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The 2013 Keynote speaker was Mark Risjord

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Introduction

Heidegger’s writings exerted a tremendous influence on the 20th century, and contributed to changing the way we view the world. He sought to reevaluate the way philosophy worked and functioned, and his detailed assessment of Technology in *The Question Concerning Technology* helped change the way the effect of technology is viewed. Catherine Botha stated, “Technology has become the central, endangering phenomena of our times”.¹ It must be added that Heidegger never claimed technology itself, but rather its essence within the realm of Enframing, is the real danger.²

This paper has a twofold aim: to come to grips with key concepts and ideas in Heidegger’s *The Question Concerning Technology*, and then to offer a critique of some of his ideas in relation to that text itself and to other works like *Being and Time*. Specifically, this paper looks at Heidegger’s overall views about nature, and how differences in the ways that he characterizes nature can have a large impact on what Heidegger is trying to show.

The Question Concerning Technology

I begin here with a discussion of Heidegger’s views about technology, as he lays them out in, *The Question Concerning Technology*. In this essay Heidegger first discusses how technology is viewed in ancient thought, which held that

the essence of a thing is what a thing is, and that technology is merely a means to an end and is the result of human activity. Heidegger casts these views of technology aside, but at same time he holds onto part of ancient Greek thinking and explains it as part of the whole. He outlines the traditional thought of technology through the use of Aristotle's causes: causa materialis, causa formalis, causa finalis, and causa efficiens. Heidegger acknowledges the aptness of a discussion of these causes in the use of technology in ancient times, but claims that this understanding of causes does not work for modern technology. He states:

In opposition to this definition of the essential domain of technology, one can object that it indeed holds for Greek thought and that at best it might apply to the techniques of the handcraftsman, but that it simply does not fit modern machine-powered technology. And it is precisely the latter and it alone that is the disturbing thing, that moves us to ask the question concerning technology per se.

For Heidegger, technology can be understood in two ways, bringing-forth, which he characterizes in terms of Aristotle’s causes, and challenging-forth. Bringing-forth is the act of revealing; Heidegger describes it as what occurs when something “concealed comes into unconcealment”. This is shown through the four causes as the causes bring one thing out of another thing. An example of the four causes, material, formal, efficient, and final, in the creation of a silver chalice; the material cause comes from the silver in which the chalice is formed; the formal cause is the shape the cup will take to become a chalice; the efficient cause is the craftsman forming

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3 Ibid., 3.
4 Ibid., 2-4.
5 Ibid., 6.
6 Ibid., 5.
the chalice; and the final cause is reason for which the chalice was made. All four causa contribute to the bringing-forth of the chalice, without one of these the silver chalice would cease to be. From this concept, Heidegger takes the stance that this mode of technology is revealing.

Whereas bringing-forth is what Heidegger ascribes to traditional technology, challenging-forth is tied to modern technology. Unlike the creation that we see in bringing forth, challenging-forth would best be described as innovation. Things brought about by challenging-forth require that nature be viewed as standing-reserve, where by “standing-reserve” Heidegger means something like resources that we can use, or natural materials that are good for something or other, the way coal is good for making energy, or for fuel.

The gathering together that belongs to that setting-upon which sets upon man and puts him in position to reveal the real, in the mode of ordering, as standing-reserve.7

David Waddington described the two by saying that in bringing-forth human activity is one part of the bringing-forth process, and that challenging-forth is human control over the process.8 This explanation summarizes some of Heidegger’s views. It touches on Heidegger’s view that technology is something experienced and not created, technology is revealed to us, and not a product of our doing. Waddington, also, adds that in most cases where things are revealed through challenging-forth, humans still have the option of bringing-forth.9

Both ways are forms of Enframing, which Heidegger

7 Ibid., 12.
9 Ibid.,
defines as:

... the gathering together that belongs to that setting-upon which sets upon man and puts him in position to reveal the real, in the mode of ordering, as standing-reserve.\textsuperscript{10}

Heidegger proposes that the essence of modern technology can be captured with the concept of Enframing, which for Heidegger has a negative connotation. In fact, Heidegger states “where Enframing reigns, there is danger in the highest sense”.\textsuperscript{11} Heidegger believes that Enframing in modern technology forces us into a form of ordering that regulates all standing-reserve, nature, in such a way that we fundamentally conceal the essence of technology, the ability to reveal. Instead of technology in which human beings participate in the process of revealing, with Enframing we have technology in which nature is forced into preconceived categories of understanding and taken as raw material for our ends.

