficulty of reconciling foreknowledge and freewill. He appeals to Ockham's notion of 'hard facts' about the past, and contends that since God's foreknowledge would not be among them, and only such facts would have deterministic implications, reconciliation is possible. What Plantinga leaves untouched is the claim that because God's (fore)knowledge would have to be *justified* it cannot be held both that God foreknows and that there are genuine contingencies. David Blumenfeld doubts that omniscience can be reconciled with omnipotence, since the former appears to deny its subject access to certain experiences (e.g. fear or frustration) and therefore to deprive him/her of access to certain fundamental concepts without which his/her knowledge is bound to incomplete. Blumenfeld does not consider the pedestrian possibility that God might be able to make up the experiential lack with a rich imagination, or the more adventuresome idea that God might have some form of direct access to the experiences of his creatures.

'Eternity, Immutability, and Divine Simplicity' begins with a discussion of 'Eternity' by Eleonore Stump and Norman Kretzmann, in which Boethius' notion of eternity, as distinct from either sempiternality or atemporality, is painstakingly explicated and defended. Despite the ingenuity of argument (e.g., in developing a special kind of simultaneity between eternal and temporal entities), one is left wondering how this can be managed without abandoning the view that temporal succession is real and objective. Similar worries may be aroused by William E. Mann's attempt to show that belief in the full-blooded immutability of God may be retained provided we have an adequate grasp of divine simplicity. Mann's claim that such a God may still be said to act, etc., depends on a Stump-Kretzmann-like model of eternity.

On the whole this is an interesting and useful collection, though its focus will limit its classroom use to specialized courses. Arguably, though, there is a deficiency running almost throughout the collection. The common assumption of 'perfect being' theology turns out to produce a remarkably conservative set of results by and large. In the minds of most contributors, perfection is still linked logically with 'necessity' of various kinds, or no-holds-barred omnipotence, or omniscience including foreknowledge of contingencies, or strong immutability, eternity and so on. The problems generated by these links are given ingenious treatment, but some will wonder whether the energy is well spent. The instinct to ascribe all possible perfections to God has deep roots in both religious experience and logic. But without resorting to the extravagances of process theology, it is possible to ask whether the neo-Platonist interpretations of perfection we have inherited should remain as unchallenged as they are here. It has

certainly been argued (by Pike and others) that what is aimed at in ascribing immutability to God, for instance, is the idea of stability and dependability of character, and that the ardent defense of absolute unchangeability is anachronistic. Apart from Kenny's and Adams' papers, there is little evidence of this line of thought. One is reminded of the way in which cosmological thought was for centuries captive to assumptions about perfect geometrical shapes.

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Julian Roberts.
German Philosophy: An Introduction.
Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press International, Inc. 1988. Pp. viii+296. US$45.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-391-03567-3); US$15.00 (paper: ISBN 0-391-03568-1).

Robert C. Solomon.
Continental Philosophy since 1750: The Rise and Fall of the Self.
Don Mills, ON and New York: Oxford University Press 1988. Pp. viii+214. Cdn$14.95: US$9.50. ISBN 0-19-289202-9.

Both of these books are introductions to substantially the same material. Solomon's book is somewhat larger in scope because it also includes French philosophy, but the German component gets much more space and attention than the French. Roberts' book introduces German philosophy from Kant to Adorno to those professional philosophers of the English speaking world who have long neglected the Germans but are becoming interested again. Solomon's book, on the other hand, is a popular book aimed at the general reader and the undergraduate. Roberts' style is tight and professional. He discusses the work of ten important philosophers without trying to make a historical sequence of them. But Solomon tells a connected story, the story of what he calls 'the transcendental pretence.'

