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Mario Bunge

Emergence and Convergence. Qualitative Novelty and the Unity of Knowledge.

Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2003.

Pp. xvi + 313.

Cdn\$/US\$75.00. ISBN 0-8030-8860-0.

One would hope that a book that pioneers the cause of the unity of science would explore a variety of fields of enquiry. The sheer range of scientific/philosophical disciplines dealt with, competently and systematically, in *Emergence and Convergence*, cannot fail to impress. Quantum mechanics, economics, ethics, linguistics, truth, probability, are all brought into Bunge's unified picture of the world. The various topics are unified by Bunge's overriding thesis, which is summed up in the following quote: 'There are three main world views concerning the structure of the universe and our knowledge of it. One is individualism, according to which everything is either an individual or a collection of individuals ... The polar opposite of individualism is holism, according to which the universe is an undifferentiated blob ... The alternative to both individualism and holism is systematism, according to which the universe is the maximal system, and everything in it is either a system or a component of a system. Moreover, systems are characterised by emergent properties' (95-6). Bunge applies this single picture of the world to the natural sciences and the social sciences alike. The happy middle way between seeing society as a bunch of individuals, and seeing society as an inseparable whole, is to see society as a collection of individuals acting in cooperation in a specific environment and social context.

However, the pay-off of pursuing such a single ontological picture through such a wide range of subject areas is predictable. The reader is continually left with the feeling that there are gross areas of logical space that Bunge is just leaving unexplored. Bunge criticises the reductionist for being an individualist, for ignoring the bonds and relations between individuals. But I doubt that this is the only, or even the usual, road for the reductionist to take. The reductionist does not generally take it that a tiger is just a collection of atoms, the order of which is irrelevant. The reductionist will take it that there is a physical description of a tiger, which is not just a list of atoms, but a description of how those atoms and physical structures are related to each other. For the reductionist, it is this description, involving structure as well as lists of entities, to which the biological description of the tiger is reducible.

Perhaps Bunge's overlooking of the options available to the reductionist is a result of his over-hasty rejection of the notion of *supervenience*, which he claims is a notion which has not (the implication I think is, could not) be elucidated. David Chalmers and Frank Jackson argue persuasively for the importance, not of reduction, but of reductive explanation. The biological facts can be reductively explained in terms of the physical facts if the biological facts logically supervene on the physical facts — that is, if there is an a priori entailment between a complete physical description of the uni-

verse and a complete biological description of the universe. The biological facts may still be real, but they are, to use David Armstrong's term, an 'ontological free lunch'. The biological facts are *no addition in being* to the physical facts. I am not sure how a position like that of Chalmers and Jackson would fit into Bunge's carving up of the options.

Indeed, Bunge's discussion of supervenience is not the only place where one feels that there is simply more to be said, there are more options on the table. Bunge deals with complex ethical issues such as abortion/stem cell research, and the harvesting of organs from executed prisoners, in a couple of sentences, showing how what the systemist will say about such issues sets things straight in a way that what, say, the utilitarian will (allegedly) say does not. Similarly, the mystery of consciousness is dealt with in a few pages, without even a passing mention of the reasons philosophers consider consciousness to be a 'hard problem' in the first place. One gets the feeling that, in his passion for scientific method, Bunge has underestimated the relevance of philosophical considerations.

The most significant neglect of philosophical considerations is in the chapter on probability. Bunge claims that much confusion has been caused by a conflation of various concepts which are picked out by the word 'maybe': possibility, likelihood, probability, frequency, plausibility, partial truth, and credibility. (Incidentally, it is not obvious that the customary philosophical distinction between epistemic, metaphysical and natural possibility does not avoid at least some of these problems.) Bunge, although mentioning Kripke, fails to show awareness of Kripke's separation of the traditional pairings of a priority with necessity, and a posteriority with contingency. This separation, the acceptance of which is widely accepted in contemporary analytic philosophy, would play havoc with the kind of distinctions which Bunge wants to make. His overlooking it is bizarre.

Whilst I am dubious that Bunge's systematist middle way is the remedy for all ontological evils, as a guide for practice in social studies, particularly with regard to social policy, Bunge seems to be on to something. He criticises, on the one hand, the rational choice theorists (the individualists), and on the other hand the hermeneuticists (the holists), for their unjustified a priori assumptions and their corresponding lack of scientific method. Social facts cannot be simplified either to the product of a collection of autonomous individuals acting in a social vacuum, nor to the product of an inseparable whole which we must interpret. Both these approaches ignore the social systems and mechanisms that not only constrain, but also shape, the motives and actions of members of society. This failing, according to Bunge, is the reason why social science has so far failed to form an adequate understanding of such phenomena as the fall of the Soviet Union, the rise of religious fundamentalism in an age of science and technology, the revival of ethnic nationalism, and the commercialisation of politics.

Bunge claims that only (a) the adoption of a systematist understanding of society, and (b) the integration of many different social sciences in the explanation of social facts, can yield real understanding, and lead to effective

social policy. The attempt to deal with poppy farmers without considering the lack of economically viable alternatives, or the attempt to deal with third-world development according to market fundamentalist principles that ignore the specific social factors present in a given society, are unlikely to be effective. This all seems both right and pertinent.

Emergence and Convergence is impressive in its breadth, but often fails to impress in its depth. It will leave philosophers continually wanting to ask, 'But what about ...?'

Philip Goff

University of Reading

Sue Campbell

Relational Remembering: Rethinking the Memory Wars.

Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield 2003.

Pp. x + 225.

US\$75.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-7425-3280-1);

US\$24.95 (paper: ISBN 0-7425-3281-X).

Relational Remembering is about the power of 'voice' — the subtle ways in which the landscape of debate can be shaped by framing questions, delegitimising opponents, generating anxiety, and focusing attention. Campbell's analysis of the memory wars provides the most thorough account I've seen of these discursive dynamics, while at the same time alerting us to the very real threat posed to abused women by the discourse of false memory syndrome. Accompanying her meta-analysis is a substantive (though suggestive rather than systematic) account of relational remembering, epistemic reliance, and autonomy, using feminist and non-feminist sources.

The primary target of Campbell's expose is the False Memory Syndrome Foundation (FMSF), a lobby group for parents whose adult children have accused them of abuse after a period of 'lost' memory. As Campbell shows, the Foundation has employed a number of tactics to generate suspicion of abuse claimants and their therapists, including assuming the appropriateness of a quasi-legal approach (where the burden of proof shifts, corroboration is required, and the accused enjoys the benefit of doubt); situating the phenomenon of recovered memory in a scientific context, alleging science to be value-free, and 'downgrading' to anecdotal the status of claimants' testimony (and that of therapists in the field); appropriating the language of radicalism and using it to label their feminist challengers; and opposing relational reconstructivist models of memory with archival models, suggest-

ing darkly that the reconstruction does not issue from the uncontaminated narratives of abuse claimants but is suggested by their therapists.

Campbell carefully deconstructs each of these framing strategies and exposes their flaws. She shows how values are embedded in the choice of scientific models of memory (e.g., the archival model sometimes being preferred because it suggests orderliness and self-control), and how the models in turn dictate saliency. She shows how the FMSF spokespersons risk compromising their own arguments by invoking the structural fallibility of memory, a Cartesian evil demon that catches more than their opponents in its net. Most importantly, she shows how their strategies reinforce old fears about women's suggestibility and erase the abused woman as a reliable self-narrator.

Within the political analysis, Campbell expands on current feminist accounts of relationality by drawing attention to the link between remembering and social activities such as reminding, memorialising, and testifying. She shows how such activities depend upon the uptake of persons other than the rememberer, and that uptake is offered differentially, depending in part upon social position. Further, being respected as a rememberer connects with one's status as a moral agent, because of the profound links between memory, identity and responsibility. Given these links, disputing someone's memory claims is a powerful way to lower her status as a self, and since most abuse claimants are women, and women's equality in the social imagination is already tenuous, attacks on memory in this context are dangerously gendered.

The collective anxiety about abuse claimants has led feminist scholars to examine the epistemological and ethical tensions associated with therapeutic relationships, as Campbell recounts. While their concern has not been to discount the claims of abused women or to deny the scope of sexual harm, they have questioned whether the therapeutic function of healing is compatible with the testimonial preoccupation with truth. Will advocacy by therapists exacerbate harm by portraying clients as victims? (Haaken); does the voice of the expert 'recuperate the experience of survivors to serve dominant understandings?' (Alcoff and Gray); can testimony 'survive' advocacy? Campbell argues that therapy and advocacy may complement each other, insofar as therapists provide testimonial space, *prima facie* trust in the testimony offered, and theoretical resources for capturing the experiences recounted. The deep insight of Campbell's book is that these offerings — narrative space, trusting uptake and categories of interpretation — are in fact part of the everyday social practices of remembering, not something peculiar to an imagined world of woman to woman militancy.

The importance of Campbell's challenge to the framing of the memory wars by the FMSF is well illustrated in the chapter on Canadian legal practices. Here she demonstrates how, under the influence of the FMSF's lobbying, defense lawyers in the 1990's adopted a strategy of seeking the confidential records of women complainants — thus compromising both their privacy and their reliable access to therapeutic resources. Campbell recounts

the deliberations of the Supreme Court of Canada and Parliament in trying to strike a balance amongst the relevant interests, and in the process makes vivid how the relational approach she is advocating makes a difference. In the first relevant case — (*O'Connor*, a sexual abuse case) — the Court accepted the relevance of records without paying sufficient attention to the vulnerabilities, past and present, of the complainants, who were former students and parishioners of the accused in a residential school. Nor did the Court see how the asymmetrical relationships between the accused and the complainants might warrant a heightened protection of the women's privacy interests. Women who have undergone sexual abuse have had their personal boundaries ruptured; women undergoing legal proceedings are forced to assume a legal identity, risking loss of control of their own narrative. To be denied the safety of the therapeutic context as well is an added affront to them as persons and citizens. When privacy interests are interpreted in light of *relational equality* considerations, however, as they were in *Mills* (the second relevant case), these multiple harms come to light.

Relational Remembering is an illuminating and provocative analysis of the multiple ways in which social position and 'voice' can set the terms of a debate, and in the process distort or displace competing viewpoints, with sometimes devastating consequences. Rather than simply 'taking sides' on the veracity issue, Campbell employs a methodology (questioning false dichotomies, the positioning of interlocutors, the standards of evidence, the assumptions, the social imaginings projected) that can usefully be generalised to other debates, such as those over biotechnology, human reproduction, or environmental health. Her project is thus doubly worthwhile — as an expose of the threat to women in the construction of the 'memory wars', and as a guide to further important deconstructive endeavours.

Elisabeth (Boetzkes) Gedge

McMaster University

David Clark

*Empirical Realism: Meaning and the
Generative Foundation of Morality.*

Lanham, MD: Lexington Books 2004.

Pp. 419.

US\$75.00. ISBN 0-7391-0766-6.

Empirical Realism: Meaning and the Generative Foundations of Morality unflinchingly takes on a task acknowledged as crucial by many in contemporary environmental ethics debates: the development of a sustained and rigorous meta-ethical account of the foundations of a genuine environmental

ethic. Affirming the failure of past ethical reflection, David Clark takes up Richard Sylvan's famous challenge to create a new environmental ethic. The book is wide-ranging and exceedingly ambitious, engaging literary and philosophical authors. The style of the book varies considerably — at times it is analytic, in other places it is marked by personal anecdote and an outright chatty approach. The book consists of three sections. In the first section, Clark argues that all anti-realisms are parasitic on the ultimate norms they claim to criticize. The inevitability of such morally foundational norms thus renders anti-realism epistemically and morally bankrupt. In the second section, Clark defends the idea that there are 'real seemings' that are the genuine and ultimate ground of both our scientific and moral knowledge. Finally, Clark develops a moral realism based upon a non-anthropocentric conception of dignity. Like many environmental ethicists, Clark criticizes the Kantian dignity of the self-legislating rational agent as too subjectivist and anthropocentric to be of any value. He redefines dignity in terms of the organization or structure of things, and as the meaning of Being. To the extent that something is structured, Clark argues that it has a dignity and is thereby morally considerable.

For all the suggestiveness and merit of Clark's analysis, I have some reservations. First, the title is misleading. 'Empirical realism' suggests the Humean and later positivist traditions. But the givenness advocated by Clark is a variant of Heideggerian phenomenology. Indeed, the categories openly employed by Clark throughout the book (circumspective concern, authenticity, reality as gift, among others) are straight out of Heidegger. Most importantly, the definition of dignity relies heavily on a certain interpretation of Heideggerian phenomenology. 'Phenomenological realism' would better describe the book.

More problematic is Clark's willingness to move from phenomenological seemings to assertions of moral fact. Clark regularly points to the fact that many of us have senses of intrinsic value and of dignity, and then infers the existence of intrinsic value. Likewise he moves from the 'fact' that various kinds of concepts are intelligible to the idea that their intelligibility is extra-cultural and extra-mental. But there is intelligibility and there is Intelligibility. The former sense is perfectly captured by the ability of a culture to create and organize rules and norms according to which something will count as sensible or nonsensical. The latter refers to an intelligibility that holds independently of any culture or knower and that could, in principle, hold and be binding for that culture even if it was impossible to ever be aware of it. The skeptical possibilities which now arise are truly mind-boggling — it could turn out to be the case that every single moral 'fact' that I affirm might turn out to be false. This will be so, should the moral facts happen to be something that nobody ever has imagined, or could discover. If we are to adopt a strong moral realism, then why should this not be the case? Now, Clark insists upon a phenomenological connection between ourselves and these facts. These facts somehow provide us with guidance. The brute 'fact' of our various rock-bottom ethical commitments indicates that we feel,

somehow, that there is intrinsic value. But this does not solve the skeptical problem at all. The problem here is not the radical skeptical problem of a denial of morality altogether, but the equally pernicious problem that we might be globally wrong in our beliefs in the moral facts. Indicating that everyone presupposes ultimate values is no solution. Nor is the assertion that the world guides us to moral truth. We have simply no idea of either how or why this should be the case.

In this regard a more sustained analysis of the notions of world and environment would help. Clark repeatedly emphasizes the world has a greatness about it and is intrinsically valuable. But if the world is intrinsically valuable, and if to be intrinsically valuable is to have value as a property, than surely we are entitled to an account of what it is that supposedly has these properties. The closest we get are vague references to the 'root intelligibility of being as such' (379).

Furthermore, Clark focuses on the 'positive' aspects of the world at the expense of its destructive side. He speaks of the diminishing of the world as things are killed or species go extinct. But this is surely odd, as extinction is part of the natural process of the universe. In this context a worry is the absence of any discussion of Nietzsche. The insight that the universe is just as much a violent place, and the existence of this violence is very often a condition of the emergence of new and unanticipated life forms, should be confronted head on. By focusing on the seemingly beautiful and loving aspects of pets, grizzly bears, unforgettable sunsets and other acts of communion with the world, this problem is blurred if not missed altogether.

Clark's book does not seem strong on the history of philosophy and the analysis of the realism/anti-realism debate seems a bit uneven. The real strength and importance of the argument lies in its analysis of contemporary environmental ethics, and it is there that Clark will find his main readership. He has fascinating reflections on the relative values of vital versus non-vital needs. Additionally, his identification of prohibitions against the destruction of a rich life and the infliction of horrifying experience upon another being seem promising normative principles for the treatment of human and non-human others and go some way towards solving the anthropocentrism problem. As well, those interested in the possibilities for a Heideggerian ethics will find valuable material for reflection here.

Richard Matthews

Mount Allison University

David E. Cooper

Meaning.

Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's

University Press 2003. Pp. vi + 152.

Cdn\$/US\$70.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-7735-2567-X);

Cdn\$/US\$22.95 (paper: ISBN 0-7735-2568-8).

Meaning is a trim text that draws on a wide range of literature from many traditions and presents an accessible defence of an interesting metaphysical view. The book usefully complements a previous specialist monograph (*The Measure of Things: Humanism, Humility, and Mystery* [Clarendon Press 2002]) in which Cooper defends his metaphysic of mystery at greater length and in greater historical and argumentative detail.

Chapter 1 ('Preliminaries') sets the book's goal of giving an 'account of meaning' that will address the 'metaphysical character' of meaning by 'providing a perspicuous overview of the behaviour and scope of [the word] "meaning"' in ordinary usage, and by addressing both 'questions about the import, function and status of meaning' and 'the issues or problems that answers to those questions generate' (6, 13). The goal avowedly is *not* to give a 'Theory of Meaning' that would largely alienate the word 'meaning' from 'our pre-theoretical notion of meaning' and whose adequacy would 'be measured by its capacity to explain or predict empirical facts' (7).

Chapter 2 ('The reach of meaning') lays out the essentials of Cooper's account, on which meaning is universal, holistic, and Life-directed. First, '*anything at all* may, in an appropriate context, be spoken of as having meaning or significance — from the cup in front of me to the cat sitting beside me, from the clouds I see through the window to the window I see them through' (21). Second, 'whatever else it is to explain an item's meaning, it is to connect the item to something outside or larger than itself, to locate it in relation to what is — in either of those ways — "beyond" itself' (29-30). Third, 'all meaning-explanations ... serve to indicate the appropriateness of an item to Life,' where 'Life is what [Dilthey], like Wittgenstein after him, calls a *Lebensform* — a "form of life"' (38, 31).

Chapter 3 ('Language') addresses the objection that Cooper's account of meaning is inadequately responsive to the statement-centeredness and systematicity of specifically linguistic meaning. Cooper rejects the premises of the objection. '[M]eaning-explanations that indicate the truth- or assertibility-conditions of sentences ... must take their unprivileged place alongside the many other ways in which the appropriateness of speech to Life are indicated'; and 'there is, in the case of most words, no [systematic contribution of word-meanings to sentence-meanings] to explain' (58, 54). Cooper also urges that his account is better able than rivals to respond to the phenomenology of 'full fledged mastery of one's language' (61). 'For the most part, our mastery consists in the smooth, effortless, spontaneous ways we speak and recognize what other speakers are conveying'; and 'our linguistic mastery is displayed by going beyond whatever could be represented as accordance with rules' (61).