\textbf{Critiques of The Question Concerning Technology}

Several problems arise from the essay \textit{The Question Concerning Technology}, and a few of these can be brought to light when with reference to Heidegger’s book, \textit{Being and Time}. One of these problems lies in Heidegger’s use of the concept of nature. Within \textit{The Question Concerning Technology}, nature is viewed as a resource. It is something that we use, something taken as “standing-reserve,” as Heidegger puts it. I will now turn to Hubert Dreyfus’ excellent discussion Heidegger’s concept of nature in \textit{Being and Time}.

Initially in \textit{Being and Time}, nature is encountered the same way, as a source of raw material. But as Heidegger progresses further into his definition, we begin to lose clarity

\textsuperscript{10} Heidegger, \textit{The Question Concerning Technology}, 12.
\textsuperscript{11} Ibid., 14.
over what he means by nature. Dreyfus shows this by discussing the three ways Heidegger says we are capable of encountering nature as ready-to-hand, as present-at-hand, or as Nature that stirs and strives.\textsuperscript{12} To view nature in light of ready-to-hand and present-at-hand is not particularly objectionable, and in large part we still think in these terms, despite Heidegger’s attempt to avoid doing so. The real issue lies in the understanding of what Heidegger means by “Nature that stirs and strives.”\textsuperscript{13} Heidegger claims that this understanding of nature is missed when nature is viewed in light of ready-to-hand and present-at-hand, but after saying that, “the nature that stirs and strives (\textit{physis}) is never mentioned again.”\textsuperscript{14}

Heidegger, as stated before, cautions against nature being viewed as something ready-to-hand or present at hand:

The ‘Nature’ by which we are ‘surrounded’ is, of course, an entity within-the-world; but the kind of Being which it shows belongs neither to the ready-to-hand, nor to what is present-at-hand as ‘Things of Nature’. No matter how this Being of ‘Nature’ may be interpreted, all the modes of Being of entities within-the-world are founded ontologically upon the worldhood of the world, and accordingly upon the phenomenon of Being-in-the-world.\textsuperscript{15}

After reading this excerpt, one thing becomes apparent. As Dreyfus puts it: “Thus even on the transcendental level, the world is equated with the totality of involvements, and all entities, including Nature, can only be encountered as they

\textsuperscript{12} Hubert Dreyfus, \textit{History of the Being of Equipment} (Heidegger: A Critical Reader, 1992), #.
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid.,
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid.,
show up in the equipmental world.” 16 Heidegger defines the world in terms of equipmentality so well that even he himself cannot escape the hole he has dug.

To continue this further, it seems that there is a tension with something Heidegger claims at an earlier point in the text. Heidegger writes:

Any understanding [Verstandnis] has its Being in an act of understanding [Verstehen]. If Being-in-the-world is a kind of Being which is essentially befitting to Dasein, then to understand Being-in-the-world belongs to the essential content of its understanding of Being. 17

The “wherein” of an act of understanding which assigns or refers itself, is that for which one lets entities be encountered in the kind of Being that belongs to involvements; and this “wherein” is the phenomenon of the world.” And the structure of that to which [woraufhin] Dasein assigns itself is what makes up the worldhood of the world. 18

From these two passages, it seems apparent that worldhood is a function of Dasein, and to become a part of the worldhood, one must first have an understanding of being. Following from the passages, having this understanding is a function limited to Dasein, and this prevents Nature from being included in Being-in-the-world.