The 'transcendental pretence' is what Rousseau found in the woods, an extraordinary concept of the self, the concept of a cosmic self be-

yond or behind the individual self, the soul of humanity shared by all humanity, which makes us all everywhere the same in essentail matters and which in some profound sense creates the world in which we live. The story of the fortunes of this pretence is 'the dramatic story of the European self-image' 'arrogant and self-righteous' and more than heady ivory tower stuff because 'the transcendental pretence is no innocent philosophical thesis, but a political weapon of enormous power' (6). Rousseau may have discovered the self, but Teutonic brains, those of Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, brooded on this discovery until they had 'developed the transcendental pretence far beyond its comparatively humble origins in Rousseau's walks' (52) into 'the most arrogant claim that one was oneself nothing less than all the world' (53), and 'this hyperinflation of the self marks the beginning of a new era of European history' (71). After this dramatic growth, and a 'novel and perverse' treatment by Schopenhauer, the cosmic self goes into hiding for two chapters (Kierkegaard, Feuerbach, Marx, Frege, Brentano, Meinong, Stumpf, Dilthey, Bergson) until it makes a timid comeback with Nietzsche only to get dismantled and apparently 'disintegrated into nothingness' (126). It briefly finds 'one of its greatest modern defenders' (138) in Husserl, only to be forgotten again by Freud, Wittgenstein, Heidegger and the tradition of hermeneutics (Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger, Gadamer, Habermas). It seems to revive in French existentialism for 'the transcendental pretence is alive and very well in Sartre's philosophy' (174). But, of course, it isn't, even in Sartre, let alone de Beauvoir, Camus, and Merleau-Ponty. By the time we get to Lévi-Strauss, Foucault, and Derrida the self is utterly played out. We now settle on 'a modest sense of self' having learned the lesson 'that the intellect is prone to self-aggrandizement and that intellectual arrogance will always take a fall' (202).

Oxford University Press wants popular treatment for their Opus series of the History of Western Philosophy (the present book is number 7 in that series) and Solomon handles the style very well. The writing is vigorous and never boring. There are even some unintentional points of interest. For example, Solomon discusses Feuerbach's famous quip at one point (88), but instead of going to Feuerbach's review of Moleschott's book on food where the original may be found, he misquotes the 'atrocious pun' from Meyer's translation of Höffding, translates this misquotation back into German himself, and the result is both atrocious and entertaining. Or in another place (112) he discusses Nietzsche's will to power and helps us out with the parenthetic remark 'macht' not 'reich.' Now that means 'makes' not 'rich,' which is hardly helpful. Even if we make nouns of the words by capitalizing them we get 'power' not 'realm' which is not helpful either. The message is: have your German checked before it is printed.

But the book really is worth reading. There are some fine popular sketches of, for example, Nietzsche's account of master and slave morality, of phenomenology and hermeneutics, of post-modernism and deconstruction and, as always, Solomon does a good job on German idealism and existentialism. I wish, however, that the story of the transcendental pretence had been tuned down and reconceived. It is never brought into connection with European history in any sustained and persuasive way, and it really fails to sustain more than half of the book.

To move to Roberts' book is to change into the world of professional scholarship. It is in no sense aimed at a general readership, yet it remains introductory so far as the presentation is primarily expository and avoids becoming involved in contentious issues of interpretation and criticism. The book has no thesis. It is essentially a collection of separate essays on ten philosophers. Kant appears as the foundation of German philosophy whose influence is felt in subsequent work, but this is in no way a thesis of this book, nor a theme with which to unify the account into a history. In fact Roberts thinks that philosophy does not really have a history except in a superficial or attenuated sense, but that philosophers have always addressed themselves to certain recognizably constant figures of thought. This is, of course, a problematical view and the short discussion he gives of it in the introductory essay cannot count as a successful defense of it. Nor, I think, was it meant to. Rather, it is meant as an indication of how the book is to be taken. But it does not apply to the whole book, unfortunately. Only Kant and Hegel are treated in this way, Kant as addressing himself to the perennial problem of matter and form, and Hegel as addressing himself to the problem of change. There is still an indication of such a perennial issue in the later Schelling, but then it fades from the book and is soon lost altogether.

