empirical testability and predictive success of modern science. It is also true that modern science has had this success even as it has dispensed with Aristotle's explanation through formal and final causes. However, we need not infer that Aristotelian science, and in particular the science of being qua being, has nothing to add to what we have learned from modern science. Modern cosmology and some sorts of theoretical physics are no more testable and can have no more claim to predictive success than does Aristotelian science. These same studies attempt to understand the origins and nature of things studied (through observation and testing) in the empirical sciences. Where prediction is involved, we have identified processes and directions of change, but not the sources or ultimate directions of those changes. It is here that an investigation of the forms invoked by modern science could be enlightening. Bell's book is important not least because it brings up such large and crucial questions.

Metaphysics as an Aristotelian Science is fittingly produced in an edition of excellent quality. It includes a bibliography, an index of names, and an index of passages from Aristotle. Unfortunately it does not include a subject index, posing difficulties for the reader who consults it for research on a particular topic, or who would like to navigate stages of an argument that is spread out through the book. The book is a revised and expanded dissertation. At this early stage of his career, Bell has developed a remarkably nuanced understanding, a striking philosophical maturity, a deep and broad facility with the texts and secondary literature, and a truly fine fluency in explicating Aristotelian passages and ideas. Many readers will opt for different interpretations, and many will take different passages as their guides, but all will benefit from exploring Bell's reasoning and the challenges it poses to their own. This book is an auspicious start to what will surely be a highly distinguished career.

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Don't Worry, Be Stoic: Ancient Wisdom for Troubled Times. By Peter J. Vernezze. Lanham: University Press of America, 2005. Pp. xxiii + 117. $24.00. ISBN 0761830146.

William O. Stephens

Readers of this journal are not the intended audience of this modest, little book. As the title implies, it targets a popular, American audience totally unfamiliar with Stoicism. The 'ancient wisdom' Vernezze imparts includes selected ideas from the Bible, Plato, Aristotle, and Zen Buddhism. Quips from Carl Jung (Jung

1971), Emerson (uncited), Thoreau, Victor Frankl (Frankl 1959), the Dalai Lama, Daniel Goleman (Goleman 1995), and Albert Ellis (Ellis 1998) also find their way into Vernezze's reflections. The principal texts discussed are from Seneca, Epictetus, and—the author's favorite—Marcus Aurelius. Vernezze disdains recent translations of Marcus and Epictetus by opting to use the antiquated Long 1864, rather than either Hays 2002 or a translation of the last century, and the aging Loeb edition (Oldfather 1925 and 1928) rather than Gill 1995 or, for book 1 of the *Discourses*, Dobbin 1998.

The book consists of a two-page preface, a thirteen page 'Introduction: Stoicism: The Path to Personal Liberation', and thirty-three, two to four page sermonlike reflections, which the author accurately enough calls 'essays inspired by Stoic thought', collected into three chapters (vii). Endnotes and a paltry index are included. Absent are any references to other scholars who have written on the Stoics. Consequently, since the author evidently makes no pretense of offering a contribution to serious scholarly work on Stoicism, it seems out of place to criticize this book on the basis of the usual scholarly standards. Perhaps Vernezze intends that some teachers of introductory philosophy courses could use his inspirational mini-essays with students unprepared to study primary Stoic texts. But even supposing this special audience, it would not seem churlish to evaluate the accuracy of Vernezze's portrait of Stoic wisdom and the quality of the book's production. The former is decent. The latter is wanting.

In the introduction Vernezze describes the Homeric warrior ethic, the Platonic Theory of Forms, and the Aristotelian ethic of the aristocratic good man as locating the normative standard of behavior as external to the individual. In contrast, Vernezze says that Stoicism searches for an internal code of behavior. He has no interest in discussing how the Theory of Forms is challenged and refined in what most scholars take to be the later Platonic dialogues. Nor does he discuss the infamous tension in the *Nicomachean Ethics* between the life of *theoria* and the life of the *phronimos*. Historians of philosophy who would cringe at painting with such broad, sloppy brush strokes could be excused for setting the book aside before reading further. Nevertheless, Vernezze's interest is to emphasize that Stoicism is 'the great democratizer of ethics' (xv) since it imposes no theoretical constraints on who may achieve the human good, whereas the Homeric, Platonic, and Aristotelian views are all elitist in that these theories restrict the good life to the few. Vernezze then discusses two groups of critics of Stoicism. The first faults Stoicism by insisting that life is simply too chaotic and stressful to be lived in a state of constant tranquility. The second group sees the Stoic goal as attainable but undesirable, since it robs us of the emotional highs and lows that enrich life and make it worth living (xviii). Vernezze responds to the first criticism by noting that Stoics insist that the life of tranquility is not achieved without great, sustained effort over a lifetime. He upholds the disposition of joy and gentle spirit characteristic of the Stoic in reply to the second criticism.

Vernezze's brief discussion of critiques and criticisms of Stoicism provides the point of departure for what follows. He aims 'to utilize Stoic wisdom in order to

transform our troubles and deal effectively with disappointment, difficulty, and destructive emotions' (xx). Our afflictions as Americans, he argues, stem from the American dream, according to which we can have it all, i.e., we can be spiritually fulfilled, physically fit, financially successful, *and* sexually satisfied. Stoicism offers a sober remedy to this pernicious American 'cult of optimism', as Vernezze calls it, and the crushing disillusionment it inevitably brings. The first chapter of mini-essays, 'Difficulties and Disappointments', illustrates how to apply Stoicism to problems encountered in the external world. These problems are cars, money, vacations, obstacles on a jogging path, marriage, suicide, old age, and illness. The second chapter, 'Destructive Emotions', contains essays on how to apply Stoicism to mental disturbance, ranging from petty inconveniences when traveling, waiting in line, house cleaning, doing automotive maintenance, and mundane stresses of workplace and relationships, to dealing with severe hardship from being maimed, debility arising from self-hatred, grief over the loss and suffering of loved ones, and anger management. The reflections in the third chapter explore connections between Stoicism, eastern and western religious traditions, and spiritual practices.