Chapter 4 ('Knowledge, meaning and world') augments Cooper's account of meaning so it 'denies the objectivity of meanings and their reduction to "natural" facts' (79). 'The point ... is that there are no independent facts [about meaning], that truth, when attributed to statements of meaning, must be *understood* in terms of ongoing use and ratification [of those statements]' (78). Cooper allows that this 'anti-realist attitude towards meanings ... cannot be disentangled from a more general anti-realism' (83). But he urges that anti-realism is 'the best response to meaning-scepticism' (64).

Chapter 5 ('Meaning, society and the human sciences') affirms that 'the category of the meaningful [is] fundamental' to 'the social or human sciences, the *Geisteswissenschaften*' (86, 85). 'Absent the categories of Life and a social science can no longer "confront us with [what] belongs to it as its theme", as Heidegger would put it' (91). Cooper also defends 'the possibility of alternative conceptual schemes', but he denies that cultural relativism follows from this possibility (105).

Chapter 6 ('Meaning and the Arts') affirms 'the meaning-disclosive power of art' and the legitimacy of speaking 'of art itself as possessing meaning in virtue of that capacity' (110, 112). Cooper also recants his previous acceptance (*Metaphor* [Basil Blackwell 1986]) of Davidson's view that 'metaphors do not mean at all' (124), and he denies that 'understanding a metaphor is necessarily a matter of discerning the speaker's communicative intention' (123).

Chapter 7 ('The meaning of life') notes that 'the vision of an ineffable reality that provides a measure of Life is ancient and pervasive,' and affirms 'the conditional claim that *if* Life has meaning, this must be sought in what, being "beyond" Life, is at once mysterious and measure-giving' (140). Cooper takes the position that 'Life can be meaningful, because appropriate to mystery' (140). He acknowledges that this position is strictly inconsistent with 'the general formula of meaning as appropriateness to Life', but he doubts that he 'would lose sleep over' this 'failure of application' (141).

Cooper notes that *Meaning* 'belongs in a series primarily aimed at students who are no longer beginners in philosophy, so that it has its sights set higher than those of an introductory textbook, but without aspiring to the level of detailed and perhaps technical argumentation expected in a specialist monograph' (1). These ambitions are laudable and *Meaning* fulfills them admirably. With suitable supplementary readings, the book — which has a helpful bibliography and index — might well serve as a text for a stimulating graduate or undergraduate seminar. The view defended in *Meaning* clearly is controversial in many ways, so students should have no difficulty thinking of term-paper topics. And, since the book is well written and well informed, they should have fun, too.

David B. Martens
Auburn University

Gregory J. Cooper

The Science of the Struggle for Existence.

New York: Cambridge University Press 2003.

Pp. xv + 319.

US\$60.00. ISBN 0-521-80432-9.

This is one of the very few books on philosophy of ecology. One of the great virtues of this book is its philosophical thoroughness, as well as the acknowledgement of its limitations given the difficulty of the enterprise. It is written from a philosophy of science perspective. Its stated aims are to clarify 'the nature of ecology as a scientific field and its role in the process of decision making' (ix). As I shall illustrate, it goes far in reaching the first objective, while it does not go so far regarding the second.

The text illustrates again and again the great complexity of the field of ecology, and the many substantive and methodological choices which govern one or another way of pursuing this science. Decisions are called for, for example, as regarding the levels of organization at which inquiry is to take place: should ecology be carried out at the physico-chemical, at the individual organismic, at the biodemographic, at the community, at the landscape, or at the ecosystemic level? Should they all be studied? And, if so, how should they be integrated with each other?

Ecology definitely provides an ideal place for reflection on the viability of the old Vienna Circle Unity of Science programme. Is reduction really a viable option if entities at 'higher' levels of analysis simply disappear from sight once the physico-chemical level is considered, and if ecological research at the physico-chemical level of what formerly were considered at organismic, or even community or ecosystemic levels, presupposes impossibly high demands on the researcher?

This book tackles a variety of topics. It seeks to offer a well-grounded definition of ecology, and in the process it attempts to deal with a number of foundational controversies summed up as: '(1) the interminable debates over competition, density dependence, the role of biotic versus abiotic factors, and the idea of a balance of nature, and (2) the controversies over theoretical modeling' (1).

For the non-specialist, more interested in the field that ecology may provide to policy-making than in arcane philosophy of science issues, the discussion of the balance of nature is particularly interesting. As is well known, the supposition that nature somehow is in 'equilibrium' has been under attack at least since the 1990's. Cooper's treatment of the issue is exemplary of his general approach. He points out that the debates really take on a variety of forms: 'sometimes as debate on density dependence, sometimes surrounding the question of whether competition is the queen of ecological factors, sometimes involving equilibrium, stability, and cognate notions' (xi). As is typical of his approach to the issues, Cooper is not content to simply lay out the options, but develops a defence of a particular point of view. In this case he argues that 'questions about the balance of nature, and

about related issues of biotic bias, density dependence, and competition are at bottom empirical questions to be settled by empirical study rather than conceptual argument' (75).

For the philosopher of science, Cooper's discussion of whether ecology can really be considered a science if general laws cannot be found, and what role theoretical model building can have in such a discipline, should be of special interest. The relevance of theoretical model building, in particular, occupies a large portion of the book (four out of eight chapters). In this context Cooper discusses, for example, whether such models may serve as research 'tools', even if they may not be predictive due to being formulated at too high a level of abstraction. He similarly queries whether such theoretical models may count as genuinely explanatory if no 'laws' can be found in biology.

The book as a whole is structured around the defence of Haeckel's definition of ecology as *the science of the struggle for existence*. Cooper devotes the first chapter to this topic. He begins by setting out the reasons for adopting this definition and then lays out several potential objections, which he intends to deal with more thoroughly in the remainder of the text. What is surprising, however, is that Cooper does not explicitly discuss alternative definitions of ecology to his own preferred choice. To be fair, Cooper does discuss an alternative approach (which he calls 'bottom up' in contrast to his 'top-down' approach), which would draw its basis from existing ecological practice rather than on the analysis of concepts. For an outsider to the science of ecology, who is keen to get a grasp of ecology in order to see better policy formulated (better in the sense of policy which is compatible with a sense of inter-dependence among human and non-human beings), Cooper's neglect of alternative definitions is disconcerting, since his own choice is so openly agonistic.

The problem, in other words, is that despite Cooper's thoroughgoing philosophical defence of his definition, he never plumbs the obvious value-ladenness of an expression such as 'struggle for existence'. As he traces his definition to Darwin's account in *The Origin of Species*, Cooper makes no effort at analysing whether this perspective on life may not be an artefact of nineteenth-century European ideology, itself enamoured of social-darwinistic suppositions *avant la lettre*.

As it turns out, the first sentence from Cooper's third quotation from Darwin suggests a different focus for a definition. Darwin writes, 'I use the term Struggle for Existence in a large and metaphorical sense, including dependence of one being on another ...' (3). It would seem that Cooper could have contributed to a less combative picture of natural processes if he had tried out a definition that focussed on *inter-dependence* among living things, and between living things and their environments, instead of focussing on struggle, for surely there is cooperation as well as competition in the non-human world — just as there is in the human world.

Cooper's neglect of an alternative, less-combative, picture for ecology is accompanied by a promise not fulfilled, or at least not fulfilled very much. As noted earlier, one of the aims of the book is to clarify the '*role [of ecology] in the process of decision making*' (emphasis added, ix). The jacket cover re-em-

phases this aim, noting that the book would address 'issues in the philosophy of ecology that are of particular importance for the deployment of ecology in the solution of environmental problems.' The implications of Cooper's analysis for policy-making, however, are only once explicitly brought to light, on p. 125. It would have been nice to have this aspect developed more carefully, given the expectations raised. In fairness, the book is long as it stands, and we should simply hope that Cooper's promise of investigating at another time the 'external questions' relating ecology to other fields of enquiry will eventually make up for this lacuna.

My overall assessment of this book is that it offers a fascinating, very informed, and always challenging, introduction to the debates and theoretical complexities that have animated, and are continuing to shape, the science of ecology. I certainly recommend this book to any one interested in the philosophy of the biological sciences, philosophers and biologists alike.

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John Cowburn, S.J.

Love.

Milwaukee: Marquette University Press 2003.

Pp. 292.

US\$32.00. ISBN 0-87462-659-5.

In his book *Love*, John Cowburn aims at a comprehensive theory of love involving the love-relationships of both, human and divine persons. It is the thesis of this book that much confusion can be avoided if we understand that the two competing theories of love (the Physical and Ecstatic Theories, as introduced by Pierre Rousselot) do not exclude but supplement each other. The problem is our inclination to cling dogmatically to a single theory as an explanatory principle of all love. The Physical Theory maintains that the basis of love is the sameness of nature (*physis*) between oneself and the loved person. The Ecstatic Theory holds that a relationship requires the 'turning towards' (Martin Buber) and the union with the loved person. Cowburn says that each theory is applicable to different types of interpersonal love-relationships. The bulk of the book is devoted to the description of these relationships. They are paradigmatic even for divine love. What makes the beginning of this volume seemingly aimless is that the target, medieval scholastic philosophy, is introduced only in its last two parts. Only here Cowburn shows us the usefulness of his classification of types of love (solidarity-love and

ecstatic love) for interpreting the love of a Christian God. A major weakness of the account is that it centres on interpersonal love alone and does not discuss the love of persons for the rest of creation.

The first part of the book discusses the phenomenon in general. Love is acceptance, more precisely a positive acceptance of oneself (self-love) or of others. Self-love, which is the basis of a relationship with other humans, is not synonymous with the mere pursuit of one's self-interest. In self-love, we defend our being if it is threatened and do something to benefit it if need arises. But it is selfishness rather than self-love that is in contradiction with love for others (26). Beyond the acceptance of self, love requires also the altruistic nature of human beings, i.e., that it is possible to do something in the first place for another human being. This altruism does not exclude that the action benefits the acting person in a secondary way. This part of the book reminds us that there is not always a conflict between the good of others and one's own good.

In the second part, Cowburn turns towards a type of love he calls solidarity-love. This is a spiritual relationship that unites people who have something in common. What they have in common can be that they are part of the same family, citizens of the same country or simply all belong to the human species. Their belonging to the same group gives rise to the subjective feeling of love. 'In solidarity-love there is a movement from objectivity to subjectivity: beforehand, two persons are, as a matter of objective fact, connected; in loving one another they recognize and accept this and so come to be linked in their subjectivities, by love' (220). Since solidarity-love does not require that the feeling is mutual, it could be extended to our fellow creatures on earth on the basis of sameness of nature. Cowburn, however, draws our attention only to interpersonal connectedness.

In Parts 3 and 4, the book covers the phenomenon of ecstatic love. The typology of love is indebted to Erich Fromm's *The Art of Loving* (1957; p.43ff). Cowburn's understanding of ecstatic love in particular draws on the theistic existentialist philosophies of Martin Buber, Ferdinand Ebner and Søren Kierkegaard. Ecstatic love means that the lover fixes his whole attention on the other person so that '... psychologically he is not in himself but in the other' (125). Here the Greek *ex-stasis* means the standing out of one's own self. This love is directed towards the individual as such (Kierkegaard), rather than as a member of a particular group. A further characteristic is that human beings need to be free in the choice of their partners in order to feel ecstatic love for them.

Part 5 prepares the reader for the 'Theological Implications'. It explains how the two loves (solidarity-love and ecstatic love) supplement each other in everyday life. Solidarity-love is rational but love as intellectual is not enough (227). Cowburn tries to reconcile the scholastic philosophy with a (personalist) theory of ecstatic love: Man might be a rational animal but there is more to love than can be grasped by rational knowledge. To love as a person involves an intellectual as well as a volitional aspect. Thus the account given is anti-reductionist. The book's theory rightly expands on scholastic philoso-

phy in order to capture all of what we consider to be attributes of love, e.g., love as an act of free persons.

The last part called 'Theological Implications' applies the distinction between solidarity-love and ecstatic love to the Trinity. According to the last chapter of our book, the love of the Father for the Son is based on the similarity of the nature of Father and Son (solidarity-love). Both love each other as persons (ecstatic love). This love has its expression or objectification in the Holy Spirit. Cowburn's introduction of this ecstatic love-relationship between the divine persons solves the problem that, in order to love each other, Father and Son also have to know each other as persons. This seemed impossible under the assumption that the divine persons, in loving each other, love only the divine being. Here, again, it is convincing that the position of scholastic philosophy (in particular Anselm, Peter Lombard and the late Thomas Aquinas) needs to be enriched with personalism, more precisely the philosophy of ecstatic love. Furthermore, it must be noted that the personalist understanding of God's love has important consequences for the divine love of human beings: God's action involves the respect for, and the freedom of, the objects of His love.

This fine book gives us insight into the need to create a comprehensive theory that allows us to comprehend the richness of the reality of love. Cowburn makes the scholastic philosophy of love more defensible. We can agree with him that our deeper understanding means the end of bewilderment but does not put an end to wonder (7).

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William Desmond

Art, Origins, Otherness: Between Philosophy and Art.

Albany: State University of New York Press
2003. Pp. xi + 306.

US\$68.50 (cloth: ISBN 0-7914-5745-1);

US\$22.95 (paper: ISBN 0-7914-5746-X).

The philosophical question of art is as important now as it was in Plato's or Hegel's time, but with one important difference. Whereas the ancient Greek sculptors or tragedians and the romantic German poets and painters felt that they were expressing deep metaphysical truths, many artists now believe themselves to be pulling the wool over the eyes of their public. And so the art lover asks, 'Is the emperor wearing clothes or not? Is this art or not?'

Something unique in history has occurred over the last century that aestheticians are still attempting to come to grips with: how to define the unique experience that calls itself the artistic is an interminable challenge to all those who truly love art. Spectators in galleries across the world face a quandary over the unavoidable perplexity of (post)modernity (think of Tracey Emin, Serrano, or Mapplethorpe): Has art changed its meaning?

‘Why do we now seem to ask so little of art where once we asked so much?’ William Desmond asks in the preface to his book, *Art, Origins, Otherness: Between Philosophy and Art*. Since his 1986 book, *Art and the Absolute: A Study of Hegel’s Aesthetics*, Desmond has resolutely articulated a philosophy of art in the wake of Hegel that is both deeply religious and deeply philosophical. In this time of post-metaphysicians and post-theists, Desmond pleads to ask metaphysical questions of art, and his plea resounds clearly throughout this truly thought-provoking work. Perhaps the following questions are still relevant: From where does the power of art originate? Is it of something human or something other? ‘That it is at all and not nothing. Why, whence?’ (3). In this book, Desmond poses these questions about art’s origins to the philosophers Plato, Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, and Heidegger.

The artistic and poetic philosopher Plato expressed *mimesis* as ontologically significant. Mimesis in essence concerns an original and a copy. Between the original and the copy lies a space that separates humans from perfect Good or Beauty. By means of ‘erotic transcending’, as seen in Plato’s *Symposium*, the soul is led to but remains separate from the original otherness of Beauty itself. The sister or brother of eros is mania (or madness), that inspiration which ‘brings up the thought of extraordinary beginnings’ (43). This space between the original and the copy, mentioned in Plato’s writings and metaphysics, cannot be totalized: ‘great poetry and philosophy are impossible without the gift of divine mania; they both, even in their quarrel, are subtended by a more radical origin, of which they provide each a kind of erotic mimesis’ (44). The problem for humans, according to Desmond, is to discern between two views of inspiration, divine madness and mad madness. Is the work of art primarily an inspiration from a divine *other* or is it solely the product of a human mind?

Another origin of the artwork lies in transcendental thought: ‘we must be the origins’ (55), says Kant, echoing and transforming Shaftesbury’s Platonism. This ‘sanctification of originality’ Desmond calls the ‘terror of genius’. Nevertheless, nature gives the rule to artistic genius. But if there is a relationship of genius and madness in contemporary art, the artist may not *know* or understand this difference and this lack of knowledge, for Desmond, is ‘metaphysically dishonest’ (79). Although this is an unjust oversimplification of Desmond’s argument, can Kant’s dishonesty be corrected, for example, by the prophet of the ‘end of art’, Hegel, who explores how art originates dialectically from an origin of *self-mediation*? Desmond, in comparing Hegel to Plato and Kant, sees the moderns lacking a truly transcendent Good or Other. When speaking of the gothic cathedral, for example, Hegel seems to

see the 'God beyond the whole sung in Gothic soaring' (117), but does not philosophically account for it in a true way. In Desmond's language, it is this something (divine) beyond the whole that gave Hegel 'the sweats'.

The post-Hegelian tradition continues these same themes. Simply speaking, Schopenhauer's expression of the origin of the art work in an *eros turannos* is, for Desmond, better articulated by his disciple Nietzsche, who radicalizes the will to power likened to a frenzied Dionysiac dance. Nietzsche's views of tragedy, philology, and morality, for example, are meaningful but, says Desmond, it is Nietzsche himself who totalized: 'Nietzsche willed to be his own mother and father and offspring all together. This is erotic *self-origination*, and like Hegel's absolute, in debt to nothing other, for there is no genuine other' (208). In the longest chapter of the book, Desmond describes Heideggerian thought as 'postulatory finitism' (253), in which Heidegger articulates a 'self-concealing origin,' an origin that is *of earth*, if not pre-Socratic.

The last chapter concludes that Hegel's triad must be resurrected, but not *within* the Hegelian system. It is only by means of art, religion, and philosophy that one might see and understand both the metaphysical value of what Desmond calls 'the agapeic origin' and the radical otherness of this origin. Desmond's answer to the twenty-first-century quandary of art consists in a *metaxological* understanding of art that is distinguished from Hegel's dialectical understanding. What is at stake here in the distinction between Hegel and Desmond is that the origin of the artwork must be *radically other* from the human's own thought. For Desmond, creativity is the gift of an agapeic divine source and not self-mediated as per Hegel.

The limitation of this book is that it is not easily accessible to beginning philosophers or undergraduates. Desmond's audience will have to have read a great deal of philosophy and aesthetics to see his arguments in their complexity. But the most valuable question of antiquity that does not eclipse, the question of origins as either something (divine) or nothing (i.e. pure chance), should nevertheless open a space for wonder and perplexity in the face of art. Even if the riches of twentieth-century art (for instance, Giacometti, Joyce, Newman, or Shostakovich) may be enjoyed with a kind of depth that Desmond's philosophical idealism doesn't always defend, this profound book is recommended to all those who wish to delve deeper into the power of art.

