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TZIPORAH KASACHKOFF AND EUGENE KELLY, CO-EDITORS

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LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Tziporah Kasachkoff
THE GRADUATE CENTER, CUNY, TKASACHKOFF@YAHOO.COM

Eugene Kelly
NEW YORK INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, EKELLY@NYIT.EDU

We welcome our readers to the fall 2024 edition of the *APA Studies on Teaching Philosophy*. In this issue, we offer one article, a book review, and a couple of poems.

Our article is entitled "Paley Before Hume: How Not to Teach the Design Argument," by Mark T. Nelson of Westmont College. The paper argues that most teachers of the philosophy of religion, and the texts and anthologies they use, tend to fall into error when they teach the Argument from Design for the existence of God. Teachers usually take Paley's statement of the argument in his *Natural Theology* with its famous "watch analogy" as a model statement of the argument. They then proceed to travel back in time to Hume's *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion*, where the argument is presented by Hume's character Cleanthes and then refuted by his characters Philo and Demea. But Professor Nelson attempts to show by a careful reading of the relevant texts that this procedure misrepresents the nature of the apparent conflict between Hume and Paley, and more subtle statements of their arguments—which Nelson presents in some detail—are lost. Nelson shows that Paley was quite familiar with Hume's *Dialogues* and must therefore have wished to present the argument in a way that avoids the objections to it of Philo and Demea. Moreover, Cleanthes's design argument is a true analogical argument (in a sense that the author defines) and is deductive, whereas Paley's argument is deductive but not a true analogical argument. We teachers of these materials must, Nelson concludes, treat the arguments of Philo and Demea as responding to Cleanthes's arguments and Paley's argument as responding to the arguments of Philo and Demea. Nelson's purpose in this paper is to wean teachers of the philosophy of religion from the all-too-simple model, "here is the design argument" (Paley) and "here is the refutation of it" (Hume).

The book review is by Tziporah Kasachkoff of the Graduate Center, CUNY, and the book she reviews is *The Road Travelled and Other Essays* by Steven M. Cahn. Professor Cahn has written extensively on matters of interest to philosophers, to teachers of philosophy, and to students of philosophy. Two other books by Cahn that will be reviewed in subsequent issues of this publication are books that, together with the book reviewed in this current issue, are referred to by Cahn as constituting a "trilogy." They are *Essays from Six Decades* and *Philosophical Debates*.

We welcome again to our pages Professor Felicia Nimue Ackerman of Brown University. In this issue she offers us two poetic reflections on teaching.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

We encourage our readers to suggest themselves as reviewers of books and other material (including technological innovations) that they think may be especially good for classroom use. Reviewers are welcome to suggest material for review that they have used in the classroom and found useful. However, please remember that our publication is devoted to pedagogy and not to theoretical discussions of philosophical issues. This should be borne in mind not only when writing articles for our publication but also when reviewing material for our publication.

Those of our readers to would like to write of their experience as teachers for our publication are welcome to do so. We are also glad to consider articles that respond, comment on, or take issue with any of the material that appears within our pages.

The following guidelines for submissions should be followed:

All papers should be sent to the editors electronically. The author's name, the title of the paper and full mailing address should appear on a separate page. Nothing that identifies the author or his or her institution should appear in the body or the footnotes of the paper. The title of the paper should appear on the top of the paper itself.

Authors should adhere to the production guidelines that are available from the APA. For example, in writing your paper to disk, please do not use your word processor's footnote or endnote function; all notes must be added manually at the end of the paper. This rule is extremely important, for it makes formatting the papers for publication much easier.

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Tziporah Kasachkoff, The Graduate Center, CUNY (tkasachkoff@yahoo.com), co-editor

Eugene Kelly, New York Institute of Technology (ekelly@nyit.edu), co-editor

Robert Talisse, Vanderbilt University (robert.talisse@vanderbilt.edu)

Andrew Wengraf (andrew.wengraf@gmail.com)

Contributions should be sent to the editors:

Tziporah Kasachkoff
Philosophy Department
CUNY Graduate Center
365 Fifth Avenue
New York NY 10016
at tkasachkoff@yahoo.com

and/or to

Eugene Kelly
Department of Social Science
New York Institute of Technology
Old Westbury, NY 11568
ekelly@nyit.edu

ARTICLE

Paley Before Hume: How Not to Teach the Design Argument

Mark T. Nelson
WESTMONT COLLEGE

INTRODUCTION

One of Gary Larson's "Far Side" cartoons shows a man who has just woken up in the morning, sitting in his pajamas, looking at the huge handwritten reminder on the wall next to his bed: "First pants, THEN your shoes."

The order in which we do things matters. It matters in dressing; it matters in teaching. In teaching about the design arguments for theism, I used to cover Paley's *Natural Theology* before Hume's *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, but I now think that is a mistake and leads to a distorted interpretation of both philosophers. And this is not just a point about pedagogy; it is also about how to understand these two thinkers.

INTRODUCTION: WHAT I USED TO DO

In my introductory classes on the design argument for the existence of God, I used to teach Paley before Hume. I did this because the readings by Paley came before the readings by Hume in the reputable and widely used anthologies I assigned for those classes.[1] That order made dialectical sense, too. Everyone knows that Hume is an important critic of the design argument, so no explanation is needed for assigning his *Dialogues*. But we don't criticize an idea until after the idea has been presented, and who has the best-known version of the design argument in modern philosophy? William Paley, of course, with his celebrated story of the watchmaker! So it makes sense: read Paley for the design argument, then read Hume for criticisms of the design argument.

I would assign the excerpt from Paley, which was chapters I–II of his *Natural Theology*, and discuss it for a couple of days, extracting a Simple Design Argument, and examining Paley's case for it. Then I would assign the excerpt from Hume, which included parts II–IV of *Dialogues*, focusing on what I took to be Hume's most important criticisms of this Simple Argument. I would point out the vulnerability of Paley's argument to Hume's criticisms, then move on.

Here is the argument I attributed to Paley. Some may interpret him differently, but interpretation is unavoidable, because, as readers of Paley will know, chapters I–II of *Natural Theology* present an extended thought experiment, and not an explicit logical argument.[2]

Simple Design Argument

1. The natural world has design.

2. If the natural world has design, the natural world has (or had) a designer.

Therefore,

3. The natural world has (or had) a designer.[3]

COMMENTARY

I would go on to give the usual sorts of disclaimers about the conclusion (e.g., a mere designer of the natural world need not be the God of theism), but I would note that even that is a substantial claim, so it is still worth asking whether this argument for it is sound. The argument is valid, of course, so this amounts to asking whether the premises are true.