How effective are these mini-essays at articulating Stoic wisdom for these troubled times? The quality is a bit uneven. Vernezze's welcome acquaintance with the *Philoctetes* (xxi) on the one hand is offset by his neglecting to identify 'the mythical beast that sprouted several new heads for each one that was cut off' (9) as the Hydra defeated by Heracles, who, of course, was an important *exemplum* for the ancient Stoics.

Vernezze is a bit careless when he writes that 'Stoics believed they had responsibilities to all creatures' (90), since the Stoics denied that nonhuman animals were rational creatures deserving of justice. More worrisome is his interpretation of the Stoic view of romantic love. One can certainly challenge his denial that there is anything to suggest that the Stoics 'would disagree with the Greek view that love is a God (Eros)' (17). Equally misleading is his assertion that the Stoics 'do not so much condemn romantic love as ignore it' (17). Reydams-Schils 2005, Inwood 1997, and Stephens 1996 all argue against Vernezze's glib assertion on this point.

The plethora of printing errors that pepper the book is extremely distracting. I counted thirty-three mistakes in spelling, punctuation, paragraph indentations, and grammar in 140 pages. Many of these errors damage the meaning intended. For example, confusing 'imminent' with 'immanent' yields: 'What are we to do in the face of such obvious evidence that death can always be immanent?' (18), and 'many Christians diverge from Church teaching, believing that, when death is immanent, the sort of prolonged suffering we see all too often today in hospitals and nursing homes can in no way be intended by a benevolent Deity' (21). The proofreader also confused 'descrying' with 'decrying' (60), 'proceeded' with 'preceded' (64). Such sloppy production does nothing to improve the reputation of the University Press of America.

The author's use of the adjective 'transcendent' is troublesome. For example,

one could take issue with his characterization of the Tao as a transcendent force (77). Similarly problematic is his ascription to the Stoics of 'the notion of an eternal, transcendent force governing the universe' (43). Gratefully, this inaccuracy is corrected a few sentences later when he notes that 'the Stoic God is not, like the Judeo-Christian God, a separately existing Being, but is instead best understood as a rational ordering principle infused throughout the cosmos' (43).

Vernezze's desire to underscore similarities between Stoicism and Christianity leads him to misread Marcus. Vernezze claims that 'Forgiveness is an important concept in Stoicism. Like Positive Psychology, Stoics recognize the profound spiritual truth embedded in Christ's counsel to love your enemies and to pray for those who persecute you…' (68-69). To support this misinterpretation, Vernezze quotes *Meditations* 4.7: 'Take away the opinion "I have been harmed" and the complaint itself is taken away. Take away the complaint and the harm as well disappears' (68). But Stoic magnanimity is not the same as Christian forgiveness. Forgiveness entails three stages: A wrongfully harms B; A and B recognize that A wrongfully harmed B; B releases A from moral condemnation. In contrast, the magnanimous person judges the misdeed perpetrated against her to be too trivial to constitute any real harm at all. The magnanimous Stoic makes no complaint against the putative offender, and thus the putative harm evaporates. The Stoic does not pray for those who persecute her, nor does she love them in the sense that Christ counsels. The Stoic does what she can to cooperate with and assist other human beings as fellow members of the social community of rational beings, but *praying for* those hostile toward her is a practice of Christian spirituality that is alien to a Stoic's sensibility.

Vernezze's eagerness to highlight parallels between the story of Job and the Stoic attitude towards misfortune yields the objectionable claim that 'by accepting the totality of what occurs with placid resolve, Stoicism approaches something akin to faith' (84). If by this Vernezze means simply that the Stoics believed in divine providence and that the cosmos operates according to right reason, which is the same as Fate, which is the same as Zeus' will, then his claim is innocent enough. But if by 'faith' he means instead belief in an otherworldly, supernatural justice that rests on scriptural revelation rather than on logical proof or material evidence, then such a notion is squarely at odds with the this-worldly naturalism, physicalism, and rationalism of Stoicism. The placid resolve of the Stoic in accepting events does not resemble faith in a salvific afterlife.

Despite these flaws, overall Vernezze does a decent job of explaining the basic appeal of Stoic thinking about everyday problems. The concise essays are well written and generally succeed in easing the worries of the kind of reader who, like Vernezze himself, can find solace in Stoicism.

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The Mysticism of Saint Augustine: Rereading the Confessions. By John Peter Kenney. Routledge, 2005. Pp. xv + 160. $29.95 (paper). ISBN 0-415-28833-9.

Phillip Cary

Apart from scholars with a specialized interest in mysticism, among whom there is a great deal of disagreement, the dominant understanding of mysticism today is a simplified version of William James' picture in *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902), according to which a private and ineffable experience of transcendence is expressed superficially and inadequately in the language of the mystic's theology or 'over-beliefs'. John Peter Kenney is among a growing number of scholars of Christian mysticism who follow instead Bernard McGinn's view, according to which the theology of the mystics is more fundamental to the phenomenon of mysticism than James' picture makes it out to be. Kenney's new book extends and deepens McGinn's portrait of Augustine as the founding father of the tradition of Western mystical theology, whose writings—more than his experience—originated several distinctive features of what we have since come to call 'mysticism'. To this task Kenney brings expertise not only in Augustine but also in Augustine's philosophical background, in particular