The book is about two centuries of German philosophy. The first century gets 226 pages, the second century gets 47 pages. There is an obvious bias here which is evident not only in the allotment of space, but also in the quality of the work. The opening essay on Kant is very good and without doubt the best one in the book. The essay on Hegel is very good as well, but it is fragmented into what ends up being more than one essay of uneven quality. The opening general account is ambitious and obscure, an attempt to give an account of Hegelian dialectic in terms of two fundamental principles: continuity and negation. The next section is a commentary on the first two sections of the *Phenomenology*. This is a clear and intelligent restatement with a good commentary which remains modest enough to remain in keeping with the introductory nature of the whole enterprise. Then follow three essays which discuss and clarify some Hegelian themes and defend Hegel against objections. There is much that is valuable and instructive here.

Although Schelling comes after Hegel in this book, about half of the essay on him is devoted to the negative philosophy of the *System of Transcendental Idealism*, in which he is strongly linked with Kant and even Leibniz, but the obvious link with Fichte is almost wholly lost, which is a pity. The discussion of the later post-Hegelian Schelling focuses on the lectures collected under the title *Philosophy of Revelation*. The insightful essay on Schopenhauer presents him as an interpreter of Kant who understood him not as wanting to show the inherent rationality of the world but as engaged in 'the critical demolition of the 'rational' in order to extract a non-rational essence from within it' (164). One feels that with Schelling and Schopenhauer Roberts is still in territory where he is at home and feels comfortable.

I suppose that a book on German philosophy cannot ignore the young Hegelians. The lion in that brood is without question Karl Marx. But Marx is left out and Feuerbach gets a chapter. Why? If Roberts did not want to do a chapter on Marx he should have done a chapter on the left Hegelians as a group rather than focus on Feuerbach. And why does Kierkegaard get a chapter? Having spent some time at Berlin University surely is not a good enough reason. It is a truncated Kierkegaard who is presented to us in any case, the Kierkegaard of *Either/Or* and the *Postscript* is left out, and what we are given seems of interest more to theologians than to philosophers. The essay on Nietzsche is disappointing and gives no justification for calling him one of the three giants of German philosophy. While the central text is *Zarathustra*, the section which shows how Nietzsche's philosophy reaches 'full power and originality' relies for the most part on *The Birth of Tragedy*.

An account of the last century of German philosophy must include a discussion of Heidegger, and this discussion must include both the enormously influential *Being and Time* as well as the puzzling later stuff. Roberts' brief remarks on *Being and Time* are singularly unhelpful, and the discussion of Heidegger's later stuff relies far too much on the second volume of his Nietzsche lectures. The later Heidegger emerges as a man who wrote 'polemic ... directed against the evils of a world dominated by technology' (256), an 'unpolitical petty bourgeois [who] is still valuable – as a remarkable and imaginative historian of philosophy' (269). This, I fear, is worse than unhelpful. But if you had space for only two more in your account of the last century, who would they be? Certainly not Lukács and Adorno. What of Husserl and phenomenology, or Gadamer and hermeneutics? And has Karl Jaspers been quite forgotten? Something on the Frankfurt school may well be in order, but why Adorno, why not much rather Habermas?

This should have been a book on German Idealism. That would have justified leaving out Leibniz, for example, for whose exclusion there is no justification as the book stands, and it would have justified including Fichte, who should have been there in any case, and stopping with Schopenhauer where the book should have stopped anyway.

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John Sallis, ed.
Deconstruction and Philosophy: The Texts of Jacques Derrida.
Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987. Pp. xv+207.
US$24.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-226-73438-2);
US$10.95 (paper: ISBN 0-226-73439-0).

The first paper in this collection of papers, all of which were presented at an international conference under the same title in Chicago in 1985, begins as follows: 'One of the more persistent misunderstandings that has thus far forestalled a productive debate with Derrida's philosophical thought is the assumption, shared by many philosophers as well as literary critics, that within that thought just anything is possible' (3). This is a curiously defensive note on which to start, but it proves uncannily appropriate to some at least of what follows. The 'just anything' here could be (and perhaps is) a translation of the despairing 'n'importe quoi!' of lycée teachers tearing their hair at the undisciplined audacity of their pupils' essays: you think you can get away with just anything! And a few of the contributors to this book do seem to think they can.