On premise (1) "The natural world has design":

I proposed that by "design," Paley means something like *the property of having parts whose shape and arrangement combine to achieve some useful purpose*. This is suggested in several places, e.g, in his observation that "[the watch's] several parts are formed and put together for a purpose, that they are so formed and adjusted as to produce motion, and that motion so regulated as to point out the hour of the day."[4] On this definition, design is an empirical, "history-neutral" property of things, such that we can tell by looking whether an object has it, whether or not we know that object's origins.[5] Moreover, on this definition of design, Paley thinks he has abundant evidence for the truth of (1), based on his observations of the natural world. (He doesn't actually give any examples of this evidence in Chapters I–II, and later chapters are not included in my students' anthologies, so I would summarize for them Paley's account in Chapter III of the design in the eyes of various animals: the parts of the eye are just the right size and shape and made of just the right materials, and arranged in just the right way to allow animals to see well in their particular environments.)

On premise (2) "If the natural world has design, the natural world has (or had) a designer":

I told my students that premise (2)—or something like it—is indispensable for Paley's argument, and he clearly believes it to be true, but it is less clear *why* he believes it to be true. Given his empirical, history-neutral conception of design, this premise is not a tautology, so Paley must think he has some sort of argument for it. Because of the importance of analogy to the design argument in general, we might expect analogy to play a role in his case for premise (2) in particular.

Here, I told them, is one way such a case could go: Paley takes it for granted that every watch (indeed, every complex machine) has a designer; that is, he would happily endorse something like

> 2*. Every machine has (or had) an intelligent designer.

But (2*) implies (2) only if the natural world is relevantly similar to a machine. That is, we would need to adduce some premise such as

> 4. The natural world is similar to a machine in the relevant respects.

So we now had to consider whether the natural world is in fact relevantly similar to a machine. The dialectic here was a bit complicated and tenuous, but at least we now had a bridge to Hume, who has much to say about such things.

At first, Hume seems like the ideal interlocutor for Paley, for early in the *Dialogues* he has his character Cleanthes give an argument strikingly reminiscent of Paley's argument, and then he has his other characters, Demea and (especially) Philo, criticize it:

> Look round the world: contemplate the whole and every part of it: you will find it to be nothing but one great machine, subdivided into an infinite number of lesser machines, which again admit of subdivisions to a degree beyond what human senses and faculties can trace and explain. All these various machines, and even their most minute parts, are adjusted to each other with an accuracy which ravishes into admiration all men who have ever contemplated them. The curious adapting of means to ends, throughout all nature, resembles exactly, though it much exceeds, the productions of human contrivance; of human designs, thought, wisdom, and intelligence. Since, therefore, the effects resemble each other, we are led to infer, by all the rules of analogy, that the causes also resemble; and that the Author of Nature is somewhat similar to the mind of man, though possessed of much larger faculties, proportioned to the grandeur of the work which he has executed. By this argument a posteriori, and by this argument alone, do we prove at once the existence of a Deity, and his similarity to human mind and intelligence.[6]

I told my students that Hume published *Dialogues* some twenty-five years before Paley wrote *Natural Theology*.[7] Even so, I said, Hume anticipated Paley's argument with eerie prescience.[8]

WHY THIS WAS WRONG

That is what I used to tell my students, and it should have been a clue that I was doing things in the wrong order: anachronistic readings of philosophical ideas are not always wrong-headed, but this one should at least have given me pause.[9] But not only is it unlikely on chronological grounds that Hume was responding to Paley; it is likely on textual grounds that the reverse was true: Paley was responding to Hume. First, there is (as far as I know) no mention of Paley in the entire Humean corpus, and certainly no mention of Paley in *Dialogues*.[10] Paley, on the other hand, was demonstrably familiar with Hume's *Dialogues*.[11] More importantly, the argument Hume criticizes in *Dialogues* simply is not the argument that Paley gives; it is the argument that Hume's literary creation, *Cleanthes*, gives.[12] Although Cleanthes's argument and Paley's argument may superficially appear to be similar, they are at bottom very different in at least two important ways. First, Cleanthes's design argument is a true analogical argument; Paley's isn't. Second, Cleanthes's argument rests on a premise about the whole world; Paley's doesn't.[13]

CLEANTHES'S ARGUMENT BY ANALOGY

Before I explain the sense in which Cleanthes's design argument is a true analogical argument, let me briefly explain why this matters. It matters because some of Philo's most incisive criticisms against that argument concern its analogical character. Every Intro to Philosophy of Religion student (in Anglophone philosophy) is taught that Philo and Demea deliver an ingenious one-two punch, arguing that Cleanthes faces one problem if his analogy is weak, and another problem if it is strong. If Cleanthes's analogy is weak, then his argument doesn't even get off the ground, and Philo argues that the analogy is indeed weak: the world (considered as a whole) is not very similar to a machine, nor is our relation to the world very similar to our relation to any machine. At a minimum, we are not in a good epistemological position to assert that they are similar.[14] If, on the other hand, the analogy *were* strong enough for the argument to go through, it would yield a theologically unacceptable anthropomorphism about God, diminishing His perfection, eternality, infinity, incorporeality, etc.[15] In sum, given the amount of critical firepower that Hume spends on matters of analogy, it is clear that he conceives of Cleanthes's argument as an argument by analogy, and that this is a crucial fact about it. Now I shall explain what an analogical argument is, and how Cleanthes's design argument is one.

I propose that the design argument that Hume has Cleanthes give in Part II of *Dialogues* is best interpreted as a classic analogical argument, i.e., one that makes use of a precise concept of analogy having roots in Greek mathematics.[16] While we sometimes use the word "analogy" loosely to mean any claim that two things, A and B, are similar in some way or other, Book V of Euclid's *Geometry* defines it more precisely: "Analogy or proportion is the similitude between two ratios."[17] Since ratios normally have two

terms, this entails that classic analogy is better thought of as a four-term relation, of the pattern "A is to B as C is to D"; for example: "3 is to 6 as 5 is to 10."[18] By extension, an argument by analogy is a way of reasoning that allows us to infer a value for D, given the claim that "A is to B as C is to D," and given specific values for A, B, and C.