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A.B. Dickerson

Kant on Representation and Objectivity.

New York: Cambridge University Press 2004.

Pp. x + 217.

US\$60.00. ISBN 0-521-83121-0.

Dickerson's book succeeds on many fronts. It provides both a very readable tour through the B-Deduction (though largely in neglect of §§21-5), and a sophisticated, innovative, compelling, yet *accessible* interpretation of this notoriously dense text. Even critics will be grateful for Dickerson's lucid presentation of his (currently heterodox) viewpoint.

Its accessibility is directly aided by the fact that Dickerson precedes exegesis with a sketch of an 'intuitive model or analogy for understanding what Kant says about representation ... in terms of the notion of seeing something "in" a picture' (3). This model is exploited throughout, almost always bringing key concepts and argument-structures into clearer focus.

Dickerson places Kant in the 'great Cartesian tradition' of representationalism, due to the following Kantian commitments: 'the immediate objects of consciousness are internal representative states', 'our internal states constitute the *medium* of representation', and 'to represent an object is to be aware of something *in* that medium' (5). Yet Kant's representationalism is distinguished in that object-representation is not something that the 'objects' of consciousness (internal states) can do on their own; the *subject* must do something to these states in order to represent objects.

Kant calls this activity *synthesis*. Dickerson's understanding of synthesis is elaborated with reference to the aforementioned pictorial 'model'. What is seen 'in' a picture is not physically included in the pictorial medium, nor is it sufficient that the medium be (passively) apprehended, for we could still fail to (actively) 'see' an object 'in' the medium. Rather, such object-blindness can only be overcome by 'an imaginative act of seeing something *in* the configuration', using 'imagination' in 'the original (and Kantian) sense of a capacity for "image-making"' (21).

Dickerson then aligns this distinction — between imaginatively seeing an object 'in' a medium and merely apprehending the medium itself — with Kantian *intuition* and *sensation*. Specifically, intuition involves 'an act of synthesis' through which 'the mind is aware of those modifications as presenting something, or as putting something before it' (25). This 'imaginative act' results in *judgment*, something Dickerson glosses both as 'an awareness of things *as* being thus and so' (25), and as 'a claim about how things are in an independent world' (27).

Later still, *apperception*, too, is equated both with this imaginative awareness of objects 'in' media and with judgment — it 'is itself an act of judging' (175). This three-way identification is remarkable, since, at many points, Kant distinguishes the activity of (e.g., productive) imagination (in, e.g., figurative synthesis) from that of judgment and apperception. Second, as Dickerson himself notes, there is a long-standing tradition of viewing apper-

ception through the lens of ‘modern notions of “self-awareness”, “self-consciousness”, “self-knowledge”, or “self-reference”’, a tradition that makes all the more striking Dickerson’s claim that, ‘despite initial appearances’, Kantian apperception ‘should not be assimilated’ to such notions, but is instead ‘the reflexive act whereby the mind grasps its own representations as representing’ (81).

Admittedly, even Dickerson acknowledges apperception to be a form of self-awareness — given Kant’s representationalism, the mind’s *own* states are being apperceived. Yet Dickerson insists that apperception is an act of awareness, not merely of modifications or ‘inner states’ as objects, but as representings of objects, by ‘cognising something *in* those states’ (173), through an act of synthesis. Consequently, for Dickerson, ‘the transcendental unity of apperception (i.e., the unified grasp of the manifold in an intuition) just *is* the cognition of an object’ (169; cf. 207) — namely, the object ‘seen in’ the apperceived intuition.

This allows Dickerson to make ‘good sense’ of Kant’s distinction between inner sense and apperception (89f): apperception is ‘involved in *all* conscious thought, and thus in the cases of both inner and outer cognition’ (90). Difficulties remain, however, for if inner sense (as direct awareness of inner states) consists in seeing (apperceiving) these inner states themselves as objects ‘in’ some (further?) medium, what medium could this be?

However this is resolved, the above identification also allows Dickerson to claim that the B-Deduction pivots around a Kantian parallel to the ‘analytic’ problematic of the ‘unity of the proposition’, of how ‘meanings hang together in a proposition or judgment, so as to compose a unified meaning that is something more than a list or mere aggregate of meanings’ (110). Apperceptive unity, for Dickerson, should be understood on analogy with the (semantic) unity enjoyed by judgmental structure, rather than with the (ontological) unity of the self-conscious subject. Contrary to prevailing views, the conditions of ego-unity simply are not allotted a central role in the B-Deduction; instead, the conditions for apperceptive unity are precisely those that must be met to fill the argument-place in ‘I think *x*’ and successfully render an ‘objective’ result.

Now, for Kant, in addition to requiring mere synthesis, apperception requires *spontaneous* synthesis. ‘Spontaneity’, for Dickerson, indicates, not presence of individual ‘choice’, but rather absence of external influence in an act: e.g., a subject’s act is spontaneous if ‘determined by the nature of the subject rather than by the nature of the subject’s given mental modifications’ (37). But given this radically subjective base, how can products of spontaneous synthesis achieve the *objectivity* (i.e., subject-independence) required by genuine knowledge, rather than yielding ‘self-produced fantasies’ (209)? How can this ‘apparent conflict between spontaneity and objectivity’ be ‘reconciled’ (44)?

Dickerson’s Kant offers us an ‘essentialist’ (as opposed to constructivist) solution. If subjectivity enjoyed an *essence* — necessarily universal to ‘all possible human cognisers’ (206) — then any synthesis determined by that

essence alone would be spontaneous (since purely subjective). Meanwhile, the essence would function as an 'objective' constraint upon each individual's acts of synthesis, regardless of the contextual contingencies 'of any particular human observer' (205). Fortunately, *logic* gives us this essence, because Kant holds that the essence of cognition is judging; the logical forms of judgment (categories) disclose the essence of cognitive subjectivity as such.

Syntheses determined by categories alone are thus *both* spontaneous, from the point of view of subjectivity-as-such, *and* yet objective, from the point of view of individual subjects. Indeed, given the ineliminable role of subjective synthesis in cognitive activity, the absence of such essence would dash all hope for objectivity. The categories are not merely compatible with, but necessary for, objective cognition.

Clear and well-argued, Dickerson's book makes a welcome contribution to recent Kant literature. Moreover, it both usefully surveys, and consciously positions itself against, most of the distinguished contemporary (English-language) Deduction commentary. While not an authoritative final say on these topics, this work must be seen as Dickerson's promising first, and hopefully not last, word.

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Anne-Marie Dillens, ed.

Le Pluralisme des Valeurs: entre particulier et universel.

Bruxelles: Publications des Facultés

Universitaires Saint-Louis 2003. Pp 176.

C18. ISBN 2-8028-0147-3.

The essays of this collection circulate around a central theme — namely, values and their plurality — which served, in 2002-03, as the motivation for a series of public lectures organised by 'l'Ecole des Sciences Philosophiques et Religieuses' (Facultés Universitaires Saint-Louis, Brussels). That which particularly distinguishes this collection is the angle under which the theme is explored. Values, the fact of their plurality, and the question of how to manage this plurality in the social world are problems considered under the rubric of an unavoidable and fecund tension at play between the particular and the universal.

As Anne-Marie Dillens explains in her introduction (7), the question of the plurality of values is particularly pressing due to the phenomena of

globalisation. If, says Dillens (7), the pluralism of values finds its most eloquent expression in the multiculturalism that characterises our societies, a triple danger menaces it. First, in order to resolve the problem of conflict of values that pluralism has traditionally brought along with it, values are removed from the public space of political decision, confined instead to the space of private life, thus shielded from the test of universalisation that justifies public institutions. In this way, public decision gains validity, not by resting on value, but rather, by its conformity with a legitimate process (usually a type of proceduralism). A further strategy for the resolution of conflict resides in the general devaluation of values or the a priori claim that values are equivalent. These trends go hand in hand with the accent placed on the secularity of civil power, by which the state attempts to reinforce tolerance with regard to plurality, while, at the same time, proclaiming its own neutrality, the effect being that values have little explicit role in the public realm.

According to Dillens (8), a second danger follows: to dispense with the public interrogation of values is to risk shutting them up in their own particularity, thereby allowing them to occupy (or pretend to occupy) the place of the universal without any form of confrontation. As Dillens explains, traditionally, the pluralism of values is rooted in the pluralism of diversity, where a pluralist society has been conceived as the 'belonging-together' of persons who do not necessarily share the same conception of individual and collective good. In effect, when values are no longer subject to public interrogation, the pluralism of diversity becomes substituted for what Dillens calls a pluralism of identity whereby multicultural society becomes a society of groups whose group-like status lies in their sharing an identical conception of the good, risking fundamentalism. Moreover, relativising values as equivalent admits a danger into the public space: the place of the universal becomes invaded, not by any value in particular, but by what Dillens names 'items of competence'. In other words, the public measure of quality rests on that which is required for competitive functioning in today's society.

In general, the texts assembled in this collection explore the plurality of values in terms of the strange requirement that values be 'particular' to a history and culture whilst, at the same time, maintaining a pretension to 'universality' in order for the value to be of value. The significance of value is studied as an effect of this tension between particular and universal whereby plurality is maintained in the fecund play between these polarities. As Dillens puts it (9), without such play, we risk suffocating the life of thought. In order to battle against the disinterest that favours relativism and contemporary culturalism, these texts invite us to return the question of value to the domain of the universal or, in other words, to the place of public debate. In the same movement, the texts propose to uproot public debate from a proceduralism that it often hides behind, a proceduralism that attempts to secure the status of the 'universal' for itself.

In asking whether cultural pluralism can serve as the basic value of a new humanism, Hélé Beji (Collège International de Tunis) stigmatises the abu-

sive use that can be made of cultural rights, pointing out that the return to culture — as if to something that could be restored — is not always the means to liberty and political plurality. Instead, Beji wants to understand cultural identity in terms of pluralism, where identity is understood as diversity: a gathering together without necessarily resembling each other.

As Rudi Visker (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven) recalls, drawing on the work of Emmanuel Lévinas and others, there is certainly a heaviness of values in the sense that values choose us before we can choose, change or reject them. But this heaviness of values which commands the humanism of the Other in man — the openness to that which is never ultimately possessed by man — allows neither the reduction of man to his belongings, nor the assimilation of the human to the cultural, nor the assimilation of the pluralism of values to simple sociological pluralism.

As Dillens explains (9), far from thinking the universal as a concept paralysed, established once and for all, whether it be in reference to a reality dissimulated behind particularities or to an ensemble of transcendental notions, the texts of Mark Hunyadi (Université de Genève), Jean-Fabien Spitz (Université de Paris I — Panthéon Sorbonne), Catherine Audard (London School of Economics) and Guillaume de Stexhe (Facultés Universitaires Saint-Louis, Bruxelles) invite us to consider the universal as a horizon whose content is to be negotiated through discussion between persons (whatever be their differences and particularities). For these authors, to deny the capacity for communication is to deny the foundation of the democratic ideal: the reflective capacity of being human, its capacity to realise practices, interrogate them, distance themselves from them, and justify their engagements (as much personal as public) by reasons that they can, to a certain point, communicate to other people. This task of negotiating the content of the universal is presented, in the notes of Nathalie Zaccai-Riejnens (Chercheur qualifié au FNRS), as a condition of real civility, or, following Marcel Gauchet, what Philippe de Lara (École National des Ponts et Chaussées, LATTS) sees, in the politics of identity or in the politics of public recognition, as the expression of the 'auto-sufficiency of the social'. In these texts, the universal is the horizon for the life of thought, whose content is to be given via exchange and public discussion.

The collection is unified by the general call that liberal political philosophy accept the provisional particularity of its own principals and that it recognise the tension between the particular and universal as constitutive of the life of democratic politics.

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Philip Fisher

Wonder, The Rainbow, and the Aesthetics of Rare Experiences.

Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press
2003. Pp. 191.

US\$17.95. ISBN 0-674-95562-5.

Philip Fisher is interested in rainbows because they are the archetype of 'the aesthetics of rare experiences' that he wants to explore with this book. The appearance of a rainbow requires just the right combination of timing and weather conditions. Rain is a prerequisite, but it must be localized because otherwise the sun could not break through the clouds and provide the requisite light. The sun must also be at a certain height in the sky, and the viewer must be able to position herself with her back to the sun. We know all of this, but that knowledge doesn't make the experience of a rainbow any less sudden or surprising. Rainbows are important for Fisher not just because they are impressive and memorable, but also because they are rare. For this reason Fisher writes, 'the rainbow is the central instance of the aesthetics of wonder' (33).

Rainbows are also important to Fisher because they mark an intersection between philosophy, science, and art. Socrates must have recognized this connection when he says (in the *Theaetetus*), 'the sense of wonder is the mark of the philosopher. Philosophy indeed has no other origin, and he was a good genealogist who made Iris [who is represented by the rainbow in Greek mythology] the daughter of Thaumás [wonder]' (155d). While everyone remembers that Aristotle said, 'philosophy begins in wonder', few recall that Socrates said it first. Perhaps this is because the connection that Socrates goes on to make between wonder and the rainbow has remained obscure to most readers; this is precisely why Fisher believes the text is so important. Descartes also must have understood this important intersection between philosophy, science, and art when he made the *Discourse on Method* the preface to several essays meant to illustrate his new method, one of which is a scientific explanation of the rainbow.

This intersection is a border region between sensation and thought, and Fisher wants to explore this territory to gain a better understanding of 'the surprise of intelligibility, that moment when the puzzling snaps into sharp focus and is grasped with pleasure' (7). 'Intelligibility' for Fisher includes everything that is uncertain, unknown, and perhaps unknowable. It is the space of the 'defective rationality' that we routinely use to function in the world. Just as Descartes went in search of the foundation of scientific certainty, and found it in the cogito, Fisher goes in search of the foundation of 'defective rationality' or 'intelligibility', and finds it in wonder.

Fisher's analysis of wonder and intelligibility is innovative and insightful. The book confidently transgresses traditional boundaries between science, philosophy, art, mathematics and literature, and this serves to rejuvenate several ancient controversies in the history of philosophy — such as the

eternal conflict between thinking and feeling, the incongruity of our wish for certainty and our desire for spontaneity and surprise, and the clash between the drive to master and possess nature and the impulse to be educated and nurtured by the natural world. Fisher brings something of a paradigm shift to our thinking about all of these controversies when he asks us to look at them through the lens of wonder. In all of these respects there is much to recommend the book.

I think the book could have accomplished even more, however, if Fisher had not insisted on treating wonder as something brand new under the sun — as if philosophy had never attempted to understand the role that wonder plays in epistemology and aesthetics. There is at least one tradition within the history of philosophy that has not overlooked wonder, and that is the tradition of inquiry into the sublime, which is almost as old as Western philosophy itself. Fisher argues that wonder must be understood as a unique kind of aesthetic experience, something essentially different from the sublime, even though thinkers from Longinus to Lyotard have pointed to wonder as a crucial element of the sublime.

The history of thought concerning the sublime provides a rich tradition for understanding all of the ‘rare experiences’ that Fisher addresses in this book, and Fisher fails to provide any compelling reasons for regarding the experience of wonder as essentially divergent from the experience of the sublime. The main justification that Fisher does provide for divorcing wonder from the sublime is that he believes wonder to be essentially a function of desire and delight, while the sublime is founded on fear and dread. But this is a simplification that does not do justice either to wonder or to the sublime. Since Longinus the sublime has been generally understood as a mixed emotion. Authors such as Longinus, Burke, Kant and Lyotard may have disagreed on what precisely the components of this mixed emotion were, but they did agree on its complexity. And all of them also agreed that wonder could be understood as one of those elements, though, again, they disagreed in their conception of the nature of wonder.

That’s why I found it so natural to read Fisher’s book within the context of the intellectual history of the strange and wonderful event denoted by sublimity, and why I found it so surprising that he would insist otherwise. That part of the book strikes me as unfortunate and counterproductive, but once I made up my mind to ignore Fisher’s official rejection of any connection between wonder and the sublime I found the book to be very rewarding.

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**Alexander E. Hooke and
Wolfgang W. Fuchs, eds.**

Encounters with Alphonso Lingis.

Lanham, MD: Lexington Books 2003.

Pp. xvii + 206.

US\$65.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-7391-0700-3);

US\$24.95 (paper: ISBN 0-7391-0701-1).

A book that describes itself as providing the reader with a face-to-face encounter with a thinker demands a singular response on the part of the reviewer. The majority of Alphonso Lingis' own thought as it is presented here amounts to a questioning of all abstracting and generalising discourse. It opposes such discourse with a series of descriptions of *singular* events which, following Levinas who remains Lingis' most abiding influence, one might describe as constituting a phenomenology of otherness or simply, singularity. The present volume models itself on this procedure by merely attempting, often without theoretic mediation, to allow us to 'encounter' Lingis himself in all his — often highly idiosyncratic — singularity.

Such a procedure involves two principal risks. One is that the encounter will turn out to be a 'bad encounter' and the reader's response will be a negative one. The second is that of hagiography: by laying bare the nature of the man and his work the editors are in danger of producing a book that is almost entirely uncritical. Even David Farrell Krell's piece, written with his usual slightly irritating panache, verges on panegyric: 'one cannot criticize his [sc. Lingis'] work' (4), 'the man should be met by love alone and the work with respect and wonder' (16).

This tendency to present a matter without (self-)criticality appears to characterise Lingis himself: indeed, he describes his own writing as 'naïve' (cf. 84), but, one must say, calculatedly so. Lingis lays himself bare, and often this metaphorical 'nudity' will take a form that certainly challenges the limits of the audience's tolerance: the book recounts a — hopefully apocryphal — story of his delivering a paper on death whilst lying in a coffin (x), and the man himself admits to the desire to deliver a paper on transvesticism at a conference on sexual difference while dressed in a suit half tuxedo, half frock (87).