In tying this back into The Question Concerning Technology, we can make one or two points. The first point is that if we assume the correctness of the proposed view of Nature reached in Being and Time, that is, if we assume that nature is encountered in Being-in-the-world, then Heidegger is

16 Dreyfus, History of the Being of Equipment, #.
17 Heidegger, Being and Time, 118.
18 Ibid., 119.
essentially undermining his own claim when he articulates the view of nature as standing-reserve in *The Question Concerning Technology*. Heidegger views equipmentality as being an incorrect way of viewing the being of entities characterized as nature in Dasein’s Being-in-the-world. The second point would be the reverse of the first point. Here we would assume the correctness of the view of nature in *The Question Concerning Technology*. If this is the case, then nature can be viewed in terms of equipmentality, and Heidegger would be contradicting the view of nature he articulates in *Being and Time*, where nature cannot be described in terms of equipmentality. In the end, Heidegger fails to leave us with a clear understanding of the place of Nature in his philosophy.

One possible way this dilemma could be resolved is by interpreting *The Question Concerning Technology* a little differently. To do this we must make the assumption that Heidegger’s view on Nature in *Being and Time* is correct. In the essay, Heidegger’s view towards nature is articulated in terms of equipmentality. If we take his essay as an explanation of technology in the context of common belief, then we can disregard Heidegger’s use of Nature as standing-reserve. One reason this might work is because Heidegger seems to look down upon this view of standing-reserve; he shows us how this attitude toward nature can become a real danger to our future.\(^{19}\)

Another concern with Heidegger’s *The Question Concerning Technology* results from his use of Enframing, or more specifically *Das Gestell*. Soren Riis argues that *Das Gestell* is not merely a result of modern technology, as Heidegger would classify it. Instead, Riis argues that *Das Gestell* has

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\(^{19}\) On a side note, one thing that seems to be overlooked in *Being and Time* is how animals are viewed in nature, how they may differ from other living things like Dasein or plants. In both *Being and Time* and *The Question Concerning Technology* plants and animals appear to be lumped together as one classification of nature.
always been a part of what it means to be human. To best explain his argument, Riis reapplies Das Gestell to what Heidegger refers to as ancient technology. Specifically, Riis applies it to the production of a silver chalice, just like Heidegger used the chalice to define the four causes. When talking about ancient technology, Heidegger believes that humans only play a part in the bringing-forth process and that the “silver ore becomes itself and is ‘set free’ when it is turned into a utensil.”

It stands to reason that:

The answer must be that the bringing-forth manifest in ancient technology basically reveals silver ore, as a very flexible resource—as what readily could be called “standing-reserve”—namely as standing ready to be used for all kinds of different purposes.

Riis also adds that the term “matter” (hyle), understood by Heidegger as co-responsible in the production process, also means, “building material” in Greek. Since this meaning is found in both ancient and modern technology, Riis reasons that the idea of nature as a form of resource provides a lasting continuity between the two. Riis concludes that if Das Gestell is a pervasive aspect of human existence, then adjustments made to our approach to technology will be a useless attempt to save ourselves from the danger, and instead the only possible solution will be to reevaluate our very existence.

Conclusion

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20 Søren Riis, Towards the origin of modern technology: reconfiguring Martin Heidegger’s thinking (Continental Philosophy Review, 2011), 104.
21 Ibid., 111.
22 Ibid., 111.
23 Ibid., 112.
24 Ibid., 116.
Nature is a concept that Heidegger did not elaborate clearly enough, and did not fully work out. In both cases presented in this paper, problems with Heidegger’s philosophy result from how he defines and uses the concept of nature. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger tells us that Nature is not something that can be viewed in terms of equipmentality; while in *The Question Concerning Technology* he defines nature as standing-reserve, and that would allow for Nature to be viewed in terms of equipmentality. Heidegger’s different stances on the role of Nature leave us with a hole in his philosophy, and although various philosophers may attempt to interpret what Heidegger ultimately means, it is possible we may never know exactly what he intended Nature to be.