It is worth noting that, on this understanding, analogical arguments are actually deductive arguments. The inference from the premises that A is to B as C is to D, and that A = 3, B = 6 and C = 5, to the conclusion that D = 10, is not at all inductive or probabilistic. Of course, there is another understanding of arguments by analogy, according to which they are inductive and probabilistic, but Hume does not appear to have this alternative conception in mind. According to Roger White, the source of this other (and chronologically later) conception

> appears to be Thomas Reid (see *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*, Essay I, Chapter IV). For Reid, an argument by analogy meant an argument that proceeded along the lines: A has a number of properties in common with B (FA & GA & HA & … & FB & GB & HB & …). In addition, A has the property K. This gives us reason to believe that B will probably also have the property K. Whatever can be said for or against such an argument, it has nothing to do with the concept of analogy as it had hitherto been understood, and this version of an "argument by analogy" could only have arisen at a time when people were losing sight of how the concept of analogy had been understood, and when it was understood as little more than a near synonym for similarity.[19]

Cleanthes's analogical argument, on the other hand, is straightforwardly an instance of deductive reasoning that aims to infer claims about the designer of the world from a four-term proposition such as "A watch is to the world as a designer of the watch is to the designer of the world," along with specific information about watches, the world, and human designers of watches. On this reading, Cleanthes makes the following sort of argument, which is very different from the Simple Design Argument I attributed to Paley:

Cleanthes's Analogical Argument

1. Like effects have like causes. [Here "like" means or entails "proportional."]

2. The whole world is like a machine, only vastly greater.

3. The cause of the design in a machine is a human mind.

Therefore,

4. The cause of the design in the whole world is like a human mind, only vastly greater.

Therefore,

5. There exists (or existed) something similar to a human mind, only vastly greater, that is the cause of the design in the whole world.

The operative sort of analogy here is Euclid's "analogy of proportionality," which is indispensable given Cleanthes's purposes. Cleanthes's conclusion, after all, is explicitly comparative or proportional: "the Author of Nature is somewhat similar to the mind of man, though *possessed of much larger faculties, proportioned to the grandeur of the work which he has executed*,"[20] and argument by the analogy of proportionality is much the easiest way to reach it. By contrast, it is hard to see how one could reach any sort of comparative or proportional conclusion via Reid's inductive conception of analogical arguments mentioned above.

A further reason for interpreting Cleanthes's argument in this way is that it makes it easy to understand Philo's criticisms of it and to see how they apply.

On premise (3) "The cause of the design in a machine is a human mind": Philo is willing to concede this, at least if it is taken as an empirical generalization. He states: "If we see a house, Cleanthes, we conclude, with the greatest certainty, that it had an architect or builder, because this is precisely that species of effect which we have experienced to proceed from that species of cause."[21]

On premise (1) "Like effects have like causes": As noted above, this premise expresses a basic rule of analogical reasoning, and Cleanthes simply takes it for granted. And apart from its supposed tendency to yield theological anthropomorphism, neither Philo nor Demea mounts any very strong criticism of the general principle. In fact, Philo appears ready to concede something like premise (1) as a plausible but qualified empirical generalization:

> That a stone will fall, that fire will burn, that the earth has solidity, we have observed a thousand and a thousand times; and *when any new instance of this nature is presented, we draw without hesitation the accustomed inference*. The exact similarity of the cases gives us a perfect assurance of a similar event; and a stronger evidence is never desired nor sought after.[22]

On premise (2) "The whole world is like a machine, only vastly greater": This is one of Philo's main targets. He repeatedly argues that the world does *not* resemble a vast machine, or at least that Cleanthes is not entitled to make such a sweeping generalization about the world as a whole:

> But, allowing that we were to take the operations of one part of nature upon another, for the foundation of our judgment concerning the origin of the whole, (which never can be admitted,) yet why select so minute, so weak, so bounded a principle, as the reason and design of animals is found to be upon this planet? What peculiar privilege has this little agitation of the brain which we call thought, that we must thus make it the model of the whole universe?[23]

(This is important because, given the structure of Cleanthes's argument, and the conclusion he hopes to reach, Cleanthes needs this premise to be about the whole world.)

The other main target for Philo's (and Demea's) critical attacks, of course, is Cleanthes's anthropomorphism, so it is worth asking how the above argument is supposed to yield it. Taken individually, none of its premises is anthropomorphic. Even taken together they do not entail anything very troubling. The problem is that there are lots of other true propositions which, when conjoined with (1) and (2), *do* yield troubling conclusions. Consider, e.g., (3*) The cause of the design in a machine is morally imperfect; (3**) The cause of the design in a machine has a body with eyes, nose, mouth and ears; (3***) The cause of the design in a machine is mortal; and so on.[24]

But to return to my point here, it is clear that the argument that Hume has Philo and Demea criticize is not Paley's but Cleanthes's. This (and the problem of anachronism) is evidence enough that Hume was not responding to Paley. But there is also evidence that the reverse is the case: Paley was responding to Hume, or at least developing his own version of the design argument in the full knowledge of the criticisms that Hume had mounted a generation earlier.

PALEY WAS RESPONDING TO HUME

I believe that Paley's design argument is not really an analogical argument at all. Indeed, I suspect that Paley deliberately avoided formulating it as one because he saw how damaging Hume's criticisms of Cleanthes's analogical argument were and responded by devising a non-analogical version. And this shouldn't be surprising since we know that Paley was familiar with Hume's *Dialogues*—he actually refers to it by name.[25] And even though Paley was not the philosophical genius that Hume was, it is hard to believe that even a moderately intelligent philosopher (and Paley was at least that) could be aware of Philo's criticisms of Cleanthes, and then just offer Cleanthes's argument all over again, without correction or explanation, a generation later.

This is not to say, of course, that Paley's version of the argument is wholly novel or original to him. As already noted, machine-based design arguments had a long history, stretching from antiquity to the "golden age" of natural theology of which Paley was very much a part. William Derham (1657–1735) and Dutch mathematician Bernard Nieuwentyt (1654–1735) had already published versions to which Paley's argument in *Natural Theology* was strikingly similar.[26] The similarities with Nieuwentyt's argument (which also begins with an analogy about finding a watch in a "desert or solitary place") are so striking that in 1848 Paley was posthumously accused of plagiarism in the *Athenaeum*, one of the leading intellectual journals of the day.[27] Whether Paley was trying to pass Nieuwentyt's argument off as his own or was merely reworking it for a new generation of readers—we need not take a position here—he clearly saw the merits of the argument and that it would escape some of Hume's most powerful objections.