My response to such extremes and other of Lingis' antics, along with his 'proper' philosophical work as it is presented (though only minimally) in this volume, is acute embarrassment. But of course one cannot stop here. The response must be singular, as the encounter with such a thinker's work must be, and if one's response is embarrassment then one must ask after the *meaning* of such embarrassment: why do Lingis' work and life strike me as ridiculous, as beyond the bounds of academic respectability (whatever that may be)? And it is precisely this 'whatever that may be' that Lingis' transgressions force us to examine. Unlike the vast majority of papers and books that we are forced to sit through, the words passing through our bodies without leaving a trace, with Lingis a reaction is *demandé*. And this is what

he is concerned to provoke. His exposing himself to ridicule, his very nudity or self-denuding is itself *eloquent*: it endeavours to bring to our awareness what amounts to an *ethical* relation to persons and events, and that is one not of indifference but of an always singular attention, a preparedness to be surprised, even shocked, by their alterity.

For this reason, one should not be surprised that in a book which purports to be 'philosophical' we find the entirety of its first section taken up with broadly 'non-theoretical' reminiscences of personal acquaintances that merely attempt to allow us to become in some measure acquainted with the undoubtedly singular individual, Alphonso Lingis. (And once again, even if the reader balks — as I did — at the repeated use of the diminutive 'Al' in contravention of the academic convention which addresses academics by their surname, this use is a mark of the attempt to address this individual in his singularity, a singularity whose very purpose seems at times to be to puncture such conventions by expanding beyond their rigid boundaries from within.)

Yet one must begin to be critical: after all, according to the ethical thought of both Levinas and Lingis himself, *every* individual is possessed of such surprising singularity, and most do not put any additional strain on the already over-burdened shelves of bookshops around the world. Lingis has been given the privilege of the *Festschrift* because he is a philosopher, and as a philosopher he remains to be judged. The editors express the frankly rather optimistic, if not hubristic, opinion that Lingis is one of the few American thinkers with sufficient originality to rival Michel Foucault in terms of the following his thought has inspired and even to form his own 'school' (xii). Later on, reality seems to reassert itself, as Hooke admits, 'there is not yet any evident formation of a school ... no sign yet that his revived senses of phenomenology and philosophical approaches to xenography have sufficiently addressed the philosophical controversies of our time' (79).

The second section of the book contains a series of essays, including several by highly notable philosophers (certainly in the case of Jean-Luc Nancy), which address the philosophical questions of interest to Lingis. Some of these are of a high quality, in particular those by Nancy, Elizabeth Grosz, and a highly personal and well-written piece on sickness and dying by Thomas Dumm. It is noticeable, though, that almost none of these essays address specifically the philosophical work of Lingis himself, contenting themselves rather to speak of the topics that are his concern: journeys into the foreign, the attempt to relate to that which is other, singularity. One would not do this with Michel Foucault.

The last Levinassian concern brings out what seems to be wrong with Lingis' attempts — namely, that, for all their fine use of language, they nevertheless seem to amount to what deconstruction would describe as a straightforward attempt to transgress metaphysical language. By this I mean, addressing singularity without the necessary admission that any linguistic description of a singularity must *betray* such singularity (due to the very non-singular nature of words themselves) and must therefore take

account of this in its presentation (*Darstellung*). This is the danger of which Derrida warned Levinas in 'Violence and Metaphysics', that of attempting a Saying without acknowledging the necessity of the Said. Perhaps Lingis is too much under the sway of his master here, who, it should be noted, recanted in the face of Derrida's onslaught.

This is a simplistic critique of course, but it does seem to me that Lingis' work, interspersed throughout this volume in the form of interviews and a concluding essay, with its abrupt juxtapositions of theoretical musings and 'naïve' descriptions of singular events, does not always add a great deal to the difficult question of how one is to speak of singularity and difference, a question that has inspired so much careful thought in the continental philosophical tradition.

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Michael Kelly

Iconoclasm in Aesthetics.

New York: Cambridge University Press 2003.

Pp. 222.

US\$60.00. ISBN 0-521-82209-2.

The main thesis of Michael Kelly's new book is to demonstrate why philosophical aesthetics tends to become 'iconoclast' by inscribing 'a deficiency into the very conception (or ontology) of art' which in turn produces 'disinterest' toward and 'distrust' of art. Unlike traditional iconoclasm, philosophical iconoclasm does not deliberately try to destroy art for ideological, moral or political reasons. Rather, it is an *effect* of the way in which philosophers generally tend to instrumentalize art to pursue their own aims and theoretical interests. Four philosophical cases are examined here to demonstrate this thesis: Heidegger, Adorno, Derrida and Danto. In spite of their theoretical differences, Kelly argues that these philosophers share a common way of *predefining* art in respect to their own theoretical interests instead of trying first to grab what art *really* is.

Kelly identifies two strategies that lead to iconoclasm in the form of disinterest and distrust in art: 1) abstracting art out of history to grasp its universality, which amounts to disinterest toward art itself, since art is always 'determined by the historical conditions from which it has been abstracted', and 2) inscribing into their conception of art their own interests,

which art itself cannot realize, since these are *philosophical* and not artistic interests, and therefore point toward art's constitutional deficiency. Kelly's idea is that this kind of iconoclasm could and should be avoided if we are to understand art for what it really is and not for what philosophers want it to be. To counter this tendency, Kelly suggests that we should reconfigure a conception of art that 'emphasizes its abilities and strengths', i.e., its '*potency*' (a concept Kelly does not develop or analyse here), rather than its 'inabilities and weaknesses', i.e., its '*deficiency*'. By doing so, we should also integrate art's historicity and 'reconfigure the relationship between aesthetics and art by reorienting aesthetics toward the history of art'.

The book is divided in five chapters: Chapters 1 to 4 are devoted to the detailed analysis of four philosophers who have written on art, in conjunction with a painter and an art historian/critic: Heidegger is associated with van Gogh and Schapiro, Adorno with Gerhard Richter and Buchloh, Derrida with Mark Tansey and Danto (as a critic in this case), Danto with Cindy Sherman and Krauss. The last chapter is devoted to Kelly's own view of an 'aesthetics without iconoclasm' by means of the 'rehistoricizing of aesthetics'.

This way of initiating a dialogue between philosophers, specific artworks and art historians or critics is the main achievement of this book, and helps to illustrate how philosophers tend to misuse art for the sake of their own theories. But this quality does not compensate for the weaknesses of the book, which are structural, methodological, and epistemological.

Structurally, there is a clear disproportion between the structure of the first chapters and the last one — which is supposed to offer an alternative to the preceding positions — not only in terms of length (Chapter 5 contains only ten per cent of the book, a third of which consists in reminding us what has already been said), but also in terms of organization. For the first four chapters all refer to specific artists, works of art and art historians/critics, whereas Kelly does not himself refer at length to any artwork in order to illustrate his position and the theoretical difference it would make if we were to adopt it. If Kelly had applied to his own work the method he demands for others, his own argument would have been more convincing and gained in validity.

Methodologically, in Chapter 2, Kelly uses *Buchloh's* analysis of Richter's works to illustrate *Adorno's* iconoclasm. The fact that Buchloh is a self-declared Adornian and that Adorno did not write on visual arts seemed to be two good reasons motivating this choice, says Kelly. But Buchloh's 'Adornian' interpretations of Richter are themselves questionable (Richter's responses are more truly Adornian than Buchloh's!). Moreover, the direct analyses of Adorno do not render the dialectical perspective of the *Ästhetische Theorie* and oversimplifies Adorno's position, especially when insisting on a *literal* definition of art as a 'lie'. Meant as a demonstration of Adorno's theoretical 'iconoclasm', Kelly's *use* of Adorno to demonstrate his own thesis in chapter 5 is therefore quite unconvincing.

Epistemologically, Kelly blames aesthetics for abstracting art out of history because of its declared interest in universality. Yet it seems odd to

blame *any* philosophical stance that uses abstraction, since its very nature *is* to be abstract and to search for concepts that try to render and help understand our diverse experiences of reality. Moreover, Kelly's suggestion that an alternative to philosophical iconoclasm consists in following art historians, who are 'naturally' closer to the real artworks and their historicity and thus escape iconoclasm, does not seem very productive. In reality, art history also works with concepts and theoretical frameworks that inspired various interpretations and classifications of artworks (Panofsky and Gombrich are just two famous examples). In other words, art history's being less 'external' to artworks than philosophy does not mean that there are no hidden (pre)conceptions of art and frames of interpretation at work. Post-colonial and critical studies (not to mention the Guerilla Girls!) have shown how art historians can also be blinded by ideology and their own theoretical interests.

Of course, the fact is that many philosophers who have written on art did not know much about it at first hand, and were less interested in art than in pursuing their own philosophical interests (although this is certainly not true of Danto, and even less of Adorno). But we didn't have to wait for Kelly to tell us this, and at least four philosophers have commented and analysed this topic more productively, I think, than he does here: Rüdiger Bubner, 'Über einige Bedingungen gegenwärtiger Ästhetik' (1973); Martin Seel, *Die Kunst der Entzweiung* (1985); Rainer Rochlitz, *L'art au banc d'essai* (1998); Jean-Marie Schaeffer, *L'art de l'âge moderne* (1992).

Finally the book is unhelpful both for aestheticians who have a good knowledge of the philosophers that are discussed here (they will not learn much from Kelly's analyses and will even be occasionally annoyed by their superficiality), and for readers who expect to discover a new way of conceiving of aesthetics and new tools to work with, since Kelly neither fully develops his own position nor gives any concrete examples of artworks and thus offers us no way of testing its interest and validity.

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Joseph LaPorte

Natural Kinds and Conceptual Change.

New York: Cambridge University Press 2004.

Pp. x + 221.

US\$70.00. ISBN 0-521-82599-7.

Natural Kinds and Conceptual Change is a refreshingly direct book that challenges a range of orthodox views in the philosophy of science (especially biology), the philosophy of language, and metaphysics. Amongst these are the views that species are individuals rather than natural kinds; that scientists discover the essences of natural kinds; that the causal theory of reference has commonly-ascribed implications for realism and analyticity; that there is an unacceptable form of incommensurability entailed by descriptivism about reference; and that there are good grounds, familiar since Quine, for thinking that there is no distinction of significance to be drawn between changes in meaning and changes in theory. LaPorte argues against all of these claims, and if you are curious about just how he does it, then this is a book for you.

Following a short, general introductory chapter, the book has six chapters that divide into three pairs. The first pair lay out LaPorte's views of what natural kinds are and their relationship to rigid designation and essentialism, and focus on species; the second pair turn to biological and chemical kind term reference; and the third pair concentrate on some of the philosophical fallout from earlier chapters, particularly their implications for incommensurability and the nature of conceptual change. The book is an interesting blend of naturalistic philosophy of science, using examples from biology — particularly from systematics and evolutionary theory — and analytic metaphysics and philosophy of language, and it is well worth the read. The arguments are, for the most part, succinct and clear, with the argument flowing from well-chosen and researched examples (primarily from biology and chemistry) to general claims that have perhaps too easily won their orthodox status in their respective fields.

Consider the first of these general claims that LaPorte takes on, the claim that species are individuals. This is usually presented as a view about particular species, such as the domestic dog, *Canis familiaris*, and makes a claim about their ontological status: the species *Canis familiaris* is an individual rather than (as past orthodoxy held) a natural kind. Originally articulated by the biologist Michael Ghiselin, and championed by him together with David Hull for the past thirty years, the species-as-individuals thesis holds dominant sway amongst biologists and philosophers working on species. LaPorte recounts the chief arguments that have been given for the thesis, a mixture of reasons against holding that species are natural kinds (e.g., there are no biological laws about species) and reasons for thinking that they are individuals (e.g., species are spatio-temporally restricted). He identifies important weaknesses in each, and so one might expect him to reject the species-as-individuals thesis (he goes so far, on p.15, to suggest that the

failure of arguments for the individuality thesis leave the view of species as kinds as the default position). But in fact LaPorte goes on to adopt what sounds like a much weaker claim, namely, that species can be interpreted as natural kinds or as individuals, entailing that the species-as-individuals thesis is a possible option rather than either a forced move in or a requirement of our thinking about species.

That might be a defensible position itself, but it invites the following kind of probe: 'The species-as-individuals thesis is usually presented as being incompatible with the idea that species are natural kinds, and not unreasonably so: individuals and natural kinds are very different ontological critters. Forget whether species can be construed or interpreted as individuals or as kinds. The debate is about whether species *really are* individuals or kinds (or both, or neither). Where do *you* stand on this issue?'

I want to hazard a guess as to just where LaPorte does stand here, based on the broader argument of the book. For much of the book offers a response to just the kind of impatient realism that lies behind the probe above, and saying more here will convey some idea of the positive view of science and language that LaPorte chalks out.

Whether species are individuals or natural kinds, LaPorte might say, is not fixed by either the meaning of the term 'species' or by our best theories about species. The meaning here is open-textured, and context can be used to settle whether the predicate 'is an individual' or 'is a natural kind' (or neither or both) is more appropriate for any given occasion. Moreover, the debate over the ontological status of species does not concern a sort of deep, underlying fact awaiting scientific discovery or resolution — a kind of essence about species — but simply reflects the options open to future scientific discourse. Maybe scientists will decide that species are individuals (or that they are natural kinds, or both, or neither), but this will be a decision, not a discovery, and one that could readily have gone another way, given our current meanings and theories. Adopting this kind of focus on linguistic change and its relationship to theoretical change, however, implies neither that science is irrational here, nor that it is incapable of progress or knowledge accumulation, as aficionados of various incommensurability theses hold. Rather, we need to understand how linguistic change is interwoven with theoretical advance, and the historical commonalities that lie in the background whenever a major issue, such as whether species are individuals or natural kinds, is resolved. This also allows us to distinguish changes of meaning from changes in theory, not least of all because meaning changes are often prompted by changes in theory.

Whether or not LaPorte would endorse these claims about the species problem, he does advance similar claims about natural kinds, including species, throughout *Natural Kinds and Conceptual Change*. If warning lights were going off while you read the previous paragraph, they will likely flash as you read through the first half of LaPorte's book. Species, he says, are natural kinds (but also, perhaps, individuals). In Chapter 2 he nicely articulates the idea that they have historical essences (at least for cladists they do).

Particular species, such as the tiger species *Panthera tigris*, have the essential property of being the biological lineage that has descended from a given population and that terminates in some particular speciation or extinction event. Being a member of *Panthera tigris* and being a part of that biological lineage are properties that any individual has in precisely the same possible worlds, and so this natural kind term and the description used to characterize it are necessarily coextensive. This implies, LaPorte argues, that species belong essentially to their higher taxa, but is compatible with the denial of essentialism about an individual's membership in a given species. That is, it is an essential property of *Panthera tigris* that it belong to the genus *Panthera*, but it is only an accidental property of any particular tiger that it belong to that species (or genus).

At the physical and conceptual heart of the book is LaPorte's claim that, even given all of this, it would be a mistake to hold, as many do, that scientists discover essences, a claim that he defends through chapter-long discussions of each of biological and chemical kind term reference. But before getting to that, consider the question of whether particular species have essences, and if so, what these are. There are several issues here. One stems from pluralism about species concepts. According to cladists, species have historical essences; according to proponents of the so-called 'biological species concept', species have a reproductive essence. Notoriously, there are many different species concepts employed by scientists in different biological fields (ecology vs evolutionary theory vs virology), and on distinct biological taxa (mammals vs birds vs bacteria). When LaPorte considers this point, he treats pluralism as yet another species concept, along with monism (74-5), taking all of these on board in much the way that I suggested he might do with the *prima facie* competing views that species are individuals and that species are natural kinds. But this makes the kind of essences that he is endorsing somewhat like Locke's nominal essences, for they exist as the 'workmanship of the understanding' or, more properly, as a function of the different kinds of inquiry that we bring to bear on the biological world. On this kind of issue LaPorte retreats too far from realism to maintain the kind of essentialism that he wants to endorse.

Another issue here concerns the characterization of the essences that species have. One problem that phylogenetic views of species face is that of distinguishing species from other — typically larger — monophyletic units, a problem that has motivated some (such as some proponents of the Phylo-code) to advocate rank-free taxonomy that departs from the traditional Linnaean hierarchy. It is not simply that we do not know what the founding populations for most species are — that's primarily an epistemic limitation — but of whether there is an objective basis for singling out species as special kinds of lineage (and, if so, what that basis is). Here is another live issue that forms part of the species taxa problem that one would like LaPorte to say something more about.

Recognition of the disagreement that exists between biologists about species forms one prong to LaPorte's argument for the claim that scientists

do not discover essences. But he also appeals to a familiar analogy between concepts and maps (80-3) and to the ways in which meaning change and theory change are linked (83-90, and Chapter 4 *passim*) to support this claim. Suppose that cladism were to win the day about species, so that 'bird' had a cladistic essence. LaPorte says, 'there will have been a change in the meaning of "bird", not a discovery of the relevant kind's essence' (83), since cladists are primarily refining the meaning of the natural kind term 'bird'. But here one wonders just why change in meaning and discovery of essence are juxtaposed in this way, why the former is taken as precluding the latter. One of the virtues of LaPorte's views is that he assesses strong, general claims made about reference and essence by means of a discussion of informed examples. It would have been nice to see some of his own positive claims and assumptions more consistently held to the flames in this way.

The final two chapters address larger themes in the philosophy of science (incommensurability) and the philosophy of language (analyticity); I'll say something only about the former. In Chapter 5, LaPorte argues that although the problem of incommensurability is not resolved by the causal theory of reference, a kind of cluster description theory, together with attention to particular forms of linguistic and theoretical stability, can solve this problem. LaPorte develops his argument here by an appeal to two case studies, that of pre- and post-Darwinian uses of 'species', and that of the overthrow of vitalism. In general terms, LaPorte adopts a position that purports to lie between the excesses of Kuhnian relativism and the historical insensitivity of traditional realism. Here he appeals again to the open-textured and vague nature of many claims about species and vitalism, with these concepts being refined through diachronic theoretical change. But whether one thinks he manages to remain moderate here will turn on how one views the following kinds of statements he makes: 'Before the Darwinian revolution, "species" did not refer to *species*: It did not clearly and precisely refer to anything, because the presuppositions for use turned out to be false' (131).

There is much more in this book than I can discuss, even in a review whose length presses an editor's goodwill. I recommend *Natural Kinds and Conceptual Change* to philosophers in each of fields that it addresses.

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Leonard Lawlor

The Challenge of Bergsonism.

New York: Continuum 2003. Pp. xiii + 154.

US\$105.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-8264-6802-0);

US\$24.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8264-6803-9).