Bibliography


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*and Theory, 37, no. 4 (2005): 567-583.*
**Bradley M. Beall—Crime and Punishment: Is Hard Incompatibilism Impractical?**

**Abstract:** Hard incompatibilism has often been criticized for the negative practical implications that it seemingly implies. With the dismissal of moral responsibility under hard incompatibilism, current forms of criminal incarceration seem to lack a justificatory base, which has adverse implications for societal protection. Further, some objectors hold that alternative methods of incarceration under hard incompatibilism are impractical. This paper ventures to show that despite the absence of moral responsibility under hard incompatibilism, the theory holds practical alternative methods of criminal incarceration that are in line with the contours of the theory. By utilizing a quarantine-based rehabilitative method to criminal incarceration, I endeavor to present hard incompatibilism as immune from the fore-mentioned claims of impracticality.

According to data provided by the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the United States penal system held jurisdiction over 1,612,395 prisoners by the conclusion of 2010. In 2003, the cost of corrections amounted to 60.855 billion dollars. These

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statistics reflect the high importance placed on criminal punishment and detention in the United States. Most people would probably agree that the criminal justice system fulfills a pivotal role in our society, even if it does so imperfectly; without it, we could scarcely hope to cope in present-day communities. Our criminal justice system is based upon the idea that people are morally responsible for their actions at least some of the time. When a person commits a morally wrong action and is morally responsible for that wrong action, we are justified in punishing that individual for committing it. Without this basic justification for punishing others, current criminal detention and our practice of blaming individuals would seem to be indefensible. Since criminal punishment is a cornerstone to any developed society, eliminating its role would be unthinkable. Yet, hard incompatibilists hold that no one is ever morally responsible for their actions. It is on this basis that the decriers of hard incompatibilism assert that the absence of moral responsibility entails a dismissal of criminal punishment. However, some hard incompatibilists contend that while blame and desert is untenable under their thesis, a practical substitute to criminal punishment can be justified despite the absence of moral culpability. It is the aim of this paper to demonstrate that despite heavy criticism of hard incompatibilism, it does not have the practical implications that its protestors have claimed. I begin by presenting some terminology germane to the discussion, followed by a series of related objections to hard incompatibilism. In what follows, I will build on the work of Derk Pereboom and show how hard incompatibilism has the resources to respond to these objections.

The free will debate is centered on the question of determinism and whether it is compatible with human freedom and moral responsibility. Determinism is the claim that all events (including human actions) are the product of the past and the laws of nature, while indeterminism is simply the denial of determinism. Incompatibilists hold that determinism is incompatible with human freedom. Hard incompatibilists make
the stronger claim that human freedom and moral responsibility are incompatible with indeterminism as well, and since either determinism or indeterminism is true, according to hard incompatibilism no one is ever morally responsible. So, according to the hard incompatibilist, the question of determinism has no bearing on the question of free will – whether determinism is true or not, we do not have free will.\(^{27}\)

As human beings, we make assessments of responsibility on a daily basis. Moral responsibility is assigned on the assumption that the agent possesses the ability to make free and deliberate actions; in other words, when we morally assess another’s actions we assume that the person possesses free will of the sort required for moral responsibility. From this, we make claims like ‘she deserves x,’ where ‘x’ can stand for moral admonishment, praise, or even criminal punishment. When an individual is responsible for committing a particularly bad action, she becomes subject to punishment which would likely include incarceration away from society. However, the issue that hard incompatibilists face is that because no one is morally responsible for their actions, such a justification for punishment is no longer available. Without such a justification, it might seem that incarceration is illegitimate.

In its strongest form, this objection to hard incompatibilism claims that morality itself disappears as soon as moral responsibility disappears. The argument goes that hard incompatibilism claims that there is no moral responsibility, so its defenders must also deny morality in general and the consequence of this seems to be the loss of something essential to functional society. This form of the objection rests on the idea that if human freedom is no longer tenable, then moral assertions such as ‘you ought to have done

x’ are neither justified nor true because ‘ought’ implies ‘can’. Objectors to hard incompatibilism hold that since human freedom is absent under the thesis and there is only one possible outcome in every event, it is therefore inconsistent to say that one ‘ought to have done x,’ where x is an action that one did not do. It would be quite odd to say that no one has the freedom to do otherwise than they did, while contending that they should have done something different. How could they?