In any case, Paley does make use of an analogy in the opening chapters of *Natural Theology*, but as I shall go on to argue, there is a difference between a true analogical argument (as described above) and an argument that merely makes use of an analogy. In Chapter 1, Paley gestures at the analogy implicit in his extended thought experiment in order, first, to prime his readers and make them receptive to his overall approach, and, second, to disarm a number of objections to this approach, almost all of which are *Hume's* objections. I cannot list them all here, so let me mention just one:

Having presented this thought experiment about finding a watch and naturally concluding that it was made by humans, Paley begins by observing:

> Nor would it, I apprehend, weaken the conclusion, that we had never seen a watch made; that we had never known an artist capable of making one; that we were altogether incapable of executing such a piece of workmanship ourselves, or of understanding in what manner it was performed; etc.[28]

If we have read Hume first, that looks like as a direct reply to this challenge of Philo's:

> And will any man tell me with a serious countenance, that an orderly universe must arise from some thought and art like the human, because we have experience of it? To ascertain this reasoning, it were requisite that we had experience of the origin of worlds; and it is not sufficient, surely, that we have seen ships and cities arise from human art and contrivance.[29]

Likewise, in chapter II when Paley modifies the thought experiment so that the watch is capable of mechanical reproduction, this is obviously meant to address the challenge of naturally inherited design and in so doing elaborates upon a point made by Cleanthes (and left unanswered by Philo):

> It sometimes happens, I own, that the religious arguments have not their due influence on an ignorant savage and barbarian; not because they are obscure and difficult, but because he never asks himself any question with regard to them. Whence arises the curious structure of an animal? From the copulation of its parents. And these whence? From their parents? A few removes set the objects at such a distance, that to him they are lost in darkness and confusion. . . .[30]

And Paley's claim, "Nor . . . would it yield [the observer's] inquiry more satisfaction, to be answered that there existed in things a principle of order, which had disposed the parts of the watch into their present form and situation"[31] neatly counters Philo's claim that "For ought we know a priori, matter may contain the source or spring of order within itself as well as the mind does; and there is no more difficulty in conceiving, that the several elements, from an internal unknown cause, fall into that arrangement."[32]

PALEY'S ARGUMENT IS NOT AN ARGUMENT BY ANALOGY

On points such as these, Paley adapts his argument directly to answer problems raised by Hume. On two major points, however, he adapts his argument so that those problems never arise in the first place: these are, as noted, Philo's objections to argument by analogy and to assertions about the world as a whole. These problems do not arise for Paley because he does not give an argument by analogy, and he never asserts that the whole world is like a machine. This might be surprising if we are already accustomed to reading Paley before Hume, but it should not be surprising in view of the chronology and Paley's actual dialectical relation to Hume. And it fits well with a close reading of the text.

First, and most obvious, is the fact that Paley doesn't explicitly formulate his design argument as an analogical argument.[33] Of course, as noted, he doesn't explicitly formulate it at all, yet there is nothing to suggest that his argument has the "A is to B as C is to D" structure that is essential to the analogy of proportionality.[34] I suggest that Paley's design argument is better understood as a simple modus ponens:

1. The natural world has design.

2. If the natural world has design, the natural world has (or had) an intelligent designer.

Therefore,

3. The natural world has (or had) an intelligent designer.

To repeat: Paley *does* make use of analogy (or at least a sort of running comparison) while making his case, but it functions mainly to illustrate and make us receptive to the above implicit premises and to rebut anticipated criticisms. My interpretation here is further supported by an often-overlooked feature of the dialectical structure of the first two chapters. Ask most students to say (without looking at the book) how Paley begins his thought experiment, and they will almost always reply—especially if they've read Hume after Paley—that it begins with Paley finding a *watch*. But it doesn't. It begins with Paley finding a *stone*. The opening sentence is, "In crossing a heath, suppose I pitched my foot against a stone, and were asked how the stone came to be there."[35] Only *after* we have been invited to conclude that the stone's presence would not require much explanation does he introduce the watch. When Paley *does* introduce the watch, his point is not that the universe is like a watch; it is rather that the *stone* is *unlike* the watch, in that unintelligent (natural) forces could explain the former but not the latter. And this difference is not itself some brute fact about the two objects. Paley asks:

> why should not this answer serve for the watch as well as for the stone? why is it not admissible in the second case as in the first? For this reason, and for no other, viz. that, when we come to inspect the watch, we perceive (what we could not discover in the stone) that its several parts are framed and put together for a purpose, *e.g.* that they are so formed and adjusted as to produce motion, and that motion so regulated as to point out the hour of the day.[36]

It is because the watch has the objective properties that constitute design, and the stone doesn't. That is, Paley's argument is, if anything, more an argument from *disanalogy* than an argument from analogy!

Further support for the idea that Paley's argument is not an analogical argument like Cleanthes's comes from the observation that Paley seems utterly unconcerned about one of the things that most exercises Philo about Cleanthes's use of analogy, namely, its supposedly inevitable tendency to anthropomorphism.[37] If argument by analogy entails theologically worrying anthropomorphism but theologically upright Paley is unworried about it, perhaps this is because he is not giving an argument by analogy. Anyway, in these early chapters, Paley is more concerned to prove God's existence than to prove his greatness (where proportionality would have been argumentatively useful). For example, when anticipating the objection that some things in nature work badly, Paley does not worry that this would yield a second-rate designer; still less does he scramble to deny that nature works badly after all. He nonchalantly replies, "It is not necessary that a machine be perfect to show with what design it was made: still less, whether it were made with any design at all."[38] Only much later in the book, long after the case for the designer's existence is made, does Paley take up the issue of the designer's personality, unity, and goodness.

Hume's other major problem with Cleanthes's design argument is that it requires him to make a claim about the whole universe: "Look round the world: contemplate the whole and every part of it: you will find it to be nothing but one great machine."[39] Against this idea, Hume has Philo hammer away on two points: no one (including Cleanthes) has experience of the whole, and it is illicit to draw inferences about the whole from experience of a few, small parts. The design that Paley invokes, on the other hand, is not a property of the whole natural world, but only of individual parts of it. And even if design appears to be lacking in some parts, there are abundant individual examples of design in *other* parts, at least in the tiny corner of the world of which we have experience. Having sketched his general argument in chapters I–II, Paley goes on in later chapters to substantiate his premise (1) by piling up example after example, especially from the anatomy of plants and animals. In chapter III, e.g., Paley explains in detail how the eye, in its material and construction, is perfectly adapted for sight in diverse species, ranging from bird to fish to seal to human.[40] One implication of my argument here is this: not only is it a mistake to read Paley before Hume, it is also a mistake to read only chapters I and II of Paley (as most anthologies do) and to leave out the particular examples of design that Paley actually offers.