The urge to tear my own hair has to be acknowledged and dealt with before I can go on to a more constructive review. What the culprits are trying to get away with here is a form of stylistic imitation. Nearly all of them seem to be trying to sound like Derrida. But it doesn't work. I am reminded of those followers of Wittgenstein who, though they had nothing of his genius, could wrinkle and bang their foreheads just like the master. Here the gestures are verbal: the essays begin, begin then, will have begun, will always already have begun (or ended); they contain sentences without verbs, paragraphs with only one sentence; they are littered (literally – we could make

a good Derridean joke here) with bits of German and Latin and Greek, and with bad puns. If I were to say that collectively they are all too *derridivative* everyone would rightly groan, but it would fit right in.

When students, having read Plato for the first time, ask if they can write their papers in the form of dialogues, I advise against it; Plato could do it, I say, but you aren't Plato. Derrida can do what he does (and he can, and sometimes does, overdo it) but these authors aren't Derrida – well, one of them is, but I'll come to that. As a final catharsis I can't help drawing attention to the most egregious case of pseudo-Derridean pretentiousness, which in twelve pages manages to pack in twenty tags in German and twenty in Latin, prints ten Greek expressions in Greek characters (even though the terms in question are quite ordinary, like *telos* or *mimesis*), throws in words like 'dehiscence' and 'subreption,' which while honorable enough aren't really needed as technical apparatus, since the relevant points can quite well be made in plain language – *but can't use 'mitigate,' or the subjunctive, correctly in English* ('all that was properly human mitigated [sic] against a *natural* immanence,' 'that Being which would unify all beings in such a way that we could claim with respect to each that there were [sic] one ground through which one of every pair of possible predicates became determinate,' both on p. 73).

The subtitle of the book is 'The Texts of Jacques Derrida' (though it sometimes seems as if it might equally well have been 'The Texts of Martin Heidegger'). But in fact it doesn't live up to its promise either as throwing light on deconstruction and philosophy or as commenting critically on Derrida's texts. It is, rather – and not only in the undesirable sense I have already dealt with – a book of Derridean texts, including the final entry by Derrida himself, true to his own stylistic form:

> We are going to speak then of Heidegger.
> We are also going to speak of monstrosity.
> We are going to speak of the word '*Geschlecht*.' I am not going to translate it for the moment. Doubtless I shall translate it at no moment ...

But this is good Derrida, a valuable addition to the corpus; it's a meditation, as usual philological and as usual with a Heideggerian point of departure, on a family of terms and concepts whose focal point is *Geschlecht*, dealing with language and thinking and humanity itself as specific, national, gendered, embodied, and 'handed,' and provoking long and challenging thought in its turn.

Like most of Derrida, though, this text could hardly be called *critical*, and that is a weakness he shares with his own commentators. Just as Derrida reports here, but never challenges, Heidegger's rather futile diatribe against the typewriter – as if technology really

subverted thought, an abandonment to despair if there ever was one – so most of Derrida's epigones repeat endlessly but hardly ever stand up to his own formulations. (This is what has given other people the impression that Derrida gets away with just anything; sometimes I think all that admiring imitation has even tempted *him* to try.) Still one or two of them do – and some others produce insights of their own in his mode.

So there are good things, apart from Derrida's own piece, to be found in this book. I select for special mention Rodolphe Gasché's analysis of the 'general system' within which the possibility of philosophy is inscribed, Hugh Silverman's discussion of the indecidability of philosophy between passion and reason and the consequent ambiguity of its status in the university (though here the lucidity of the thought is obscured by some all-too-Derridean play about university geography and architecture), Irene Harvey's thoughtful essay on Rousseau and writing, John Caputo's commentary on the uselessness of signs in Husserl and their liberation in Derrida, Robert Bernasconi's admirable (and for once genuinely independent) treatment of deconstruction and ethics, with special emphasis on Derrida's essay on Levinas in *L'Ecriture et la différence*, and lastly David Wood's playful and anecdotal (but alas too cleverly inconclusive) metanarrative of the conference itself.