Bergson définit sa philosophie par une fonction: intervertir le cours habituel de la pensée. Il y aurait une tâche propre revenant à la philosophie, la définissant comme activité singulière se distinguant de toute autre activité, qu'il serait nécessaire de clarifier et qui pour l'essentiel se caractériserait par un geste particulier, par une opération: l'interversion. Si la pensée de Bergson a suscité tant de quiproquos, s'il est arrivé qu'on la confonde avec des tendances spiritualistes ou avec la phénoménologie, à laquelle elle est très profondément opposée — comme le montre Lawlor dans un chapitre essentiel de son livre intitulé «Le concept d'image: phénoménologie» —, c'est qu'on ne s'est pas assez intéressé à ce que signifiait «intervertir le cours habituel de la pensée» et à ce que Bergson visait dans cette interversion. En surface, les analogies sont possibles: l'analyse de la conscience chez Bergson pourrait sembler se rapprocher de la phénoménologie qui, elle aussi, se pose comme analyse des «flux» de conscience, de même la question du temps pourrait être liée aux «Leçons sur la conscience intime du temps», ouvrage dans lequel Husserl développe une vision très proche de la durée bergsonienne. Les analogies sont possibles mais elles passent à côté de l'essentiel: comment la construction d'une conscience impersonnelle chez Bergson est liée à une vision de la durée et de la créativité. C'est pourquoi la question de l'interversion du cours habituel de la pensée est une question centrale, dans la mesure où elle forme ce qu'on pourrait appeler l'«ethos» du bergsonisme, ou dans les termes de Bergson l'intuition qui donne sens à l'ensemble des concepts.

En ce sens, le livre de Lawlor constitue un moment important dans la lecture de Bergson, non seulement par la clarté avec laquelle il rend compte de la «métaphysique» bergsonienne mais aussi par la manière avec laquelle il situe très précisément les déplacements qu'a opérés Bergson dans la pensée française. Lawlor montre que ce «cours habituel de la pensée» n'est rien d'autre que la généralisation de la perception et d'un mode particulier de celle-ci: l'image-perception. Comme si la pensée n'était au fond que de l'image-perception généralisée. Dès lors se précise un peu la tâche que Bergson attribue à la philosophie: intervertir le cours de la habituel de la pensée signifie tout d'abord: se dégager d'une généralisation de la perception, mise en œuvre spontanément.

Pourquoi ce problème de la perception est-il central chez Bergson ? Tout simplement parce que la perception est un mode spécifique d'expérience qui s'est imposé comme mode unique et privilégié d'expérience, au détriment d'autres dimensions. Cela s'explique par la simplicité apparente de la perception: il semble que les objets perçus soient simples, donnés immédiatement, dans l'évidence de ce qu'ils sont. Pourtant, sous l'apparence de cette

simplicité, se cachent des opérations complexes d'abstractions et de simplifications qui font passer le flux de l'expérience en une multiplicité d'objets identifiables et stables. C'est que la perception a un rôle, comme l'intelligence a une fonction: permettre une action réelle ou possible sur les choses. Et toute action repose sur une identification préalable par laquelle les éléments sur lesquels l'action s'opère sont individualisés et identifiés. Cette identification se produit spontanément et inconsciemment pour Bergson; elle relève d'activités et d'habitudes qui se réalisent à un niveau inférieur à la conscience et qui la déterminent. Cela nous donne une seconde définition de l'intervention: se dégager de la perception comme action possible sur les choses, ou encore cela signifie : transformer le rapport entre la pensée et l'action.

Mais la mise en évidence de la perception comme modèle de la pensée, si elle est nécessaire n'est pas suffisante; une critique de la perception est essentielle mais elle doit s'ouvrir sur d'autres dimensions à partir desquels une «reconstruction» de la philosophie pourrait être possible. Cette critique est plutôt de l'ordre d'un déplacement: il ne s'agit nullement de rejeter la perception mais de la déplacer. Bergson va situer dans la mémoire le lieu à partir duquel une autre manière de poser les problèmes est possible. Mémoire et perception diffèrent en nature mais s'impliquent mutuellement: la mémoire n'a d'actualité que dans une action présente qui, en quelque sorte, l'actualise et, réciproquement, toute perception s'installe dans une densité qui n'est autre que la contraction de la totalité de la mémoire dans un moment actuel. Tout le travail d'interprétation de Lawlor vise à dégager cette question de la perception et de la mémoire d'une simple théorie des facultés, pour l'ouvrir à un tout autre problème: la construction d'une ontologie et d'une métaphysique de la durée.

L'essentiel du livre de Lawlor se situe à notre avis dans cette substitution d'une ontologie à une philosophie de la perception. Cela en fait un livre essentiel, non seulement pour comprendre ce qu'est le bergsonisme, mais aussi pour situer le moment et les modes d'une bifurcation dans la pensée française entre une réduction de la philosophie à une théorie de la perception, comme l'est sans aucun doute la phénoménologie, et l'exigence, inaugurée par Bergson, d'une reconstruction métaphysique dégagée de la perception et de ses modèles.

Cette question d'une métaphysique dégagée de la perception ouvre de nouvelles dimensions éthiques que Lawlor analyse dans son dernier chapitre en confrontant les positions de Levinas (qu'il décrit comme une philosophie de la transcendance) et de Bergson (penseur de l'immanence), montrant que l'éthique et la métaphysique sont fondamentalement liées, surtout chez Bergson.

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Gabriel Richardson Lear

Happy Lives and the Highest Good.

Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press

2004. Pp. ix + 219.

US\$35.00. ISBN 0-691-11466-8.

One might expect that little new could be added to the debate over inclusivist and intellectualist interpretations of happiness in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. This book, however, does add something new, arguing that contemplation is the highest human good on the basis of a 'for the sake of' relation understood in terms of approximation.

Lear begins by arguing that the criteria for happiness in *EN* Book I do not require an inclusivist interpretation of happiness, that they fit a monistic account of the human good quite well, and that an inclusivist interpretation faces a problem when it comes to 'middle-level ends' — ends sought for their own sake as well as for happiness (cf. Chapters Two and Three).

A final end provides the criteria for success for the ends subordinate to it. A most final end is never sought for the sake of anything else; and happiness, the human good, is the most final end. Since the candidates for the human good that Aristotle rules out in *EN* I 5 and I 7 are all monistic goods, Aristotle appears to take happiness to be a monistic good for the sake of which everything else is sought.

The self-sufficiency criterion doesn't require an inclusivist interpretation. An end is self-sufficient if, given sufficient external goods for its achievement, choosing it for its own sake would make life worth living. A monistic good such as contemplation could be such a good. That the human good is not to be counted as one good among others also doesn't require an inclusivist interpretation. *Qua* final good, a final end is not to be counted along with the goods subordinate to it, because it provides the basis for their value.

An inclusivist interpretation also faces a problem with middle-level ends. Since the value of a set of ends is derived from the value of the ends that make up the set, on an inclusivist view it is hard to see how the final end for the sake of which middle-level ends are sought can be a basis for their value. If one were to say that middle-level ends are a set of ends that satisfy a certain property and that this property is the basis of their value, then this property will turn out to be the human good, and it will be a monistic good.

One can solve the problem of middle-level ends and take contemplation to be the human good if one can argue that the most important middle-level ends, morally virtuous actions, are sought for the sake of contemplation. Lear's argument for this solution runs as follows.

Aristotle recognizes a 'for the sake of relationship' according to which an activity can be for the sake of an end if it approximates that end, even if the agent doesn't consciously aim at that end. Just as animals reproduce for the sake of the divine, a human being can act for the sake of an end fixed by his nature even if he doesn't consciously aim at that end (Chapter Four).

Practical wisdom turns out to approximate theoretical wisdom. These two virtues are structurally similar because theoretical wisdom aims at truth and practical wisdom aims at truth in agreement with right desire. Practical wisdom approximates theoretical wisdom because theoretical wisdom is superior to practical wisdom. Practical wisdom issues orders for theoretical wisdom, not to it; and theoretical wisdom is authoritative over practical wisdom (Chapter Five).

A person acts for the sake of what is genuinely fine if his actions are ordered with respect to the human good, their goodness is manifest, and they provide an appropriate basis for public praise and self respect. A person who acts for the sake of the fine must have some understanding of the good that orders his action, but need not have a full understanding of that good (Chapter Six).

Morally virtuous action approximates contemplation. For example, in a paradigmatically courageous action a brave man risks his life for his *polis* because doing so is fine. This shows that he believes that living in the freedom provided by his *polis* is more valuable than life itself. In order for him to be right about this, this freedom must be used for worthwhile rational activity. A brave man will have some conception of what such worthwhile activity consists in. But in fact any such rational activity is worthwhile because it is or approximates contemplation. Thus, paradigmatically courageous actions are ultimately done for the sake of contemplation (Chapter Seven).

EN X 7-8 draws the conclusion that one might expect from all of this. Contemplation is the highest good. Picking up *EN I 7*'s claim that happiness is rational activity in accord with the best and most complete virtue, *EN X 7-8* argues that contemplation is the highest human good because only it is sought only for its own sake, morally virtuous action also being sought for the sake of contemplation. Primary happiness, thus, is a life of contemplation, the political life being a secondary form of happiness. However, a person who leads a contemplative life will also choose morally virtuous actions for their own sake. Since they approximate the divine activity of contemplation, he will choose them as a way of realizing the divine in the embodied circumstances of human life (Chapter Eight).

Lear seems right to recognize approximation as a 'for the sake of' relation in Aristotle. While a reader is apt to have some questions about some parts of some of her arguments, her arguments pay close attention to the text, they are worth taking seriously, and they display the virtue of not claiming more than they can support.

There is, however, a view that Lear mentions in passing that I think may be worth further discussion. While not an inclusivist view, it would give many inclusivists most of what they want. It is that the human good is the single, general good of rational activity in accord with virtue, including the best and most complete virtue of rational activity, contemplation. This view fits *EN I 7*'s claim that the activity whose excellence exercise constitutes happiness is *idion* (unique) to human beings (1097b35-8a1), activity in accord with practical reason differentiating human rational activity from that of divine

beings. Despite Lear's objections against a similar view (196-7), I think this view can provide a satisfactory explanation of why someone who leads a primarily happy life will choose morally virtuous actions for their own sake. It can also accept most if not all of Lear's explanation of why morally virtuous action is chosen for the sake of contemplation.

The main worry for this view is that it takes contemplation to be for the sake of the more general end of rational activity in accord with virtue, whereas *EN X 7-8* argues that contemplation is sought only for its own sake. One possible response to this worry is that *EN X 7-8* only argues that contemplation is the best and most complete *virtue* of rational activity, not that it is the highest good, something that would explain why the only alternative to contemplation considered in *EN X 7-8* is morally virtuous activity. Though such a view may not ultimately be defensible, I would like to see what Lear has to say in connection with it.

Lear has written a fine book. Anyone interested in Aristotle's ethics should read it.

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John Locke

Selected Correspondence.

Mark Goldie, ed.

Toronto and New York: Oxford University Press 2002. Pp. xxxvi + 378.

Cdn\$105.00/US\$45.00. ISBN 0-19-823542-9.

This one-volume edition of John Locke's *Correspondence* is a selection by Mark Goldie from Esmond S. de Beer's eight-volume edition of the correspondence, to which it is keyed.

Goldie describes the period between 1630 and the mid-eighteenth century in England as an epistolical age. Letters conveyed news, shared secrets, served as the media for academic controversy, and cemented or upset social relations. Correspondents offered assurances of goodwill and esteem or complained of their ill-usage at one another's hands. Letter-writing manuals were studied, and their contents emulated even by maidservants (xvi); collections of letters were printed, and political and religious essays might take the form of a letter to a 'friend'. Many letters were nevertheless impulsive, rambling, stream-of-consciousness productions. Goldie's choice of letters of all types is intelligent and sensitive, and the surrounding apparatus is thoroughly researched and consistently interesting. The collection is

furnished with a general introduction acquainting the reader with the main episodes of Locke's life and the salient features of his personality. The sixteen chapters that follow comment briefly on the letters and explain the contexts in which they were written and received. An appendix to the book identifies Locke's correspondents handily, and a topical bibliography suggests modern readings on subjects from Agriculture and Alchemy to William III and Women.

Locke, who was born in 1632 'on the margins of gentility,' was sent away to school at Westminster, whose corporal punishments he remembered with revulsion fifty years later (163), and then educated at Oxford through the assistance of a private patron. Growing up in an atmosphere of sectarian division and popular unrest, Locke mistrusted Catholics, Platonists, social radicals, tyrants, and Quakers, though Benjamin Furly, a Quaker correspondent, refers in 1694 to 'a society so free, as you and I would gladly see' (196). The views that would appear in the anonymously published *Two Treatises on Government* and the *Letter Concerning Toleration* (1689) were making trouble for Locke much earlier. He explains his sudden departure for Holland in 1683 in the midst of a political purge of Whigs and Dissenters (74ff) as motivated by his health and complains of being 'suspected to write divers scandalous and seditious libells' (100). *The Reasonableness of Christianity* was also published anonymously. Locke later told Philip van Limborch, an Arminian, that he was happy to find 'one theologian ... for whom I am not a heretic' (210). His attack on innate ideas in the *Essay*, which he published on his return to England, was taken as an attack on religion, though religion proved resilient, when, as William Molyneux suggested (234-5), Christian apologists shifted from Cartesian to physico-theological arguments for the existence of God. Persistent 'blasphemy' — including denying or reasoning against God was still punishable and punished by death as late as 1697, and Locke had reason to worry about the extension of his views by his admirers John Toland and Matthew Tindal (230-1).

Many letters in the collection are to and from women. Those from Damaris Cudworth Masham and Carey Mordaunt, are frank and emotional, and Locke could be both gallant and evasive (159). Locke himself was obviously in love with Elinor Parry in 1659 — 'when I thought myself in a condition destined to misery beyond remedy and beyond comfort behold two or three drops [of ink from your pen] have revived me' — but he lacked the wherewithal to marry and never did. Lady Masham's relations with Locke and his concern for her youngest child, Francis, remain mysterious, though her dependency on him is evident (104-5, 108-10). The editor notes on p. 250 that John Edwards referred libelously, in a foreword to his attacks on Locke and John Toland of 1697 that was papered over (literally) by the publisher, to 'the seraglio at Oates.'

The Irish writer on optics, William Molyneux, who sent Locke a copy of his own *Dioptrica Nova* on its publication in 1692, won Locke's heart immediately with his gentleness and perspicuity. 'You must therefore expect to have me live with you hereafter, with all the liberty and assurance of a settled

friendship,' he wrote back in response to Molyneux's first letter. 'There are beauties of the mind, as well as of the body, that take and prevail at first sight; and wherever I have met with this, I have readily surrender'd myself ...' (171). Molyneux pointed out the apparent contradiction between Locke's suggestion that God might have put the power of thinking into matter and his argument for the existence of an immaterial God from the impossibility of thinking matter and tactfully suggested a reconciliation; he also queried Locke's teachings on the will and his use of a slippery slope argument with regard to the reality of species (175). Molyneux's death six years later at the age of forty-two came as a shock to the much older man; this friendship was not replaced and was probably not replaceable. Other philosophical letters to and from Molyneux, James Tyrell, and Limborch concern Locke's attempted clarification of his views on natural law and divine command, the will, personal identity, responsibility, and Malebranche's doctrine of seeing all things in God, which Locke and Molyneux agreed to be 'perfectly unintelligible' (183).

The *Essay* was attacked for its apparent relativism and its 'Hobbism' (Epicurean eudaemonism). This made Locke very angry (150-2). An apologetic letter from Newton, who had accused Locke of striking at 'the root of morality' and who had remarked on hearing of Locke's illness that 'twere better if you [Locke] were dead' was however met with a gracious reply (188-9). Though not a Hobbist, Locke assigned a value to pleasure and recreation (59ff.). A pleased Dissenter, Henry Hatrell, pointed out that the denial of innate ideas implied the impossibility of Original Sin. Inclined to be forgiving of drunkards, Locke was, however, stern about laziness. More in the vein of Thomas Malthus than Karl Marx, he writes that 'everyone, according to what way providence has placed him in, is bound to labour for the publick good, as far as he is able, or else he has no right to eat' (191). Many fathers and mothers wrote to Locke for advice on educating their children. He urged them to distinguish between normal childish behaviour and unacceptable rebelliousness, and he insisted that boys and girls should be educated the same way for the most part. He also advised parents to pour water in their children's shoes; wet feet toughened them up (107). He outlined courses of study, recommending Livy for history and culture; Chronology, Geography; Cicero, Pufendorf, Aristotle, and the New Testament for ethics; followed by a smattering of anatomy and chemistry (253).

Besides politics, money (Locke was a canny investor who looked out for inside information [282]), education, theology, ethics, toleration, experimental science and the theory of ideas, health and medicine are the subject of many letters. Locke describes a successful operation on Lord Ashley (later Shaftesbury), who later died in exile in Holland, consisting of the permanent insertion of a silver tube in the abdomen to drain a liver abscess. Washed daily in wine, it enabled its possessor to walk, ride and play tennis (39-49). Locke was asthmatic and described himself as a 'decayed shell ... a breathless shadow.' Goldie suggests that this was calculated self-presentation. Though the letters from his last year reveal true physical exhaustion and a sense of

his approaching end, he had always found it convenient to present himself to the world as a frail and reclusive theorist of human knowledge, not as the political subversive, theological reformer, and destroyer of philosophical dogmas he really was.

Every serious student of Locke, and anyone interested in seventeenth-century politics, theory of ideas, biography, social relations, and the status of women and children, will want to own this volume.

Catherine Wilson

University of British Columbia

Christine Overall

*Aging, Death, and Human Longevity:
A Philosophical Inquiry.*

Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of
California Press 2003. Pp. xi + 264.

US\$ 44.95. ISBN 0-520-23298-4.

Christine Overall is a person who, like the rest of us, is aging at a steady pace. Yet, hitting 'middle-age' she admits, compelled her 'to acknowledge that I probably had less than half my life left' (3). Even if such a brutal and immutable fact is, as existentialism chides us, at the heart of human possibility and meaning, another tenacious and funny fact of the human species is that believing that mortality is true *and* applies imminently to one's self seems to depend upon having lived quite a while already. This book is indeed an 'acknowledging'. A major North American feminist bioethicist, Overall explores what is assumed, known and argued about aging and longevity from personal, professional and sociocultural sources, paying closest attention to equity.