Another implication is that the argument I initially attributed to Paley now needs to be revised:

Paley's Revised Design Argument

1. Some things in the natural world [such as the eye] have design.

2. If these things in the natural world have design, then they have (or had) an intelligent designer.

Therefore,

3. Some things in the natural world have (or had) an intelligent designer.

A final bit of indirect evidence that Paley is responding to Hume (and not vice versa) is that this revised version of the design argument would be largely immune from Hume's criticisms. It is exactly what one would expect if Paley had read Hume, saw what happened to Cleanthes, and made mental notes about what not to do. In case this is not clear, suppose Paley were to concede that the analogy between machine and world is weak, or that theistic arguments by analogy lead to unacceptable anthropomorphism. What would follow from that concerning Paley's Revised Design Argument? Nothing. Neither of these claims directly contradicts either of the premises or the conclusion of Paley's revised argument, so if they are to have any critical force at all, it must be that they somehow undermine one or both premises. But the connection between these ideas and Paley's premises is tenuous at best, as I argued earlier. As far as I can see (at least in the opening chapters), nowhere does Paley argue that natural things such as eyes must have a designer because they resemble watches or telescopes, which we have discovered (via inductive, empirical generalization) usually to have intelligent designers. Rather, he seems to regard it as following from a general metaphysical principle such as "Everything that has design must have a designer," which principle he regards as self-evident and necessary. He asserts just such as principle in chapter II:

> *There cannot be design without a designer; contrivance without a contriver*; order without choice; arrangement, without any thing capable of arranging; subserviency and relation to a purpose, without that which could intend a purpose.[41]

If he did regard it as a contingent empirical generalization, we would expect him to qualify it accordingly: "In our experience, for the most part, etc.," but he doesn't do this. And if he didn't regard it as self-evident, we might expect him to argue for it some place, but he doesn't do this either.[42] In particular, he does not do it via an analogy with watches or other machines. In the initial thought experiment, when asked why the watch (unlike the stone) cannot be explained in purely naturalistic, impersonal terms, his is answer is *not* "Because we have learned by empirical observation that all watches happen to have been designed by humans." Indeed, as Benjamin Jantzen points out, Paley seems to reject the empirical inductive account of this principle later in the book, when he states,

> If we had never in our lives seen any but one single kind of hydraulic machine; yet if of that one kind we understood the mechanism and use, we should be as perfectly assured that it proceeded from the hand, and thought, and skill of a workman, as if we visited a museum of the arts and saw collected there twenty different kinds of machines for drawing water, or a thousand different kinds for other purposes.[43]

His answer is simply to open the watch and point out that (unlike the stone), "its several parts are framed and put together for a purpose; e.g., that they are so formed and adjusted so as to produce motion, and that motion so regulated as to point out the hour of the day."[44] If anything, reflection on the watch and other machines is just an occasion on which the self-evidence of the claim that "Everything that has a design must have a designer" is made especially vivid.[45] I conclude that Paley's design argument does not appeal to analogical argument, even to justify premise (2), "If things in the natural world [such as the eye] have design, then they have (or had) an intelligent designer." And since it doesn't, Hume's criticisms of analogy do not touch it.

Let me head off one possible misunderstanding here: my goal in arguing that Hume's criticisms of analogy do not touch Paley's design argument is not primarily defensive or apologetic. I do think that Paley's argument is less bad than it is often made out to be, but still I think it faces a powerful (and familiar) objection based on evolution via natural selection. That is, the proper interlocutor for Paley is not Hume, but Darwin. And this highlights a further advantage to my interpretation of Paley's argument: my interpretation makes it plain where and how the Darwinian critique touches it. In arguing for premise (2), Paley says, in effect, "It is impossible for design to occur without a designer," to which the Darwinian may reply, "Wrong! Given genetic inheritability of traits, random genetic mutation, natural selection, and millions of years, it is not impossible at all." Maybe there are other versions of the design argument that are less vulnerable to this Darwinian critique, but they will have to be developed differently from either Cleanthes's or Paley's version. Even this points up one final advantage of my interpretation: philosophical ideas often have various forms and complex histories; they are proposed, critiqued, refined, and proposed and critiqued again. This is surely true of that sprawling family of philosophical ideas that we call "the design argument," but reading Paley before Hume may fool the beginning student into thinking that there is just one design argument, and that Paley proposed it, Hume refuted it, and that is the end of it.[46]

CONCLUSION

For all these reasons (and despite how things are presented in leading textbooks), it is a mistake to teach (or even read) Paley before Hume. The remedy is simple: pants before shoes; Hume before Paley.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Quebec Seminar in Early Modern Philosophy, Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières, September 2019.

ENDNOTES

1. Feinberg and Shafer-Landau, *Reason and Responsibility*; Pojman and Rea, *Philosophy of Religion: An Anthology*. But the same order can also be found in many other leading anthologies, including Cahn, *Exploring Philosophy of Religion: An Introductory Anthology*; Davies, *Philosophy of Religion: A Guide and Anthology*; Edwards, *Reason and Religion: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion*; Meister, *The Philosophy of Religion Reader*; and Peterson et al., *Philosophy of Religion: Selected Readings*.

2. Not only does Paley *not* explicitly lay out an argument, he does not even let on that it is an *argument for theism* until the last sentence of chapter II. There he asks, "Can this [the claim that a complex, reproducing watch does not have a designer] be maintained without absurdity? Yet this is atheism." See Paley, *Natural Theology*, 15.

3. Bruce Jantzen offers a similar interpretation of Paley's argument but in terms of "purpose" instead of "design." See Jantzen, *An Introduction to Design Arguments*.

4. Paley, *Natural Theology*, 7. It is also suggested by his claim that his hypothetical observer "knows enough for his argument: he knows the subserviency and adaptation of the means to the end" (Paley, *Natural Theology*, 10).

5. Hume, on the other hand, appears to have his characters use an "historical" conception of design, such that a thing has design only if its parts *were arranged* in a certain way on "purpose." Philo says of Cleanthes's argument: "Now, according to this method of reasoning, Demea, it follows . . . that order, arrangement, or the adjustment of final causes, is not of itself any proof of design; but only so far as it has been experienced to proceed from that principle" (Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, 146).

6. Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, 143.

7. Hume (1711–1776) started writing *Dialogues* in 1750, completed it until 1776, and published it posthumously in 1779. Paley (1743–1805) wrote *Natural Theology* in the last decade of his life and published it in 1802.

8. Wikipedia ("Watchmaker Analogy") says the same thing: "David Hume . . . offered a number of the most memorable philosophical criticisms to Paley's watch analogy."

9. As a referee for this journal points out, critics who, say, invoke Kant to explain what's wrong with Peter Singer's utilitarianism are not necessarily wrong-headed. My point here is that this particular anachronistic ordering can easily lead us into distorted readings of both Paley and Hume. Moreover, in the present case an anachronistic ordering makes for a curious pedagogical redundancy: if Hume really *were* responding to Paley's argument, and really *had* put an argument just like Paley's into the mouth of Cleanthes, why should I bother to assign Paley at all? My students are already going to read Cleanthes' version of the design argument, which is much more succinct than Paley's and philosophically interesting in its own right.

10. And why should there be? Machine-analogy design arguments were already well-known in Hume's day, and had a history that stretched back as far as Cicero: "When you look at a picture or a statue, you recognize that it is a work of art. When you follow from afar the course of a ship, upon the sea, you do not question that its movement is guided by a skilled intelligence. When you see a sundial or a water-clock, you see that it tells the time by design and not by chance. How then can you imagine that the universe as a whole is devoid of purpose and intelligence, when it embraces everything, including these artefacts themselves and their artificers? Our friend Posidonius as you know has recently made a globe which in its revolution shows the movements of the sun and stars and planets, by day and night, just as they appear in the sky. Now if someone were to take this globe and show it to the people of Britain or Scythia would a single one of those barbarians fail to see that it was the product of a conscious intelligence?" From Cicero, *The Nature of the Gods*, 158–59. In short, the fact that Hume has Cleanthes invoke a watchmaker analogy is no evidence at all that he writes with Paley in mind.

11. See Paley, *Natural Theology*, 10.

12. Jantzen goes even further: "While Hume did in fact devastate the argument by analogy, it was largely an argument of his own creation." See Jantzen, *An Introduction to Design Arguments*, 99.

13. This misconception has also found its way into the popular press. Julian Baggini, e.g., in an article on Hume's criticisms of religious belief claims, "Hume was here anticipating the argument of William Paley, who argued that it is as rational to infer the existence of a divine creator from the existence of the marvellous, complex universe as it is the infer the existence of a watchmaker from the discovery of a watch." See Baggini, "Hume on Religion, Part 3: How He Skewered Intelligent Design," 23.

14. See, e.g., Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, 148.

15. See Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, 156, 158, 166, and especially 168.

16. My discussion in this section is based largely on Roger M. White, *Talking about God: The Concept of Analogy and the Problem of Religious Language*.

17. Quoted in White, *Talking about God*, 14.

18. The concept of analogy in play here is the analogy of proportionality, as distinct from the analogy of "focal meaning." For a helpful discussion of this distinction, see White, *Talking about God*, chapters 1–2.

19. White, *Talking about God*, 22. This is strikingly similar to how the editors of one of my anthologies characterized Cleanthes's and Paley's arguments as well: "A standard reading of the argument from design interprets it as an inductive argument. More precisely, it is an argument by analogy, with the following form:

    1. a, b, c, and d all have properties P and Q.
    2. a, b, and c all have properties R as well.
    3. Therefore, d has property R too (probably).
    4. The more similar d is to a, b, and c, the more probable is the conclusion.

    Cleanthes's argument can be rendered as follows:

    1. Boats, houses, watches and the whole experienced world have such properties as "mutual adjustment of parts to whole" and "curious adapting of means to ends."
    2. Boats, houses, and watches have the further property of having been produced by design.
    3. Therefore, it is probable that the universe also has this further property—that it, too, was produced by design."

    From Feinberg and Shafer-Landau, *Reason and Responsibility*, 28.

20. Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, 143, my emphasis.

21. Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, 144.

22. Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, 144, emphasis mine.

23. Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, 148. Again, in the next paragraph: "So far from admitting, continued Philo, that the operations of a part can afford us any just conclusion concerning the origin of the whole, I will not allow any one part to form a rule for another part, if the latter be very remote from the former" (Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, 148).

24. These are precisely the criticisms that Philo repeatedly presses at Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, 166–69.

25. He mentions Hume once by name in a later chapter. In his discussion of God's goodness, Paley rejects Philo's claim at Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, 208, which he takes to express Hume's own opinion, that idleness "lies at the root of a considerable part of the evils which mankind suffer." See Paley, *Natural Theology*, 265.

26. See Derham, *Physico and Astro Theology; or, a Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God*; and Nieuwentyt, *The Religious Philosopher; or the Right Use of Contemplating the Works of the Creator*.

27. See "Verax," "Dr. Paley's 'Natural Theology'," 803. For a fascinating introduction to the controversy, see Jantzen, *An Introduction to*

Design Arguments, 168–69. For further critical discussion, see Branch, "Paley the Plagiarist."