The titles, I repeat, are misleading: this book will not be enlightening about deconstruction, or about Derrida, to a reader familiar with neither. But for the converted it will all be good, if sometimes irritating, fun, while for the detached but sympathetic observer it provides a useful cross-section, for better or worse, of current work in deconstructive and Derridean studies.

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Evan Simpson, ed.
Anti-Foundationalism and Practical Reasoning: Conversations between Hermeneutics and Analysis.
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada: Academic Printing & Publishing, 1987. Pp. vii+254.
$38.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-920980-26-0);
$19.95 (paper: ISBN 0-920980-27-9).

This volume is made up of revised papers first delivered at a conference entitled 'Anti-Foundationalist Views of Practical Reasoning.' It

contains an editor's introduction and four sections (Practical Philosophy, Social-Political Critique, Moral Reflection and Legal Deliberation) each consisting of a brief introduction and three papers.

Simpson introduces it by remarking that current discussions of anti-foundationalism reflect the discrediting of the search for foundations, i.e., grounds for beliefs which are 'not merely confident assumptions but absolutely secure bases which are not subject to amendment' (3). He observes that analytical philosophers such as Quine and Wittgenstein and Continental thinkers such as Heidegger and Gadamer converged on this point and that Rorty made the term 'anti-foundationalism' a 'slogan for a complex cluster of ideas previously lacking resonant expression' (1-2). Finally, Simpson sketches some familiar objections to anti-foundationalism along with the anti-foundationalist replies to these objections and he spells out some features of anti-foundationalism troubling thinkers who are basically sympathetic to the position.

Sullivan's and Grondin's papers in the section, Practical Philosophy, provide accounts of the diverse motives and ideas of analytical and hermeneutical anti-foundationalists. Sullivan points out that unlike their Continental counterparts, Anglo-American thinkers come to this position from 'logical positivism's academic successor, analytic philosophy' (30-1) and are not motivated by anti-modernism or hostility to science (30) but by the view that foundationalism has not contributed to the progress of science and modernity (34). Heidegger, Gadamer and hermeneuticists, on the other hand, identify foundationalism with 'the cultural legacy of the Scientific Enlightenment' (34) and present their views as a protest against a 'scientistic and methodological distortion of truth that appears irreconcilable with the reality of human finitude' (55). Both Sullivan and Grondin believe that anti-foundationalism will not be philosophically attractive unless it can be shown to differ from the view that anything goes and each thinker claims that this can be done by reconstructing a broadly Aristotelian notion of practical reason or *phronēsis*. Sullivan thinks that we should do this along the lines pursued by MacIntyre while Grondin favors Gadamer's hermeneutical approach.

The essays in the section, Social-Political Critique, are sympathetic to anti-foundationalism and hostile to Rorty's work. Comay claims that Rorty goes wrong in thinking that once we see through the foundationalistic idea of essentialism we must jettison 'the idea of universality – instead of interrogating it and wresting it free of its essentialist trappings' (92). This makes it impossible for Rorty to practice immanent critique and 'expand or radicalize the democratic claims of bourgeoise liberalism' (92).

Burch's interpretation of Rorty's description of his position as ethnocentric adds to this portrait. For he holds that Rorty's claim is that

people who 'for reasons of race, occupation, gender, economic circumstances, cultic practices and so on' are outsiders (101) and whose talk fails to conform 'to the modish standards of polite, liberal academic talk' will not be allowed to participate in the conversation of mankind (102). More generally, his view is that Rorty's anti-foundationalism keeps him from viewing his own thought self-critically, thus allowing him to avoid examining the actual workings of his own liberal ideals (112-3). So, Rorty's understanding of hermeneutics and philosophy is part of a 'more damning picture' in which he is seen as wanting to deflect attention from the socio-political world (112) in order 'to champion the American status quo' (109).