Turning to the discipline of philosophy, Overall found 'relatively little contemporary philosophical work takes as its specific focus the exploration of normative aspects of human longevity' (15). This is indeed unfortunate given that a number of contentious issues, such as mandatory retirement and selective abortion of phenotypic and genotypically abnormal fetuses, are animated by, at least implicitly, a set of assumptions about what living well and dying well entail, and about what each person is entitled to or owes others in respect of those standards. *Aging, Death, and Human Longevity*, minimally, fills a key gap in the literature. These other debates would do well to draw from Overall's work for the clarity and depth of critical reflection it offers.

Overall's own project here, however, is to interrogate the fact that 'most of the modern philosophical discussion — what there is of it — along with a

great deal of less formal extra-academic cultural commentary, seems weighted against the prolongation of human life' (15-16). This observation resonates with, and bisects a juxtaposition that Overall set out in the opening pages: on the one hand, her grandparents' 'positive examples of aging happily', and on the other hand, a burgeoning and ruthless lifeboat-styled cultural ethos about the 'burden' allegedly being imposed by those very same kinds of folks.

Widespread anxieties about the carrying capacity of the planet, the cost of Medicare, the radical demographic shifts underway in the North and in the West (fewer children die, more people live longer, fewer babies born, big cohort of Boomers), form a nasty backdrop against which a set of 'unproven and false' (57) assumptions about the elderly thrive. These assumptions include the idea that getting old is nothing but a decline, lacking in new pleasures, interests or possibility; that the 'natural rhythm' of the human life maps a proper length to a reasonable capacity to do enough in that time; that those over seventy suck up a disproportionate share of medical and social goods (42-3); that the old have a 'duty to die' since they are taking up (wasting?) valuable resources better spent on someone younger (i.e., assumed by sheer age to be more deserving and facing better prospects); that failing to give up life is dishonorable and selfish. The view that death is normal and natural, that doing anything to prevent its arrival is wrong, is called the 'Apologist stance'. In the chapters, 'Remember You Must Die', and 'Age Rationing' and 'Generational Cleansing', Overall takes on the arguments that apologists deploy support to the attitude that living longer is a special kind of crime.

By contrast, 'One Swallow does Not a Summer Make' argues for the 'prolongevitist' stance, a stance shared by Bernard Williams and Thomas Nagel — that it is reasonable, right and good to hope for, and expect, and put energy toward living more rather than dying quicker. In her own words, 'the prolongation of human life potentially provides the opportunity for everyone to flourish ...' (179); and that it is simply a mistake to suppose that persons, by virtue of advanced age, have no wish to, inclination to pursue or capacity to take up such new forms of vital living. It is a mistake to fail to notice that 'the elderly' are not a monolithic group, but, like any other age group, are made up of individuals with unique histories and futures. This book, most importantly, uncovers 'the ageist, sexist and classist assumptions that animate the debate about human longevity' (21).

For example, notice that 'the elderly' are disproportionately female: 'Throughout the world nine times more women than men are aged one hundred or more'; 'two-thirds of individuals eighty years and over were women' (9). The 'duty to die', thus, is really an injunction directed at old women. Is 'prolongevitism nearly universally rejected by ethicists, physicians, and intellectuals who speak out in public on end-of-life issues' (187) because we're all feeling guilty about resource depletion? Or is that a red herring that sexism can hide behind? Less speculatively, 'the existence of gendered expectations about women's biological and cultural roles makes it

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less likely that women will have had as full a life as men and more likely that the quality of women's lives will be lower than that of men ...' (189); 'by virtue of their gender older women may have lacked some of the life opportunities from which older men have benefited' (179). Paying attention to life-histories, histories of advantage and disadvantage (race, ability, gender, class), and factoring this into discussions about who has 'lived enough' is fair. Pretending that people, simply by virtue of the years they have racked up, are all the same, will only maintain the differentials accrued by virtue of class, race and gender, up to the very end.

Overall's clear, convincing book doesn't reduce to a sentimental plea to think nicer thoughts about the old folks. Her project is soundly an equality-seeking one. While we can do nothing to alter the fact of death, we can and should alter the circumstances around dying in accordance with principles of fairness and equity. While she does, by and large, rely on a distributive focus ('If more life is better, how much life is enough?' [21]; 'that view fails to take into account the potentially large quantitative gain in total happiness as a result of sheer increase in years lived ...' [44]), her project is grounded in the wider and more radical claim that 'altering public attitudes concerning the desirability of prolonging the lives of very old people ... and concerning laws and policies about the "right to die" could have a genuine impact on how long people live' (12). Overall affirms that it is the qualitative world, the visibility and invisibility of persons, the images, metaphors and words that are used to speak about and with them; the respect and belonging, the hopefulness and sense of worthiness that they enjoy, as much as, if not more than the 'proper proportion' each receives, which shapes and impacts our lives as humans, whatever our age.

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Sami Pihlström

Naturalizing the Transcendental:

A Pragmatic View.

Amherst, NY: Humanity Books 2003. Pp. 390.

US\$49.00. ISBN 1-59102-104-9.

Naturalizing the Transcendental aims to mediate many of the outstanding disputes of philosophy, including disputes between realism and anti-realism, and disputes between absolutism and relativism. Pihlström approaches these disputes by returning to Kant. He argues that we can use transcendental arguments to discover transcendently necessary features of experience, even though these features are necessary only for us, that is, for creatures

who share a form of life with us. But Pihlström avoids relativism by arguing that transcendental arguments must begin *in medias res* and that they make fallible arguments about the necessary features of a contingently given form of life. This is what he means by naturalism: we begin with the world as it appears to us and work our way up from there toward the necessary features of this world of experience. Pihlström also describes his approach as ‘philosophical anthropology’, by which he means a philosophical inquiry into human nature. Finally, he allies himself with the pragmatic method, which he defines as a method that maintains ‘both the transcendental and the empirical perspectives without collapsing philosophy into a purely empirical discipline or into a vacuous a priori inquiry into allegedly immutable, necessary structures of reason’ (313).

Unlike post-modern relativists who fail to ground the normative side of human experience, Pihlström claims that our experience is necessarily governed by norms. One of his emphases here is to argue against a certain post-Wittgensteinian and neo-pragmatic view associated most closely with Rorty, which holds that philosophy is ultimately only a descriptive endeavor. Instead, Pihlström concludes, ‘philosophy *should* retain the possibility of critical and normative discussion’ (106). This is true because our form of life necessarily contains a crucially normative component.

Pihlström’s style of transcendental argumentation is, he admits, ultimately self-reflexive and circular. Our form of experience leads us to ask normative and universal questions. We turn this questioning on our form of life and we discover that it is necessarily governed by certain normative principles. Pihlström characterizes this circular method as a dynamically spiraling project of self-critique. He does not claim to have discovered the a priori necessary categories of any possible experience. Instead, his transcendental arguments are fallible and conjoined with a pragmatic focus on the concrete and contingent. From this he derives necessary features of experience that are merely ‘contingently’ grounded. ‘Whatever necessary norms we find in our language, these norms are contingent in the sense that they could be different from what they are’ (110). In other words, we discover the necessary features of experience from within experience; but we have to admit the possibility that experience could be different from what it is. Although the emphasis on contingency seems to ally him with Rorty, Pihlström’s goal is to derive a limited, transcendental necessity from within a form of life that is contingently given.

Pihlström argues for his position by working his way through much of the history of philosophy since Kant. He includes discussions of Pierce, James, Husserl, Dewey, Wittgenstein, Quine, Davidson, Rorty, McDowell, Taylor, Putnam, Lear, Levinas, and Apel. What is, perhaps, most interesting in this historical account is the way in which Pihlström uses Kant’s transcendental idealism as a lens with which to examine the debates of the last two centuries. Furthermore, he covers a vast array of secondary literature that makes his text useful as a primer in recent philosophy. His extensive notes will undoubtedly be useful for specialists.

In my opinion, the book is a successful attempt to gather two centuries of philosophical reflection around a central problem. One omission in this historical account is, however, significant. Although Pihlström hints (29) that an examination of the work of Hegel and other German Idealists would be useful, he nowhere examines this line of thinking. But some of Pihlström's conclusions could easily be developed by way of an analysis of Hegel; and the problem presented by idealism could serve to further explain the historical development that is his focus.

Pihlström's goal is to derive original general conclusions from the history of philosophy. He does not focus on precise critical readings of primary texts or on questions of development. Instead, he uses the history of philosophy as a springboard from which to derive his own conclusions. While this method is useful, the critical reader may wonder why it is necessary to engage in detailed considerations of rival interpretations of a given philosopher, if the point of the investigation is not to produce a definitive interpretation of the philosopher in question. Two points might be made in defense of this method. First, Pihlström's primary audience is specialists grounded in the debates that surround these historical thinkers. And second, his thesis is that there are certain necessary features of experience for people like us; this historical method clarifies who exactly are 'people like us', i.e., those of us who have struggled with the likes of Kant, Wittgenstein, Rorty, and Putnam.

Pihlström concludes that for creatures like us ethics is central. We must take seriously the demands made upon us by others who demand justification by appealing to intersubjectively accessible norms. According to Pihlström, the ethical standards of our form of life demand that we adopt a form of moral realism: it is transcendentally necessary for creatures like us to be moral realists. This is a transcendental and pragmatic argument based upon what it is necessary for people like us to believe. It leads Pihlström to a basic methodological point: 'we can see (normative) ethics as grounding metaethics, rather than the other way around' (321). Pihlström goes further and claims that the ethical question of what is of value for creatures like us can be used to ground all of philosophy. A philosophical anthropology that asks transcendental questions about the necessary features of our form of life must ultimately begin with a transcendental analysis of our substantive ethical commitments.

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Nicholas Rescher

*Epistemology: An Introduction to
the Theory of Knowledge.*

Albany: State University of New York Press
2003. Pp. xvii + 406.

US\$81.50 (cloth: ISBN 0-7914-5811-3);

US\$27.95 (paper: ISBN 0-7914-5812-1).

In this ambitious book, Nicholas Rescher presents his account of the nature of epistemological inquiry. By his own account, the work is the result of his own epistemological inquiries spanning several decades and 'combines into a systematic whole ideas, arguments, and doctrines evolved in various earlier investigations' (xi). As such, the scope of the work is broad and the opinions espoused are provocative and partisan.

None of this is necessarily a bad thing, of course — epistemology has become an extremely broad subject, and the writer who shies away from presenting his or her own opinions risks producing work that fails to involve the reader. Nevertheless, there are virtues that a book on epistemology, if it is to present itself as introductory in nature, must surely possess. For example, it must be as concise as possible, so as to maintain the newcomer's attention; it must also present the topics as clearly as possible, for the same reason; it must present a reasonable variety of alternative positions to the author's own, lest the reader take some controversial opinion of the author's as gospel; finally, it must cover a certain shortlist of topics that are indisputably the concern of epistemology.

Rescher holds some of these virtues but not all of them. Most noticeable perhaps is the length of the book — at 400 pages it would make demands on all but the most committed beginner. Jonathan Dancy's *Contemporary Epistemology* (Blackwell 1985), Robert Audi's *Epistemology* (Routledge 1998) and Michael Williams' *Problems of Knowledge* (Oxford University Press 2001) all compare favourably at 250, 300 and 250 pages respectively.

More serious, however, is the lack of discussion of what might be considered part of the epistemologist's staple diet. The topic of a priori knowledge is hardly mentioned at all. Nor is the topic of perceptual knowledge. Induction is only touched on in passing and neither Hume's nor Goodman's analyses are discussed. There is little or no examination of the role of testimony, the problem of other minds, the myth of the given, virtue epistemology or the distinction between internalist and externalist attitudes to justification. An introduction to epistemology should discuss most if not all of these themes.

This is not to say that this work is without merit. On the contrary, it has many things to say, most of them perceptive and interesting. Furthermore, the structure is clear throughout — each chapter begins with bulleted synopsis, allowing the reader easy negotiation of the themes discussed therein.

Rescher sets out his agenda early on, stating that a large portion of the book will be concerned with what he calls '*erotetics*, the business of raising

and resolving questions' (xiii). The book is in fact primarily concerned with this topic, with Chapters 5-18 addressing a host of topics pertinent to the analysis of the methodology of rational inquiry: the role of presumption and probability analysis, pragmatic agreement and cooperation, cognitive relativism, theoretical complexity and simplicity, cognitive limits, etc.

Many of these topics are thought-provoking and deserve more analysis than I can adequately give here. However, one must nevertheless question their presence in a book intended as an introduction to *epistemology* — the finished product reads more like an introductory work on the nature of rational inquiry that is frequently pertinent to important epistemological topics. I shall reserve my more detailed comments to the earlier chapters of the work, which concern more clearly recognizable epistemological issues.

Rescher devotes Chapter 3 to the consideration of scepticism, rightly judging it to be central to epistemological inquiry. He approaches scepticism from different angles. On the one hand, Rescher repeats a now-familiar argument whereby we are justified in ignoring the sceptic's more radical challenge on the grounds that there must be at least some restriction on doubt determined by interlocutors' shared linguistic or conceptual schemes. As Rescher puts it, the sceptic 'is not free to impose his hyperbolic probative standards on us. If he wishes to dispute about knowledge, he must take the concept as he finds it in the language-based conceptual system that we actually use' (45).

One might wonder whether such a stipulation, even if granted, has the anti-sceptical efficacy Rescher envisages; it surely remains a considerable task to *specify* core rules pertinent to our conceptual scheme in such a way that they restrict the sceptic's challenge. Any attempts to do so face a potential dilemma: if the specification is too loose, the sceptic is left with room to manoeuvre; too strict, and the sceptic can justifiably complain that it is he who is suffering under unfair probative standards.

Rescher also approaches the challenge of scepticism from an alternative angle, however, via the concept of *risk*. Rescher characterises the sceptic's position as one that is extremely risk-averse, in that the acceptance of any proposition as justified would risk the possibility of future disconfirmation. The result is that the sceptic is compelled to 'play it safe' and refuses to accept any proposition at all. However, Rescher argues that such a position is practically untenable. The sceptic's position is 'hypercautious' and errs too much 'on the side of safety' (47). In contrast, the sensible rational course is that of the 'middle of the road', whereby not every justificatory claim is accepted uncritically, nor is every one rejected out of hand.

This is a novel way to approach the problem of scepticism, though I doubt it offers a convincing response to that problem. For example, it seems to me to mischaracterise the sceptic's position: the sceptic is not one who rejects every proposition's aspiration for justification as the result of a piece of dogmatically negative ideology; rather, the sceptic merely claims that he has not yet encountered any proposition that yet deserves to be considered justified. The sceptic is not overcautious as a rule but rather has become so

through experience — he simply has failed to find any convincing claims to justification. So long as the sceptic maintains his resistance to being characterized as a hypercautious ideologue, we still lack the grounds to dismiss his position as irrational and irrelevant.

Despite my worries about its ultimate success, Rescher's take on this and other epistemological issues deserve consideration. Nevertheless, I would be hesitant to recommend this work to a newcomer over some of the other introductory works available, such as the ones mentioned above.

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William S. Robinson

Understanding Phenomenal Consciousness.

New York: Cambridge University Press 2004.

Pp. xii + 264.

US\$65.00. ISBN 0-521-83463-5.

Solving the 'hard problem' regarding phenomenal consciousness is one of the current trends in philosophy of mind. The 'hard problem' seeks to address the explanatory gap which exists between the subjective phenomenal aspects of our mental states — the *what is it likeness* or *qualia* of such states — and an objective scientific characterisation of the brain. As Thomas Nagel recognised in *The View from Nowhere*, an objective scientific view of the world fails to take into account the subjective feel or unique consciousness imbued in our personal experiences. In short, a materialistic theory of mind never captures phenomenal consciousness; hence, science offers us no view at all.

William Robinson's *Understanding Phenomenal Consciousness* rejects Nagel's conclusions. It's wrong to suggest that science will never capture the unique qualitative aspects of our experiences. For Robinson, the explanatory gap is really no gap at all because one's phenomenal consciousness is merely a different side of the same neurological coin. This is not to suggest that Robinson is a reductionist or eliminativist — he is not; phenomenal consciousness can be explain but not reduced to brain science. In short, Robinson espouses a unique dualistic perspective.

Although many philosophers (McGinn, Searle, Dennett, Churchland — to name a few) may find Robinson's dualistic conclusions untenable, *Understanding Phenomenal Consciousness* is a formidable defence of this provocative position. Robinson's arguments are concise, sophisticated, and pack a philosophical wallop. The book is in two main parts. Much of the first part is

devoted to attacking traditional and contemporary theories on conscious such as Cartesian dualism, representationalism, higher-order (thought) theories, and functionalism, while the first two chapters outline Robinson's main dualistic thesis called qualitative event realism (QER). QER states that '... there are non-materialist events that consist in occurrences of phenomenal qualities, and that such occurrences are nothing more or less than episodes of phenomenal consciousness' (10). Despite the fact that the qualitative feel of conscious events cannot be reduced to brain science, it does not mean there aren't materialistic causes. Using current developments in psychology and neurology, Robinson argues that '... qualitative events are caused by, but not identical with, some brain events, namely, occurrences of patterns of activity (most likely, of neurons)' (12). In short, QER holds that qualitative events are immaterial episodes of consciousness underpinned by neurological causes. Robinson hopes that by understanding qualitative events, we can gain a better understanding of consciousness generally.

In the second part of *Understanding Phenomenal Consciousness*, Robinson explicitly calls for a unified dualism. On the one hand, Robinson argues, 'we should say that dualism is our best theory, because we cannot plausibly deny phenomenal consciousness and we cannot give an account of it within our sciences' (183). On the other hand, he states, 'holding dualism ... is perfectly compatible with having an interest in discovering a satisfying view of the relation between phenomenal qualities and their causes' (184). This satisfying view, according to Robinson, is discovered if we look at neural patterns as causes of consciousness. And it's these patterns of neural activity which cause our phenomenal experiences. In short, 'qualitative events will be regarded as being fundamentally real as quarks or quasars' (184).