28. Paley, *Natural Theology*, 8.
29. Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, 149. Hume apparently considers this such an important criticism that he has Philo repeat it a few pages later: "Have you ever seen nature in any such situation as resembles the first arrangement of the elements? Have worlds ever been formed under your eye; and have you had leisure to observe the whole progress of the phenomenon, from the first appearance of order to its final consummation? If you have, then cite your experience, and deliver your theory" (Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, 151).
30. Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, 151.
31. Paley, *Natural Theology*, 9.
32. Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, 146.
33. For a similar interpretation of Paley's argument, see Jantzen, *An Introduction to Design Arguments*, 131–35. For a rather different interpretation of Paley's argument still as deductive and non-analogical, see Oppy, "Paley's Argument for Design." For an interpretation of Paley's argument as an inference to the best explanation, see Schupbach, "Paley's Inductive Inference to Design: A Response to Graham Oppy." As noted, I read Paley as offering a deductive argument, but even if I am wrong about that, and Paley is in fact offering an inductive inference to the best explanation, that does not weaken my two main claims that Paley's argument in chapters I-III is not a classical argument from the analogy of proportionality and does not rest on claims about the whole world.
34. It is telling that Paley does not use the words "analogy," "analogous," or "similarity" anywhere in chapters I or II. He uses the word "similar" once, when, in the thought experiment, the watch is "found in the course of its movement to produce another watch similar to itself." He does use the word "analogy" elsewhere in the book—some twenty-four times—but never to describe the kind of argument he is making. Generally, he uses it to refer to structural or functional similarities between different kinds of natural objects, such as seeds and eggs. See, e.g., Paley, *Natural Theology*, 188. Occasionally, he uses it to refer to ways of learning or modes of inference that connect two very different objects, but this is always within natural history and never theology. For example, he marvels at the instincts of butterflies that know to lay their eggs on the right plants for their caterpillars to eat, even though the adults do not eat those same plants. This is marvelous, he says, because the adult butterfly cannot know this via memory or "analogy." See, e.g., Paley, *Natural Theology*, 163.
35. Paley, *Natural Theology*, 7.
36. Paley, *Natural Theology*, 7.
37. It probably isn't inevitable if we distinguish (as mathematicians since Euclid have done) between properties that are invariant under analogy and properties that are not. See White, *Talking about God*, 22.
38. See Paley, *Natural Theology*, 8. Paley expands on this point in chapter V: "When we are inquiring simply after the *existence* of an intelligent Creator, imperfection, inaccuracy, liability to disorder, occasional irregularities, may subsist in a considerable degree, without inducing any doubt into the question: just as a watch may frequently go wrong, seldom perhaps exactly right, may be faulty in some parts, defective in some, without the smallest ground of suspicion from thence arising that it was not a watch; not made; or not made for the purpose ascribed to it" (Paley, *Natural Theology*, 35).
39. Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, 143. Also, Cleanthes happens to use the "world" in this passage, but he clearly does not mean just planet Earth, and he and the other characters use the word "universe" dozens of times elsewhere.
40. Why does Paley start there? Partly, perhaps, because Nieuwentyt, whom he follows, starts there, and partly because the eye is such an effective example on its own, but partly also (I conjecture) for rhetorical reasons: Hume has Cleanthes give a spirited discourse on animal anatomy, beginning with the eye, arguing that it is blind dogmatism to reject such natural and convincing arguments. At the end of this speech, the narrator reports that Philo was "embarrassed and confounded." This is one of the few places in the whole dialogue where Cleanthes' arguments carry the day, which may be why Hume has Demea barge in and change the subject to anthropomorphism. See Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, 154–55.
41. Paley, *Natural Theology*, 12, my emphasis.
42. The closest Paley comes to offering evidence for (2) is his assertion that "in no assignable instance hath such a thing [i.e., something that exhibits design or purpose] existed without intention somewhere." See Paley, *Natural Theology*, 68. Here, he seems to be saying that there is no clear, empirical disproof of the claim—but that is a far cry from an empirical *proof* of it.
43. Paley, *Natural Theology*, 45, quoted in Jantzen, *An Introduction to Design Arguments*, 125.
44. Paley, *Natural Theology*, 7.
45. That is, it looks less like analogy than like "intuitive induction," in which, according to White, "the induction 'exhibits the universal as implicit in the clearly known particular'" (Aristotle, *PostA*, 71a8). If by contemplating a particular case A, I can see that from the fact that A is F, it follows that A is G, then I am entitled to infer the universal truth that anything that is F is G. One can put the induction here in the form: 'When you see in the particular case why A's being F implies that A is also G, you will recognize why anything that is F is G.'" From White, *Talking about God*, 46.
46. Interestingly, Hume does have Philo raise the possibility of design without a designer, not because he has any positive counter-explanation of the Darwinian sort, but as an instance of the negative (and characteristically Humean) point that "Experience alone can point out to [a man] the true cause of any phenomena" (Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, 145).

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BOOK REVIEW

The Road Travelled and Other Essays

Steven M. Cahn (Resource Publications/Wipf and Stock: Eugene Oregon, 2019). ISBN: 978-1532664519.

Reviewed by Tziporah Kasachkoff
THE GRADUATE CENTER, CUNY

Steven M. Cahn has written extensively on matters of interest to philosophers, to teachers of philosophy, and to students of philosophy. The three books by Cahn that will be reviewed in this publication—books that Cahn has referred to as a "trilogy"—are *The Road Travelled and Other Essays*, *A Philosopher's Journey: Essays from Six Decades*, and *Philosophical Debates*. Each book is, for the most part, a compilation of articles previously published.

In this issue I present a review of the first book of the trilogy. Reviews of the other two books will be published in subsequent issues.

The Road Traveled and Other Essays consists of essays published between the years 2014 and 2019 and is divided into six parts. The first part, entitled *Well-Being*, deals with what it means to live a life that one can consider worthwhile; the second part, entitled *Religious Belief*, looks at the reasonableness of religious belief; the third part, *Academic Life*, presents some issues that arise for those who work in academia; the fourth part, *Doctoral Education*, presents issues one may encounter in one's pursuit of a doctoral education, and the fifth part, *Puzzles*, deals with five particular ethical questions. The sixth part, entitled *Reminiscences*, is a detailed account of Cahn's educational and professional history.

I

The first section of Part I, **Well-Being**, is titled "Living Well" and looks at Ronald Dworkin's view regarding what is to be considered a "successful" as opposed to a "wasted" life. He raises the question whether, as Dworkin maintains, there is indeed a single metric that is appropriate for the assessment of the worth of all lives no matter how different those lives are or how different are the persons leading those lives. Helpfully, here as elsewhere, Cahn encourages the reader to engage with theoretical issues (in this case, the positive worth of a life) by directing attention to the empirical details of two very different individuals whose happiness and sense of fulfillment is sustained by activities and pursuits that are very different from those that sustain and animate the other. Cahn also draws attention to several other philosophers' views about what it is to lead a worthwhile life, and asks critical questions regarding those views. Cahn offers his own criteria for what he considers both necessary and sufficient for leading a good life, presents a possible criticism of his view, and offers an answer to that criticism. Finally, Cahn (with Christine Vitrano) looks at Robert Nozick's claims regarding the "experience machine"—a machine that simulates real-life experiences so well that one cannot tell the difference between the machine-induced experiences and what one would experience in real life. Nozick claimed that *no one* would choose the experience machine over lived experience, a view endorsed by many philosophers since it was first presented in 1974. Cahn thinks otherwise and offers reasons for a person turning to such a machine not only for a particular experience at a particular time but also for a lifetime. The issues that this discussion raises—psychological, ethical, philosophical, and perhaps also religious—are both interesting and thought-provoking not merely for philosophy students (or students generally) but for *all* readers.