This objection might seem to eliminate a rational application of morality, but there exists an alternative. Although ought statements of this character might not be true (if hard incompatibilism is true), Pereboom points out that “moral judgments, such as ‘it is morally right for A to do x,’ or ‘it is a morally good thing for A to do x,’ still can be.” These moral judgments manage to communicate the key content contained in ought statements without the attached notions of moral responsibility. Specifically, they convey that the person has morally deviated in some way, and that it would have been morally superior to have committed some action other than the one performed. Here, Pereboom is explicating that even without the notions of moral responsibility and human freedom, morality can still remain intact. Further, by replacing moral ‘ought’ statements with moral judgments, individuals can still rationally communicate moral considerations under hard incompatibilism. Therefore it seems that the replacement of moral ought statements with moral judgments demonstrates that hard incompatibilism does not preclude morality.

28 There has been considerable debate whether ‘ought’ implies ‘can’. However, I hold that this principle stands in the context in which it is used, while recognizing that others have argued against its legitimacy.

Nevertheless, critics of hard incompatibilism maintain that even if hard incompatibilists can make sense of morality, their rejection of moral responsibility has disastrous consequences for society. This weaker form of the general objection claims that since hard incompatibilists deny that people have free will, they cannot ever be justified in saying that someone is morally responsible for any action they perform. From this, they claim that it follows that no one can ever deserve to be punished. Therefore, these critics assert that punishment such as incarceration is unjustified if hard incompatibilism is true.

Imagine someone who murdered his friend and was subsequently put in prison for the remainder of his life. Now imagine a person who killed his friend while brainwashed and was also sentenced to life in prison. Our intuitions might tell us that the punishment in the first case seems fitting, but the punishment in the second case seems grossly unfitting because the person was not responsible for his action. The proponents of the weak objection are recognizing that since no one is responsible for their actions under hard incompatibilism, the punishment in the first case is just as unjustified as the punishment inflicted in the second. Further, objectors to hard incompatibilism point out that although the theory precludes punishment, it must still recognize the need to separate dangerous and violent wrongdoers from lawful society. Just envision a society with psychopaths left free to commit horrendous acts without the societal justification to separate them from the general population and you will realize the appalling consequences that result. So, since hard incompatibilism holds that no one deserves to be incarcerated, critics of the thesis denounce it as being false by pointing to the widespread recognition of legitimacy and requirement of criminal incarceration. A rough formal presentation of the objection to hard incompatibilism might look something like this:
(1) If hard incompatibilism is correct, then it is illegitimate to incarcerate criminals.
(2) It is not illegitimate to incarcerate criminals.

Therefore,
(3) Hard incompatibilism is not correct.

Obviously, (1) is thought to be true since according to hard incompatibilism, no one is morally responsible for their actions, and therefore punishment practices such as incarceration are unjustified. This is proclaimed on the basis that punishment enacted without desert is unjust. (2) is held to be true on the basis that no sane person would agree that moral deviants such as serial killers should be allowed to remain within the general public unrestrained, as the consequences would be horrific. It should be stressed that proponents of this objection are making the claim that application of hard incompatibilism would entail the shutting down of the penal system and releasing incarcerated persons back into general society, which is obviously a crazy consideration. (3) follows validly from (1) and (2).