Mitscherling points out that Comay objects to Rorty's defense of bourgeois liberalism, his '(surreptitious) aggrandizement of philosophy' in the defense of the status quo and his conversational understanding of philosophy (122). While finding no fault with the first two of these criticisms, Mitscherling argues that Comay errs when she accepts Rorty's view of hermeneutics and his identification of hermeneutics with conversation. Further, although Mitscherling doesn't believe that philosophy should be as closely tied to politics as Comay does, he insists that it be essentially involved in the 'intersubjective constitution of those values that will create a vital tradition for the future' (134). He argues that while hermeneutics as developed by Gadamer cannot provide foundations for morals or politics it can provide much that was lost when the quest for foundations was abandoned because it lays the groundwork for 'a philosophical critique of society' which will yield not only a critique of ideology but a critique of critiques of ideology (133).

In the next section, Moral Reflection, these issues are pursued. For even if no anti-foundationalist holds the objectionable views ascribed (mistakenly, I believe) to Rorty, it is understandable that efforts are made to formulate a method for constructing critical ethical and political theories which promises to reveal major errors as they are committed. Nielsen thinks such a method can be developed by exploiting some of Rawls' insights and some ideas of Habermas and the critical theorists. In effect, this method (labelled 'wide reflective equilibrium') instructs us to harmonize moral intuitions with moral principles and with broad, substantive social theories (144). Both Misgeld and Allen comment on Nielsen's proposal and argue that it is of no avail. Misgeld contends that while critical theory can serve to make pragmatism more critical of itself than it often is, it cannot yield a research program or a testable normative theory enabling us to tell which of our practices are and which are not legitimate (173-4). Allen thinks that Nielsen fails to realize that what we learn from anti-foundationalism is that ethics and politics must do without grounds, i.e., items 'whose presence determines which beliefs and theories are

true' (186). Hence Nielsen also fails to realize that equilibrium does not lie in the rehabilitation of 'ideas of moral truth and objectivity but in a firmer recognition of what for a long time we have done very well without, namely a presence which does for theory what metaphysicians of morals asked God, Reason or Human Nature to do for practice' (187).

The essays in the section, Legal Deliberation, show us that the issues raised by anti-foundationalism extend beyond the limits of academic philosophy, and the volume as a whole is a most welcome addition to the literature on this general topic. It helps keep us abreast of the numerous, diverse, interesting and important philosophical conversations now taking place because of anti-foundationalism.

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John Wilson.
What Philosophy Can Do.
Totowa, NJ: B & N Imports (for Macmillan) 1987. Pp. vi+158.
US $23.50 (cloth: ISBN 0-389-20622-9);
US $9.95 (paper: ISBN 0-389-20623-7).

In this book John Wilson attempts a philosophical apologetic, setting out what, in his view, philosophy can do, how it may be done more effectively, and why it is worth doing. Philosophy, once believed to be able to answer the questions 'What is permanently true and real?' and 'What is permanently and universally valuable and desireable?' has lost credibility, due to false modesty and confusion on the part of philosophers, unconscious resistance to philosophy on the part of the lay person, and the dominance of ideologies and myths in society at large. Wilson believes that by showing what philosophy *can* do, and by exposing the dynamics behind our resistance both to reason in general and philosophy in particular, he can help create an environment wherein philosophy may once again answer these age-old questions.

While the controversial question of what philosophy does can hardly be settled in his book, Wilson takes a partisan position and argues for the epistemological fruitfulness of philosophy as conceptual analysis. If conceptual analysis is to yield answers to the above questions, a certain non-contingent view of the content of our concepts is presupposed. There are certain conceptual 'givens' – not just conceptual

necessities whose denial involves contradiction, but what Wilson calls 'virtual conceptual necessities.' 'A feature which is virtually necessary for conceptual reasons ... is one which it would not be contradictory to say is absent, but which will in fact almost certainly (still for conceptual reasons) be present' (62).