II

In Part II, **Religious Belief**, Cahn examines (what are known as) "theodicies"—arguments that the existence of evil in the world is compatible with the existence of an omnipotent, omniscient, and omnibenevolent God (and for this reason the presence of evil in the world cannot be used to disprove the existence of such a God). Cahn begins by stating that a successful theodicy must offer a reason to view evils that occur in the world as not merely compatible with God's existence, but as truly justified. But, Cahn asks, if this were the case, how could belief in God afford any comfort? Perhaps it would not, though a believer *might* be comforted by the thought that (as some have argued) human evildoers are at least not automatons but rather free agents capable of choosing otherwise than in fact they do. (It is worth noting that although Cahn is probably correct in claiming that an account of God as *not* being omnipotent would likely appeal to few theists, some well-known theists have claimed exactly that.[1]) Students might also question the view, put forth by Cahn, that an omnipotent, omniscient, and wholly benevolent God must consider all evils as *enhancements* to life. Given that an omnipotent, omniscient, and totally benevolent God might allow a person to intentionally murder another so as to permit that person the exercise of his or her free will, students will have to determine which of the following constitutes an *enhancement* to life: a world in which the exercise of free will does not rule out the occasional murder followed by divine condemnation and punishment of the murderer (as God has issued a commandment not to murder) or a world in which no murders are ever committed because no humans ever act with free agency.

In this section there is also some discussion of what it means to worship and what counts as being deserving of worship. This is a welcome addition to the literature as there is relatively little discussion of this topic elsewhere.

Whether or not students agree with Cahn's conclusion that God—at least as presented in the Old Testament—is not worthy of worship, this reading should lead to worthwhile discussion of both how one is to interpret the biblical passage that Cahn appeals to in support of his claim that God is not worthy of worship as well as the meaning of worship generally.[2]

The final part of this section is devoted to a discussion of Heaven, resurrection, the meaning of having a "soul," and the reasonableness of believing some things rather than others regarding a spiritual "afterlife."

III

Part III, **Academic Life**, contains discussions of a) Faculty Appointments, b) Academic Voting, and c) the Ambiguities of Affirmative Action. From his own experience as a teaching member of philosophy departments at various universities, Cahn gives an account of what takes place during faculty meetings that have as their focus the appointment of a new faculty member to the department.

Against this background he gives advice to readers about what to avoid in such meetings so that "unfortunate appointments" do not result. This discussion is followed by suggestions regarding the voting procedure to use in choosing an academic colleague. Cahn ends this section with a discussion of the ambiguity of the notion of "affirmative action" given the different policies the expression refers to, the different efforts recommended to achieve whatever are claimed to be its goals, and the different justifications appealed to for adopting it as a policy.

IV

Part IV, **Doctoral Education**, contains three short pieces. The first deals with the orientation meeting that is often conducted for incoming doctoral students followed by Cahn's advice to students in the pursuit of their doctoral studies. The second piece deals with the standards that philosophy departments should (but sometimes fail to) maintain to ensure that students who emerge from those departments have a comprehensive knowledge of the essential concepts and issues in the field, as well of its important figures and readings. The third piece is a list of unfortunate professional attitudes that students might be exposed to by their professors and so come to see as acceptable when in fact they should be denounced and eschewed.

V

Part V, **Puzzles**, is a section in which Cahn raises specific ethical questions concerning three very different situations. They are as follows:

1) The use—and advertisement thereof—of an affirmative action policy by one's department in its consideration of candidates for a position in that department.

2) The action one is to take with found items on a bus given that the owner is unknown and (therefore) not contactable. Does one give these items to the bus driver without knowing whether the driver will himself follow whatever established protocol exists for items found on his bus?

3) The extent to which we are obligated to act altruistically for the sake of others even when acting in this way will involve considerable cost to us. Of course, there are some circumstances in which the cost of our *not* acting altruistically will have dire consequences for others. Cahn asks *for the reasons* one should or should not choose self-interest over morality both in cases where acting out of self-interest will have consequences that are extremely grave for others and in cases where not acting out of self-interest will involve grave consequences for oneself.

All the questions raised here should engage student interest and promote spirited discussion. The raising of these questions in the context of discussion of the ethical theories that students have encountered in their ethics classes will prove helpful to their understanding—and perhaps also to the re-evaluation—of those theories.

VI

Part VI, **Reminiscences**, is a recounting by Cahn of his history as a student, graduate student, and later as a teacher of philosophy at the various academic institutions in which he taught—Dartmouth, Vassar, New York University, University of Vermont, and the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. He also notes the administrative positions he has held (at Exxon Education Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and as dean and then provost at the Graduate Center of City University of New York). Finally, Cahn writes of his vast publication enterprises, many of whose volumes will be familiar to students of philosophy.

NOTES

1. Genesis 18: 23–32.
2. See, for example, Thomas Jay Oord, *The Death of Omnipotence and Birth of Amipotence* (Grasmere, ID: SacraSage Press, 2023) and references therein.

POEMS*

Felicia Nimue Ackerman
BROWN UNIVERSITY

Plus Ça Change

(This poem appeared in *Light*, https://lightpoetrymagazine.com/)

Right and left can't seem to see
There's a way that they agree:
From the classroom to the dorm,
All opinion must conform.

Content Warning

(This poem appeared in *Lighten Up Online*.)

Save our youth from open speech.
That's the safest way to teach.
Don't suppose their minds are agile;
Be aware their souls are fragile.
If you go against their mode,
Whoops—their psyches might implode!

*Though readers are aware of the academic context to which Professor Ackerman's poems respond, Professor Ackerman has noted that *The Wall Street Journal* reported that "There was very little free speech at Harvard—the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression ranked it last of all colleges last year." And, according to *Axios*, "A Florida school district is pulling nearly 2,000 books from its shelves—including some dictionaries and encyclopedias."

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

Felicia Nimue Ackerman
Brown University
Department of Philosophy
Box 1918 45
Prospect St.
Providence, RI 02912
felicia_ackerman@brown.edu

Tziporah Kasachkoff
Philosophy Department
The Graduate Center, CUNY
365 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10016
tkasachkoff@yahoo.com

Mark T. Nelson
Department of Philosophy
Westmont College
Santa Barbara, CA 93108-1099
manelson@westmont.edu