Although Robinson's arguments are impressive, and I agree with the overall flavour of his thesis, let me outline four concerns. First, Robinson gives us insufficient evidence to support his claim that neural patterns will ultimately be responsible for our individual phenomenal experiences. Current brain science suggests that there is no single neural pattern or group of neural patterns responsible for phenomenal consciousness. The brain is much more holistic than what Robinson makes it out to be. An alternative suggests that it's your run-of-the-mill neurons, not committed to any special function, which contributes to consciousness. There are probably a myriad of operational neural networks (not patterns) responsible for our qualitative experiences such as worrying about mortgage payments and seeing a red apple. But until Robinson says more, his claims appear to be insufficiently supported.

Second, one of Robinson's more striking claims is that phenomenal consciousness events are immaterial and, therefore, causally impotent — he is an epiphenomenalist (Chapter 10). As I understand Robinson, material neural events will cause phenomenal consciousness, but phenomenal conscious itself is causally inert. I am deeply sceptical of such claims. Although the qualitative aspects of our experiences may be hard to capture in science, it does not mean qualia has no causal power. Consider heroin, which is highly

addictive. The chemical composition of heroin is such that it produces an intense high — a feeling of euphoria. Despite the fact that this euphoric feeling cannot be captured by science, it's the very subjective feel or qualitative experience that makes it so powerful and reinforcing to addicts. If I am right, then surely the subjective feeling of euphoria plays *some* causal role in opiate drug use. In this sense, the phenomenal qualities are causal potent indeed.

Third, Robinson fails to consider how culture plays a role in phenomenal consciousness. Research indicates that not all cultures explain behaviour the same way. The West tends to explain behaviour by virtue of beliefs and desires, while some other cultures explain behaviour by appealing to spirits, witches, and other such causes. Drawing parallels, it could turn out that some, but not all, phenomenal experiences are culturally determined. For example, in Maori culture grief is not derived from inner psychological states but is seen as being inflicted upon another by the deceased. In the West, grief is often associated with unfulfilled desires and wants to be with the deceased. However, for the Maori, grief does not come from within but is externalised in the form of an attack. In just the same way an enemy's attack can be sudden, violent, and unwanted, so too is grief. In such cases, Maori phenomenal experience of grief may be radically different than Western qualitative experiences of grief, and determined, in part, by the culture in which one is raised. This, in my eyes, is an area of further exploration that Robinson ignores.

Lastly, this book is written for seasoned philosophers with a depth of knowledge normally not found in the general public. This is unfortunate. The sheer density and complexity of the arguments makes it very difficult to read unless well versed in the philosophical literature. Too bad, since much of Robinson's arguments are original and he pushes the discussion of consciousness to an important new level.

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Norbert N. Samuelson

Jewish Philosophy: An Historical Introduction.

New York: Continuum 2003. Pp. 344.

US\$125.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-8264-6140-9);

US\$29.95 (paper: ISBN 0-8264-6141-7).

This is an introductory undergraduate textbook in Jewish philosophy that comes with all the trimmings, including time-lines and lists of 'key questions' to help students digest the contents of each chapter. Given the growing proliferation of university Jewish Studies programs in the U.S.A. and other English-speaking countries, it is an idea whose time has come. Unfortunately, *Jewish Philosophy* suffers from several grave deficiencies; perhaps we must wait longer for a more suitable textbook to appear.

The book opens with an overview of biblical Judaism, and, skipping Hellenistic Judaism, it moves on to rabbinic Judaism, medieval Jewish philosophy (mostly Maimonides, with chapters devoted to Gersonides and Crescas), and into modernity with chapters on Spinoza, Hermann Cohen, and Martin Buber. The next three chapters treat the subject of much of Samuelson's recent scholarly work, Franz Rosenzweig, and the book concludes with a meditation upon the future of Jewish thought.

Following the introduction, Chapters Two through Seven offer what can only be called a remarkably idiosyncratic account of the Hebrew Scriptures. In the space of more than sixty pages, Samuelson does not find an opportunity to mention the central event of biblical historiography, i.e., the Exodus from Egypt. He also fails to mention that the Hebrew Scriptures contain any ethical message. The prophets' incessant demands for justice, 'Am I my brother's keeper?', 'Love your neighbor as yourself', 'Thou shalt not murder', and the stern and frequent warnings against the mistreatment of widows, orphans, and strangers, are all missing from his account. We are to believe that the entire message of the Hebrew Scriptures is that God created the world so that the Israelites might offer Him praise and sacrifices in the Temple, while waiting for the coming of the end of days.

The discussion of Rabbinic Judaism also fails to foster confidence. Again Samuelson seems determined to describe a Judaism as free as possible from concern for human well-being and interpersonal ethics. Although Chapter Thirteen bears the promising title, 'The Rabbinic View of Ethics', it is devoted to (sometimes astonishingly odd) interpretations of passages from the first chapter of the tractate Avot, most of which deal with the transmission, study, and application of the law, rather than with ethics. Typically, Samuelson translates the Hebrew expression *gemilut hassadim*, which is universally understood to mean 'acts of kindness', as 'deeds of piety' (134). Generally speaking, Samuelson's treatment of Rabbinic Judaism simply does not meet the standards of accurate and representative scholarship required in a textbook. For instance, in an earlier chapter describing the nature of Rabbinic texts, he misidentifies the very first subject discussed by the founda-

tional text of Rabbinic law (the Mishnah), which is, in fact, the evening recitation of the *Shema*, and not, as he claims, 'evening prayers' (103).

Arriving at the middle ages, Samuelson embarks on a general historical overview of the period, devoting a mere total of eight pages to the seminal figures of Saadia Gaon, Judah Halevy, and Ibn Daud, while Bahya ibn Pakuda is left completely unmentioned. Maimonides is the first philosopher discussed in any depth. Avoiding Maimonides' celebrated reworking of Aristotelian ethics, Samuelson devotes five chapters to the *Guide for the Perplexed*, covering its treatment of biblical anthropomorphism, negative theology, proofs for the existence of God, angels, creation, prophecy, providence, and the reasons for the commandments. Much of this material is explained in a clear and straightforward manner, despite a few unfortunate factual errors and a confusing insistence that a large section of the *Guide* should be understood as dealing with the messianic redemption.

The Maimonides section is followed by two rather murky chapters on Gersonides and Hasdai Crescas, both of which are certainly too condensed to be of much use to undergraduates lacking any previous knowledge of philosophy. Kabbalistic mysticism is mentioned as a bogeyman which helped dethrone the great tradition of Maimonidean rationalism, but hardly anything is said regarding its content. This is quite unfortunate, given the tremendous impact of Kabbalistic ideas upon subsequent Jewish thought, and the prominence of its 'Hollywood' incarnation in contemporary popular culture.

Samuelson does a reasonable job with Spinoza, who serves as a bridge between the medieval and modern worlds. Both his metaphysical and theological-political doctrines are briefly explained, but (naturally) the book has nothing about Spinoza's picture of the individual human being. Samuelson concludes by claiming that Spinoza saw himself as a harbinger of a 'messianic' age of universal enlightenment (273), an interpretation that may not sit well with Spinoza's own estimation of the intelligence of the masses.

Hermann Cohen offers a special challenge to Samuelson: how to avoid the substantive ethical ideas which make up so much of Cohen's classic, *Religion of Reason Out of the Sources of Judaism*. He manages this by spending most of the chapter on Cohen's philosophy of science. The chapter on Buber follows a more surprising tact. Martin Buber is said to be an existentialist, and Samuelson claims that all existentialists were 'deeply affected by Edmund Husserl's ... phenomenology' (286). As a result, space can be legitimately spent on explaining Husserl's disagreements with Kant. Eventually, the famous 'I-Thou' relationship is introduced and used to critique the routinization of the human-God relationship in established religions.

Finally, we come to Franz Rosenzweig, who is clearly Samuelson's personal hero. These last chapters are written with some passion and a fair degree of clarity, considering the difficulty of Rosenzweig's own writings. Unfortunately, Samuelson does not really leave himself much space for the actual exposition of Rosenzweig, and most undergraduates would probably find these chapters quite dauntingly terse. Indeed, every chapter of the book

could have been improved by devoting more pages to prose and less to time-lines, lists of questions, etc. Mention should also be made of Samuelson's rather quirky version of Jewish history. It would not be at all surprising if a reader came away from this book with the impression that no Jews lived in France and Germany until after the Spanish expulsion of 1492.

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David Sedley

Plato's Cratylus.

New York: Cambridge University Press 2003.

Pp. xi + 190.

US\$60.00. ISBN 0-521-58492-2.

David Sedley's *Plato's Cratylus* launches a new series for Cambridge University Press, the Cambridge Studies in the Dialogues of Plato. Other dialogues to be featured in the series, edited by Mary Margaret McCabe, include the *Meno*, *Lysis*, *Euthydemus* and the *Timaeus*.

The *Cratylus* is devoted to saying whether or not there is a correct way to name something or someone (e.g., Is 'Hermogenes' the correct name for Hermogenes? Why is 'helios' the correct name for the sun? — and similarly for a host of cosmological and philosophical terms). It is among the more enigmatic of Plato's dialogues owing not only to the presence of these etymologies consuming roughly two thirds of the work but also to the seeming implausibility of some of the etymologies. What is to be made of the fact that so much 'non-philosophy' appears in a purported work of philosophy?

One way in which scholars have dealt with this matter is to simply ignore the etymologies altogether, focusing instead upon the remaining, more recognizably philosophical, portions of the dialogue in their commentaries. Another common strategy has been to treat the etymologies as a sort of joke on Plato's part — perhaps even as a send-up of the view that etymologizing can lead one to philosophical truth. After all, Plato gives *philosophical* reasons in the dialogue for thinking that etymologizing is a flawed epistemology.

Sedley takes neither sort of approach, opting instead to suppose that the large, etymological portion of the dialogue plays a genuine role in understanding the philosophical point of the dialogue. This approach is not unique to Sedley (he especially notes the 1865 work of George Grote, *Plato and the Other Companions of Sokrates*), but, in light of the mainstream approach

noted above, it certainly makes his work unique and interesting among contemporary Platonic scholarship. It happens rather frequently in Platonic scholarship that if a doctrine, theory or claim comes across as too bizarre by modern lights, the scholar supposes that Plato must be joking with his readers. To write about Plato, after all, one must understand what he's getting at; and this task normally requires the scholar to presume that Plato is trying to do serious philosophy; so when understanding what he's saying doesn't come readily enough then perhaps it's time to question Plato's seriousness.

What is immediately attractive about Sedley's book is that it is therefore philosophical *work*. Resolving the difficult interpretive problem posed by the *Cratylus* requires a terrific, yet disciplined, imagination, because one needs to put oneself in Plato's mind, so to speak, and to see philosophically plausible possibilities that most of us just don't see (or don't see so quickly). Resorting to the 'joke thesis', a perhaps even more pervasive practice since the relatively recent emergence of philology as a sort of science, is too readily resorted to before these other possibilities have been exhausted. For this reason alone, Plato scholars are likely to find Sedley's book a very important contribution to the discipline.

Sedley's solution to the etymologies problem is to contend that, while Plato believes etymologizing to be philosophically flawed (i.e., it cannot help us to know what's true), it is nevertheless *exegetically* correct. That is, it is a correct method for determining what things the 'name-givers' — the ancients who, according to Plato, first coined names for things — were referring to, or what they had in mind in giving things the names that they did. It is precisely the careful study of a number of etymologies that will reveal that this is so; hence all the attention to the etymologies. However, the vast majority of the names given by the name-givers are designed to describe a world in flux, and, as Plato contends, the only real beings that one can know (the Forms?) are themselves not in flux. So etymologizing will not lead one to truth. This is an especially egregious finding for Plato and his Socrates, because even virtue terms (e.g., *agathon*: 'good') are coined as though the knowable world was a world of flux.

Sedley's position is deftly argued, relying upon a mix of his own expertise with the Greek language and a refreshing philosophical sensibility about what claims really need a defense and those which do not. The book (173 pp. of text) is written, in other words, with a good sense of sticking to the main line of argument — why and how the etymologies are to be taken seriously — without getting academically trapped by all of the philosophical side issues that get raised along the way. For example, the controversial issue of whether or not Plato's Forms are 'self-predicated' (i.e., whether or not Plato thinks the Form of Beauty is itself beautiful, or that the Form Large is itself large) requires mention by Sedley, but it does not for that reason consume a lot of his attention.

Sedley's argumentation is often quite involved, requiring of readers that they consider several threads of reasoning, historical facts, and translational

observations more or less at once, and then bring some of these along with them as they continue with the next argument. Those who desire a sort of argumentation which relies mostly upon considerations of 'what follows from what' will probably not appreciate Sedley's work; those, on the other hand, who allow some educated conjecture and classicist's skill to mix with considerations of 'what follows from what' may well find much here to chew on.

The book is divided into seven chapters and includes a list of references, an *index locorum* and a general index. Many of the footnotes are rather substantial and are themselves likely to be found valuable pieces of scholarship for both philosopher and classicist. One feature of Sedley's writing that may frustrate some philosophers, at least, is his tendency to declare that certain claims are 'obviously', 'clearly', or 'surely' true (e.g., pp. 13, 17, 19, 21 in only the first chapter), thus begging the question against those in position to challenge the claims, and unduly nudging other readers about what they ought to think about the quality of a claim or argument just given. Otherwise the writing is not a distraction to his main line of argument, and is instead a nice mix of the crisp and the elegant.

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R. W. Sharples, ed.

Perspectives on Greek Philosophy:

*S. V. Keeling Memorial Lectures in
Ancient Philosophy 1992-2002.*

Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing 2003.

Pp. viii+ 167.

US\$59.95. ISBN 0-7546-3279-2.

The opening page of the book gives the reader the context for the collection: 'This volume brings together the Keeling lectures [given at University College London] from leading international figures in ancient and modern philosophy, presented between 1992 and 2002.' This statement is a bit deceiving; although the contributors are leaders in both ancient and modern philosophy, their lectures are all primarily focused on ancient philosophy. A reader expecting essays on modern philosophy will be disappointed.

Even though all the lectures coalesce around ancient topics, the subject matters vary significantly — ranging from ethics to metaphysics to Greek philology. Yet, the list of contributors and their lectures are impressive; it is comprised of some of the biggest names in ancient philosophy scholarship: Bernard Williams, 'Plato's Construction of Intrinsic Goodness'; T.H. Irwin,

'Morality and Immutability: a Platonic contribution to meta-ethics'; Günther Patzig, 'Quality of Life in Plato and Aristotle'; Jacques Brunschwig, 'Do we need new Editions of Ancient Philosophy'; David Furley, 'Aristotle and the Atomists on Forms and Final Causes'; John M. Cooper, 'An Aristotelian Theory of the Emotions'; David Charles, 'Wittgenstein's Builders and Aristotle's Craftsmen'; Sarah Broadie, 'From Necessity to Fate: a Fallacy?'; Martha Nussbaum, 'Compassion and Terror'.

Considered broadly, the lectures can be placed into two categories: (i) those that deal exclusively with a topic in ancient Greek philosophy and (ii) those that explicitly try to engage ancient authors in contemporary philosophical debates. Brunschwig, Furley, and Cooper's lectures might be placed in the former, while the others might be placed in the latter.

Nearly half of the lectures assume a familiarity with the ancient Greek language and thus may not be accessible to those without a working knowledge of Greek. The most obvious example of this assumption is Brunschwig's lecture, two-thirds of which involves complicated philological analysis of Aristotle's *Topics*. Even those who have reading knowledge of Greek might find Brunschwig's essay — with its intricate and extensive exegesis of a very complicated text — demanding and slow going.

In contrast, Nussbaum's lecture might be of interest to even casual readers of Greek literature. The lecture begins by drawing a parallel between Euripides *Trojan Women* and a topic familiar to all readers — the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. She uses these two tragic examples — both of which elicit feelings of compassion for the victims — as a means to investigate 'what to do about compassion, given its obvious importance in shaping the civic imagination, but given, too, its obvious propensity for self-serving narrowness' (144).

The best essay, I believe, is David Charles' essay on Wittgenstein and Aristotle. It engages a central problem in all philosophical periods — concept and language acquisition — from both the ancient and contemporary analytic traditions. Thus, one would assume that the lecture should be of interest to both modern analytic philosophers (especially philosophers of language) as well as those who believe that the ancient philosophers can still contribute to contemporary debates. In fact, Charles thinks that Aristotle can do more than merely contribute to the debate. Charles pits Wittgenstein's famous analogies of '[comparing] learning to apply a concept with learning to cook, sometimes with learning to build or mastering traffic rules' (106) with Aristotle's account of the artisans and craftsmen in *Metaphysics* I 1 and *Posterior Analytics* II 19. Charles concludes his lecture with the following: '[Wittgenstein] overlooked the emphasis placed within the Aristotelian tradition on experience and on levels of purposive activity below the level of conceptual thought ... Aristotle's emphasis on the role and significance of the master craftsman holds out the possibility of a position that respects Wittgenstein's concern with practice while simultaneously defending some of the claims of classical realism which it seems he [Wittgenstein] wanted to reject. Indeed Aristotle did not merely gesture toward the possibility of such

a position. He did a great deal to show that it could be developed and defended' (126).

In contrast to Charles' lecture, a few of the lectures seem to have rather loose theses, being more explanatory than argumentative. And even then, there fails to be much of a payoff at the end of the explanation. This may be due to the fact that the essays in the volume are culled from lectures which might have been aimed at a broader, less philosophical audience.

In conclusion, the collection as a whole is likely to be only accessible to those who have graduate training in ancient Greek philosophy and the Greek language, though a few of the essays may be of interest to those without such training. Nevertheless, the breadth of the essays from prominent professors of Greek philosophy is notable and those with a continuing interest in Greek philosophy would do well to add the book to his/her college library holdings.

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Henry R. West

An Introduction to Mill's Utilitarian Ethics.

New York: Cambridge University Press 2004.

Pp. xi + 216.

US\$55.00 (cloth: ISBN 0-521-82832-5);

US\$20.00 (paper: ISBN 0-521-53541-7).

Henry R. West's text is an excellent companion to John Stuart Mill's classic essay, *Utilitarianism*. West does not merely offer a passive exegesis of Mill's work; he actively engages in the debates that are at the centre of Mill's text. West succeeds in making *An Introduction to Mill's Utilitarian Ethics* accessible to the 'wide audience' he had hoped — from the student taking her first course in philosophy to the professional philosopher wishing to delve into the debates that surround Mill's ethics (7).