However, some hard incompatibilists such as Derk Pereboom hold a more positive outlook on the implications of the stance. Pereboom holds that while we may no longer be able to uphold punishment in exactly its current form, a radical revision is not necessary on hard incompatibilism either.\footnote{Derk Pereboom, \textit{Living Without Free Will} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).} Pereboom disputes premise (1) of the objection to hard incompatibilism by making the claim that the theory allows for the legitimacy of criminal incarceration similar to the measures used when quarantining people that harbor a dangerous communicable disease. The analogy of quarantine, says Pereboom, proves helpful when considering a society without moral culpability that nevertheless wishes to preserve societal
protection. Quarantine measures seek to protect society from reasonable danger by separating disease from the general population, while not mistreating or assigning blame to the person who is carrying a communicable disease. Those subjected to quarantine do not deserve harm; they are simply being isolated from the general population in order to protect it. Therefore, quarantine recognizes the interests of society as well as the rights of individuals. Not only does it seek to prevent further communication of the disease in question, it also seeks to treat the disease present in the individual. In the same vein, a society without moral responsibility would need to meet the requirement to protect its citizens from harm while also refraining from blaming and mistreating criminals and moral wrongdoers. Adopting a quarantine treatment model for criminals fully recognizes the central claims of hard incompatibilism, while also addressing the need to protect the communal interest in safety. I contend that Pereboom’s analogy addresses the previously stated objection to hard incompatibilism by spelling out a practical and non-radical alternative to current practices of criminal incarceration. Thus, hard incompatibilism does not have the consequence that we must free all prisoners.

Responders to the hard incompatibilist perspective have not viewed available alternatives to current forms of punishment as positively as Pereboom. In “Hard Determinism and Punishment: A Practical Reductio,” Smilansky formulates a

31 One such recent example of the isolation of persons harboring a dangerous disease comes from the 2003 SARS outbreak. During this time, individuals diagnosed with SARS-like symptoms were isolated from the general population to prevent further infection. See, National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases, Division of Viral Diseases. "Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS): Fact Sheet on Isolation and Quarantine." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. May 3, 2005. http://www.cdc.gov/sars/quarantine/fs-isolation.html.
reply to Pereboom’s quarantine conception whereby he hopes to show that hard incompatibilists\textsuperscript{32} must commit to a disparate and defeating alternative to current forms of punishment.\textsuperscript{33} Like Pereboom, Smilansky recognizes that hard determinists cannot consistently claim that any type of punishment is deserved because they are committed to the idea that no one is morally responsible for their actions and therefore do not deserve to be punished. Smilansky agrees with Pereboom that premise (1) of the original objection is false. However, Smilansky is unconvinced that the quarantine model can be legitimately be implemented in the way that Pereboom envisages. Instead, he holds that since hard incompatibilists posit the absence of moral responsibility, yet still wish to retain criminal detention practices, they must compensate those they incarcerate for their loss of freedom. After all, it was not their fault that they committed the wrong action, so if we are going to harm them for something that was not their fault, we must also compensate them. According to Smilansky, this compensation is necessary because “...we are depriving them of their freedom primarily with our own good in mind.”\textsuperscript{34} Smilansky’s objection is that we are targeting and injuring people whom are not responsible for their actions, for the benefit of society and to the detriment of

\textsuperscript{32} Note that Smilansky is discussing the hard determinist position, while Pereboom is speaking on the merits of hard incompatibilism. Hard determinism is a somewhat stronger claim that determinism is true and incompatible with human freedom, and therefore there is no moral responsibility. Hard incompatibilism instead holds that whether or not determinism is true, human freedom and moral responsibility are incompatible in either instance. Since these arguments are focused on the outcome of a world without moral responsibility, I will continue to use the term hard incompatibilism despite Smilansky’s differing conceptual choice.