Wilson gives two examples of 'reading off' necessary facts about the world from an examination of our concepts, one of which, punishment, is of broad philosophical interest, and is controversial. Punishment, he says, is entailed in the notion of a rule-governed activity, which is itself a necessary feature of human social life. Since punishment is a logical corollary of what is a necessary feature of human life, the notion that it requires justification (unless by this we mean the justification of a particular form of punishment) is logically queer. Punishment does not require justification any more than, say, rationality. Both are presupposed in human living.

Punishment is not contingently related to rules, Wilson says, although, of course, one could easily argue for their actual inseparability on the grounds that 'men are inherently non-aneglic' (are women?), and will always, as a matter of fact, contravene agreed-upon rules, out of weakness of will, greed, and so forth. But the true nature of the relation between punishment and rules is one of virtual necessity – that is, they are inseparable *for conceptual reasons*. 'A breach of ... rules must be taken to entail the enforcement of some disadvantage on the breaker. If this were not so, we should not be able to identify them as rules prohibiting X or enjoining Y; or else we should not be able to identify *rules* at all, as against wishes, pious hopes, generalisations about human behaviour, or descriptions of some sort of ideal. A social rule enjoining X exists only if, when people fail to perform X, something which is characteristically a disadvantage is normally enforced on them' (83).

I find unconvincing this account of punishment as necessary both for the concept of a rule to have content, and for the individuation of rules. Why cannot rules be individuated simply in terms of the situations/behaviour they are meant to govern? Given differences amongst these, different rules will presumably be called for. As to the distinctiveness of rules, why can they not be distinguished from 'wishes and pious hopes' by their communitarian status – their general acceptance as a form of institutional ordering? Rules have this feature, wishes do not. It seems questionable, therefore, that punishment is a virtually necessary feature of rule-governed activity and hence requires no justification. Moral philosophers still have a job to do on it, one which cannot be supplanted by conceptual analysis. To say this, of course, is not to deny the truth of Wilson's position on the fruitfulness of conceptual analysis but only to challenge one of the claims he makes on its behalf.

By far the most interesting part of Wilson's book deals with the effective teaching of philosophy. The role of philosophy, he says, is to 'help us align our beliefs and feelings to reality, via truth.' And unless we take the 'feelings' part seriously, we will have no success. While human beings do care about consistency, reasonableness, and right, they also suffer from pathological dread of having the irreconcilable elements of their belief-structure exposed. Thus, they are likely to be the victims of fantasy, fantasy reinforced by various myths operative in society. They will cling to the fantasy and resist whatever threatens to overturn it, especially philosophical analysis.

Wilson suggests various ways in which this problem can be handled. First of all, successful teachers must understand the nature of the students' dread of philosophy, and compensate for it by recreating 'something of the relationship between patient and therapist.' This is to be done by adopting a more Socratic approach to the teaching of philosophy – one in which the teacher becomes a trusted friend and mentor to small groups of students, meeting in a non-threatening environment do do non-academic things, and gradually moving into philosophical discussion. One cannot help wondering how realistic this proposal is in an age of shrinking budgets and expanding class-sizes.

Such a change would require a radical shift in societal priorities – which, of course, Wilson recognises when, second, he discusses the need for good public relations in the promotion of philosophy. The improvement of philosophy's image is a matter of reassuring the public that philosophy (when understood and practised properly) is non-ideological. This is to be achieved by purging philosophy of its ideological elements, and presenting it as a matter of 'procedures and principles of reasonableness' rather than as giving right answers, or even formulae for them. Why is it worthwhile to vindicate philosophy in this way? To dispel the twin dangers of autism and myth – the dissociation from reality at the individual and social levels. By educating us into an attitude of critical reasonableness, philosophy helps us to escape domination by our fantasies, and to challenge the institutionalised projections of them.

Because of the scope of this book – the epistemological fruitfulness of conceptual analysis, the true nature of philosophy, the various forms of and reasons for irrationalism, the recommended changes to the teaching of philosophy – *What Philosophy Can Do* is more suggestive than conclusive. For the reader, this is tantalising, and sometimes frustrating – but for meatier fare perhaps one must turn to the rest of the Wilson collection!

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