West's text opens with a brief biography of Mill's early life and then offers an overview of Mill's writings. The rest of West's text loosely follows the structure of *Utilitarianism*: West devotes one chapter to each section of Mill's original work. In addition to these five chapters, West engages more contemporary arguments regarding whether Mill is best interpreted as a 'rule-' or 'act-utilitarian', but he ultimately argues that these anachronistic labels cannot straightforwardly be applied to Mill's system of ethics (95). To assist those new to Mill's *Utilitarianism*, a lengthy appendix offers an overview of Mill's entire essay (169-94).

West's text places great emphasis on Mill's hedonism. Due in part to this focus, West sees Bentham's utilitarianism as the obvious doctrine Mill's essay expands upon. Bentham's system of ethics puts forward two hedonic theses, 'ethical hedonism' and 'psychological hedonism'. Ethical hedonism 'is the view that pleasure and pain are the criteria the production of which makes acts right or wrong' (23). Psychological hedonism 'is the view that pleasure and pain are the ultimate motivational forces determining action' (23). Starting with ethical hedonism, West argues that even though Bentham realizes that 'pleasure' is a generic term for many different kinds of sensations, ultimately Bentham's utilitarianism assumes an analysis of pleasure that does not fit with the everyday phenomenology with which people are well acquainted. Bentham assumes that 'all [pleasures] and pains are commensurable. They can each be ascribed some intensity and duration as quantitative measures and summed up to give a total amount of pleasure and pain' (26). West explains that Mill is well aware of the implausibility of these aspects of Benthamite utilitarianism. Thus, West reasons that Mill's distinction between higher and lower pleasures is, at least in part, designed to address the implausibility associated with Bentham's ethical hedonism (22; 27).

In Chapter Three, West argues that 'Mill is correct in analyzing pleasures and pains as differing in quality as well as quantity, and that this is a consistent hedonist position' (48). West summarizes his reasoning as follows: 'Mill thinks that an introspective analysis of pleasures and pains leads to the conclusion that pleasures and pains differ as pleasures and pains in their hedonically felt qualitative differences as well as their intensity and duration [even though their family resemblances render them all appropriately classified as pleasures and pains] ... Mill was right that there may also be preference for one pleasure rather than another based on qualitative superiority' (68-9). West agrees with Mill that humankind's more elevated faculties and our sense of dignity 'influence the experience of pleasure'; but West disagrees with Mill that qualitatively superior pleasures 'consistently correlate with the employment of higher distinctively human faculties' (e.g., temperate indulgence in fine food does not necessarily lead to the loss of dignity associated with being a swinish glutton [68-9]). On West's reading, Mill's distinction between higher and lower pleasures offers the further details Bentham's ethical hedonism lacked. Thus, Mill's analysis makes the utilitarian doctrine both more consistent with our introspective account of pleasure and, generally speaking, a more plausible basis for moral judgments.

In Chapter Five, West turns to a critical examination of Mill's psychological hedonism. West sees Mill's version of psychological hedonism as an improvement on the overly simple (and introspectively implausible) version held by Bentham; Bentham held that each person always 'chooses a line of conduct' which 'taken by him at that moment' is thought to maximize net pleasure (101). West, making note of conscious *akrasia* as an obvious counterexample, points out that Mill held a 'more complex version' of psychological

hedonism, a version which differs from Bentham's in two respects (102). First, Mill emphasizes the role that psychological associations may have with the mere *thought* of an action, and second, Mill highlights the way such associations can lead to habit formation (102). Thus, Mill's more complex form of psychological hedonism emphasizes the motivational impact pleasures and pains may have on character formation (107).

The last two chapters of West's text discuss the last two chapters of Mill's *Utilitarianism*. In Chapter Six, West offers a charitable reading of probably the most widely criticized section of Mill's *Utilitarianism* — Chapter Four's 'Proof of the Principle of Utility'. In careful detail, West examines Mill's 'proof' premise by premise; he concludes that Mill's argument is ultimately negative, denying that 'there is any happiness or any value that cannot be analyzed without remainder as the happiness or the good of some individual or individuals' (145). In Chapter Seven, West outlines Mill's defense of utilitarianism against the charge that it would be unjust. To modernize some of the debates, West makes ample use of Rawls' anti-utilitarian arguments — including Rawls' 'veil of ignorance' and the 'separateness of persons' objection — and offers some suggestions regarding how Mill might have responded to Rawls (164). This last chapter of West's book not only offers readers a greater understanding of the last chapter of *Utilitarianism*, but also will manage to stimulate lively discussion.

On the whole, I think West's introductory text is a success. On the occasions when I found West's analysis of Mill's arguments contentious, they were interestingly so. For instance, while I was not totally convinced by West's interpretation and emphasis on Mill's hedonism, it did make me re-examine several key passages. Furthermore, such a reading is sure to spark much debate in an entry-level philosophy course. In sum, *An Introduction to Mill's Utilitarian Ethics* offers thorough and thought-provoking explanations and interpretations of the main arguments of Mill's original text, and I think it would make an excellent accompaniment for those interested in studying (or re-studying) Mill's *Utilitarianism*.

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Mark A. Wrathall, ed.

Religion after Metaphysics.

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Given that metaphysics is or includes a view as to what, fundamentally, exists, one might wonder how you can have religion without metaphysics. The answer is that you have to mean by 'metaphysics' a particular take on this matter of what really exists. More specifically, you might mean what many who are inspired by Heidegger mean: 'an obliviousness to the understanding of being that governs an age' (3).

The specific form of obliviousness the authors in this volume have in mind is what Heidegger called 'onto-theology', in which philosophers 'tried to understand the being of everything through a simultaneous determination of its essence or most universal trait (the "onto" in "onto-theology"), and a determination of the ground or source of the totality of beings in some highest or divine entity (the "theo" in "onto-theology")' (2). The claim appears to be that metaphysical enquiry typically (necessarily?) runs together two assumptions: (1) Existing things share a common property or essence — 'beingness' — in virtue of their existence. It is this essence that metaphysicians study. And (2) this 'beingness' in which all existing things participate is appropriately seen as a divine Being. As in Aristotle's 'Metaphysics', ontology is carried out in the context of theology. There are two reasons given implicitly or explicitly in this anthology for dispensing with metaphysics understood in this way. One is that it is deeply confused; the other is that for some time most people have simply not found it credible.

The first four authors (Robert Pippin, Gianni Vattimo, Richard Rorty and Charles Taylor) examine especially the loss of credibility. While they agree that there is some kind of loss, they differ over both its sources and the attitude it should engender. Pippin considers this loss *via* an examination of Nietzsche, arguing that nihilism is (according to Nietzsche) not so much a failure of belief as it is a kind of spiritual boredom. The challenge left by the death of God is how to awaken the yearning and search for meaning that, paradoxically, gives meaning to life. Vattimo contends that the contemporary loss of faith in some overarching way of capturing Truth has brought with it the death of the onto-theological God, but also an opening for the God of Biblical revelation. Rorty agrees with Vattimo that 'anti-essentialism' commands increasing assent, and as it does so it disqualifies religion as a truth-claiming activity exposed to the business of looking for relevant reasons. On Rorty's view, though, the continuing desire for a god of some sort is a vestigial hankering that is fine as a private taste, but should not be given the status of insight. Taylor contends that among the multitude of outlooks characterizing the modern world, 'closed world structures' are of particular relevance to this question of the loss of religious sensibility. Built on the

distinction between the natural and the supernatural, these structures have come to enjoy wide acceptance as the 'modern outlook'. Almost inevitably, they allow the uncritically naturalistic attitude to 'blank out the transcendent' and render the religious impulse quaint or pathological in appearance.

The next four (Wrathall himself, Hubert Dreyfus, Adriaan Peperzak and John Caputo) discuss particularly the confusions they see in 'onto-theology'. Wrathall and Dreyfus share the view that the failure of 'onto-theology' is its reduction of the engaging God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to the disengaged God of the philosophers. Wrathall makes the point by examining Heidegger's analysis of the 'technologizing' of everyday life — the reduction of things that matter deeply to us to merely functional entities, and the liberating possibility of living attuned to 'the four-fold of earth, sky, mortals, and divinities' (4). Dreyfus, on the other hand, resorts to Kierkegaard as his lens not only on what is wrong with onto-theology but also the limitations in Heidegger. The despair that Heidegger seeks to relieve with his appeal to the four-fold manifold, Kierkegaard regards as a necessary opening to that infinite commitment to the paradoxical God-man which liberates the self. Peperzak expresses reservations about Heidegger's sweeping analysis of 'onto-theology' and its short-comings. Indeed he sees Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit* as 'a partial fulfilment of the ontological project' (111), and sees the way forward from there to be suggested by Levinas and the discovery of an adequate notion of personhood in relations. Caputo locates the breakdown of onto-theology in its failure to recognize the centrality of the impossible. He recommends the antidote of centring on a phenomenology of the experience of God, and embracing the sense of the impossible that comes with it.

The two concluding papers (Leora Batnitzky and Jean-Luc Marion) concentrate on the question of how religious thought may be conducted in a post-metaphysical world. Batnitzky finds Strauss and Levinas to be the guides to freeing our understanding of revelation from its essentialist assumptions and reclaiming the possibility of an adequate metaphysics. An authentic religious response is made possible, she argues, by recovering our philosophical bearings. Marion concludes by insisting that the 'end' of metaphysics should not be understood as its termination, but as its fulfilment; the point at which all the metaphysical possibilities have been tried in succession. Marion finds in Heidegger's critique of metaphysics the opening through which the metaphysical project can be viewed apart from 'the question of being itself' (183); an opening which Heidegger failed in the end to exploit.

I suspect — but I am in no position to do more than suspect — this will be a profitable collection for philosophers at home in the continental/Heideggerian tradition. Several of the authors are luminaries in that setting. The others appear thoroughly grounded in the discussion and able to develop provocative lines of reasoning. There is a broadly shared sense of whom one looks to for illumination, even if the light is shed by mistakes they have made or avenues they have not pursued. At the same time, there is little sense of

a party line, and there are differences of interpretation and conclusion that seem likely to be fruitful in this sort of discussion.

It has been said, however, that when it comes to philosophy the English Channel is very wide, and this volume illustrates the maxim. There are points in this collection where the gap narrows and the rudiments of a tunnel may even be discernible. Wrathall's introduction sets the scene for the discussion in terms that are accessible and he goes on to introduce the contributions in like manner. His own paper is a masterful, comprehensible, even plausible, explication of central elements in Heidegger's work. Taylor's paper is a rich and stimulating suggestion about the thought-forms of modern life and may be grasped without an extensive grasp of continental philosophy. Rorty is typically irritating and provocative, but says several things that actually seem insightful.

There remains much to baffle the uninitiated reader. The claim is made, for instance, that 'being itself, which is never a pure object placed before us, the subjects, gives itself in a less peremptory, weakened form' (Vattimo, 34). Marion writes (181), 'the property of giving is to give a gift (something given), to deliver it, thus to deposit it in presence, from which at the same instant it abstains, since it does not give itself as something given.' These represent large sections of the anthology in seeming to exemplify what Peperzak charmingly dubs 'a regional language through which one version of continental philosophy fences off the ignorant' (104). Context is everything, and to someone steeped in the context shared by these writers there may be something rich in passages like these. The rest of us may be left with a tantalising sense that something deep and important might lie behind this, but we are not sure what it is. Is this really an advance on the 'onto-theology' that is said to be confused and not credible?

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Alenka Zupančič

The Shortest Shadow:

Nietzsche's Philosophy of the Two.

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Lacanian psychoanalysis, according to the editor of MIT's 'Short Circuits' book series, crosses lines of thought that rarely touch each other and hence is 'a privileged instrument' for sparking new perspectives on a classic text or author (viii). Applying this instrument to Nietzsche, Alenka Zupančič uncovers an intriguing 'figure of the two' that constitutes his 'fundamental invention' (27). Given the enormity of this claim, one might expect the whole of this relatively short book to be devoted to a supporting argument. However, Zupančič engages in an extended analysis of the 'figure of the two' only in the second half. This is not necessarily a strategic mistake. An excellent introduction probes Nietzsche's bombastic rhetoric regarding breaking history into two, and its overall emphasis on *duality* directly questions the conventional postmodern assumption that the philosophical significance of Nietzsche's style lies in the play of multiplicity or the endless proliferation of perspectives. Moreover, insofar as Nietzsche esteems 'the moment when one becomes two' (25), the introduction undermines the widespread notion that the normative success referred to in *Ecce Homo's* subtitle — 'becoming what one is' — signifies the transformation of a multiplicity of drives and impulses into a unified, aesthetic whole.

In short, Zupančič frames *The Shortest Shadow* with a linguistic motif — 'one becoming two,' 'edge between the two,' 'redoubling,' 'splitting in two' (etc.) — that is comparable in suggestibility to the philosophical collage of Nietzsche's feminine figures in Derrida's *Spurs* (University of Chicago Press 1979). This sharp introductory focus will retain readers' confidence while the first half ('Nietzsche the Metapsychologist') develops the psychoanalytic context for conceptualizing the 'figure of the two' in the second ('Noon').

The plausibility of such a context is enhanced by Zupančič's concentration on the *Genealogy of Morals*. Consider that 'all great religions are an answer to man's feelings of displeasure and pain' (47). Unlike Marx, Nietzsche believed religious remedies are not necessarily opiates that tranquillize and deaden the pain. In particular, Christianity provided intoxicating stimulants that overpowered existing passionate states with orgies of feeling. Drawing on Eric Santner's claim (in *On the Psychotheology of Everyday Life*) that human beings endemically suffer from a 'too muchness' of reality and respond by either engaging or withdrawing from its constant pressures, Zupančič argues that the extreme excitement of Christian asceticism engenders a paralyzing hybrid of engagement *and* withdrawal: a 'surplus of passion' leaves a person 'supremely awake ... but not alive' (49). Nietzsche's ascetic ideal does not postpone enjoyment to a promised afterlife, but rather organizes the psyche to provide motivation in the here and now through a perverse

enjoyment in devouring its own lifeblood. And this corresponds exactly 'to what Freud calls the superego', namely, 'the law of an insatiable passion' in which 'the very form of renouncing becomes a form of enjoyment' (53).

Zupančič's account of the genealogical link between specifically religious neuroses and the pathology of contemporary types of humanity will be too impressionistic for some tastes. Nevertheless, it explores insightfully Nietzsche's diagnosis of the common problem as a 'paralysis of the will' that can, paradoxically, 'take the form of some intense activity' (67). For instance, even though he admires the moral scrupulosity of active nihilists who fly the banner of the Enlightenment and fight against lies and illusions 'in the name of the Real' (77), this type's enthusiasm in the task of uncovering the hard truth exhibits a Christian delight in self-directed cruelty. Passive nihilists, on the contrary, are skeptics who disengage from any commitment to the Real in the name of the (Freudian) reality principle, but this type also needs a regular dose of awakening passion. Zupančič does an especially good job of describing the affliction of passive nihilists with a dead-on reference to the 'ascetic hedonism' of characters in a Bret Ellis Easton novel who take their champagne shots of excitement with Xanax, a 'sedating tranquilizer' (67). Eventually, however, active nihilism seems to destroy its final illusion by concluding that the Real is not different from labyrinthine appearance. Then both types appear implicated in a codependent relationship which reveals the distinctive discontent of postmodern civilization: the 'full coincidence of the Real' with the reality principle eliminates 'the very space of creativity' (80).

Lacan refers to this as a 'crisis of sublimation' (71). However, his non-Freudian use of the term 'sublimation' does not signify the creation of an idealized surrogate for an unsatisfied drive. Following Lacan's well-known reading of *Antigone*, Zupančič emphasizes that a sister's passion, deemed unacceptable and irrational by the reality principle, is satisfied and given value in the form of her brother's funeral. This sublimation of Antigone's passion evokes the Real in contradistinction to the reality principle, but not as something existing beyond the funeral. And since the Real cannot be separated from this 'everyday object' it remains 'veiled' even as we come closer to it (79). Zupančič thereby renews the philosophical promise made in the introduction: Nietzsche's figure of the two entails a 'new and different conceptualization of the Real' (12). Sophocles' symbolic fiction, moreover, performs the proposition that 'the Real is the intrinsic division of reality' (80) and holds up the creative possibilities of opening 'the gap that separates reality from itself' (81). At a unique juncture of philosophy and metapsychology, then, Lacan meets Nietzsche on the other side of the crisis.

Many Nietzsche scholars will find this moment exhilarating. Most, unfortunately, will find the follow-up analysis extremely frustrating. Part Two's task is 'delicate' because it must express 'the concept of something that, in Nietzsche, has no concept, only a recurrent (linguistic) image' (87). Zupančič responds to this alleged lacking with a complete panoply of Lacanian concepts. Even in part one, these terms — the Real, the Symbolic, the Imaginary,

(etc.) — are introduced too casually. In Part Two, however, ‘Nietzsche’ often disappears for long stretches, his role reduced to providing striking metaphors for Lacanian exegesis. Anyone who is not an expert in Lacan is likely to be befuddled: ‘In relation to the two conceptions of Nothing(ness), the first positing the Nothing as something, and the second positing it as difference or interval (the mechanism of double affirmation presupposes that the negation or lack gets inscribed only as difference and nonrelationship: not the difference between the One and the Other, but the difference of the Other itself, since the Other is always two) — in relation to these two conceptions of Nothing(ness), we cannot say that the first one is symbolic and the second remains caught in the duality of the Imaginary’ (137). Surely Zupančič is laboring under a false dichotomy? The booming Nietzsche industry has produced many books that try to conceptualize Nietzsche’s ideas while being sensitive to his artistry. Her own introduction sets up a marvelous contrast with Alexander Nehamas’ hugely influential view of Nietzsche’s self-creation in *Life as Literature* (Harvard University Press 1985). And in *Nietzschean Narratives* (Indiana University Press 1989), Gary Shapiro has even used Lacan to briefly (but fruitfully) take issue with Nehamas’ interpretation in a way that is consistent with *The Shortest Shadow*. This book, however, short-circuits such possibilities since it is almost devoid of references to the secondary literature.

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