\textsuperscript{34} Ibid., 356.
the individual. He contends that this uncompensated deprivation of freedom constitutes a form of punishment, which is an unjustified practice under hard incompatibilism. This injustice, says Smilansky, is incongruent with the ethical features that hard incompatibilists hope to retain.\textsuperscript{35} From these constraints, Smilansky claims that the only recourse to retaining criminal incarceration practices without committing a grave injustice is to compensate criminals with lavish living arrangements. Instead of being punished or quarantined, criminals may only be ‘funished’:

For institutions of funishment would also need to be as delightful as possible. They would need to resemble five-star hotels, where the residents are given every opportunity to enjoy life. This would go beyond material conditions: each criminal will need to be permitted considerable leeway in running his or her own personal lives, as well as a large measure of freedom of social interaction (including frequent visits from outsiders, when possible).\textsuperscript{36}

If you recall the astronomical correctional figures presented at the beginning of this paper, you will realize that Smilansky's suggestion is completely impractical in economic terms. Considering the often-cited poor prison conditions, an update to accommodate Smilansky's proposed compensation measures to an already ballooning budget would be grossly unfeasible. Indeed, this is exactly what he has in mind.

\textsuperscript{35} It is important to remember that hard incompatibilism does not exclude moral considerations, as previously demonstrated. Hard incompatibilists should still care about whether actions are moral or immoral.

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., 355.
The final move in Smilansky’s practical *reductio* is to claim that because hard incompatibilists must commit to punishment, which is economically unfeasible, the practical application of the thesis makes it self-defeating. Smilansky makes the claim that “[m]orality is inherently practical, and serves as a basis to help people live with each other, and so abandoning any relationship to practice is destructive for a normative ethical view.”\textsuperscript{37} From this, Smilansky is making the case that hard incompatibilism must commit to impractical criminal incarceration and is therefore self-defeating *in practice*.\textsuperscript{38} Smilansky’s *reductio* argument might be formally stated as follows:

(1) Hard incompatibilism is an impractical moral view.

(2) If hard incompatibilism is an impractical moral view, then it is false.

(3) Hard incompatibilism is false.

Smilansky holds that (1) is true on the basis that hard incompatibilism’s only plausible method to justify quarantine practices is to resort to five-star incarceration accommodations, which is impossible in practice. (2) is considered true on the idea that normative ethical views aim to help people live with one another, and complete inapplicability is destructive to the purpose of any moral theory. Smilansky claims that these types of normative ethical views must have some semblance of

\textsuperscript{37} Ibid., 366.

\textsuperscript{38} Notice that this is a distinct and weaker claim than saying that it is theoretically self-defeating, which would suggest a contradiction in the theoretical formulation of the concept. It seems that Smilansky can make the assertion that hard incompatibilism is impractical, but not that it is contradictory at inception. On this basis I hold that Smilansky’s use of the term ‘reductio’ to represent the formulation of his argument as implying more than is reasonable.
potential applicability to survive as plausible theories. (3) follows validly from (1) and (2).

My defense of hard incompatibilism focuses on premise (1), although it’s not clear that (2) is true either. However, even if premise (2) is granted to Smilansky, the argument still fails. Smilansky’s underlying support for claim (1) that proper compensation under hard incompatibilism must include five-star accommodations seems to be somewhat unfounded. Although criminals do not deserve punishment under hard incompatibilism, the claim that five-star accommodations are the only recourse to justify incarcerating criminals seems to be somewhat extravagant. This claim rests on the idea that those whom are targeted for incarceration under hard incompatibilism are being harmed for the benefit of society to the extent that these standards become necessary. However, it does not seem to be the case that quarantine-like incarceration exclusively entails the selfish interests of general society and the subsequent detriment to criminals. The concept of rehabilitation adds some very strong support to the idea that quarantine might be utilized to benefit society, as well as the individual.39 In this context, rehabilitation is the process of restoring a person to functional place in society. By taking on the aim of rehabilitating criminals while they are quarantined, society is protected from danger and the criminal’s underlying dysfunction is treated so that she may one day re-enter society.40 Under rehabilitation, the criminal is compensated

39 Note that Pereboom speaks on the idea of rehabilitation of criminals under a quarantine model. However, while Pereboom implies that rehabilitation is a somewhat secondary consideration, I hold that rehabilitative aims are pivotal to sustaining criminal incarceration under hard incompatibilism.

40 Some criminals may not ever become capable of re-entering society under rehabilitation. These people may require more personal liberties than those whom hold promise for rehabilitation, but this does not suggest that five-star
through treatment of the underlying issues that affect her function as a person who does what is morally permissible. This stance provides adequate compensation to those whom are incarcerated apart from society and subsequently presents an alternative to Smilansky’s proposal. Further, compensation provided through rehabilitation seems to respect persons in a manner that is absent in Smilansky’s five-star compensation. Instead of simply incarcerating criminals apart from society in lavish living arrangements, rehabilitation seeks to address the issue that led to their incarceration. Hence, the aim of rehabilitation shows a committed interest in respecting persons as beings whom possess a future chance to pursue positive roles in their lives. This might even point to a more ethically-geared criminal justice system than is presently utilized. Additionally, the idea that individuals might become morally improved through rehabilitation seems to confer an added bonus to society as a whole: the improvement of the parts leads to an improvement of the whole.

Since rehabilitation seems to be a viable alternative to Smilansky’s five-star compensation, we must now turn to the implications that this holds for his reductio. Premise (1) no longer seems to be a substantiated claim, since quarantine-based incarceration with the aim of rehabilitation provides a viable alternative to funishment. If (1) is unmotivated, then we lack the reasons to accept the conclusion. In other words, if we are not justified in believing the claim that the hard incompatibilist’s only recourse to justify incarceration of criminals is to compensate them through luxurious living conditions, then we do not get reasons from this argument to accommodations are necessary. Further, these cases would seem to be the exception rather than the rule.

It is not the aim of this paper to discuss possible methods of rehabilitation, but such methods might include moral education, therapy, medication, etc. Obviously, differing cases of criminal misconduct would require differing forms of rehabilitation.
believe the claim that hard incompatibilism is impractical and therefore self-defeating. On this basis I conclude that Smilansky’s charge of impracticality against hard incompatibilism fails. It follows that if hard incompatibilism cannot be deemed impractical on this basis, then it cannot be deemed self-defeating either.

Throughout the course of this paper I have demonstrated that hard incompatibilism can withstand major objections raised in regard to the criminal incarceration implications envisioned by its objectors. I have also shown that morality does not cease to exist under hard incompatibilism, nor does it entail the release of all criminals from prison. Further, I have established that hard incompatibilism holds a justified method of criminal incarceration that does not succumb to the charges of impracticality voiced by Saul Smilansky. This in turn has shown that hard incompatibilism is not self-defeating in practice. Hopefully, this paper has also touched on some of the merits of a quarantine-based system of criminal incarceration aided by rehabilitative aims. I hold that hard incompatibilism applied through a quarantine-based rehabilitative approach to criminal incarceration might address some of the complaints found against current institutions of criminal incarceration. From these considerations, perhaps hard incompatibilism is not as destructive and demoralizing a thesis as it has often been made out to be.

Bibliography


Clayton Bohnet—Epistemology and History: Hegel’s Critique of Reflection

Introduction
Much debate in Hegelian scholarship concerns the nature of and even the presence of epistemology in Hegel’s philosophy. The debate hinges upon how we understand Hegel’s perplexing statement that one cannot examine the faculty of knowing without knowing. This means that we cannot stand beyond the faculty of knowing and know it. This impossible task is precisely what Hegel sees Kant attempting to do in the Critique of Pure Reason. Now because of this and related claims there has been much confusion about Hegel’s own epistemological position: Is he a realist, an idealist, or even a formalist?

Some commentators such as Baillie and Kaufman have argued that Hegel does not have an epistemology in the traditional sense. For Hegel, they argue, epistemology is not something that is done in one place and for instance ontology or theology in another— it is all part of a single process. Thus to pin point Hegel’s epistemology mires one in the totality of Hegel’s philosophy. Thinkers such as Westphal have argued on the contrary that Hegel very clearly makes epistemological claims. These claims can without too much difficulty be situated within the tradition of epistemology.42 Beissler and Rockmore have both shown how Hegel’s epistemological commitments can be seen most clearly in his criticisms of Kant.43 In different ways they both show that although Hegel is never outright in stating epistemological positions his epistemological commitments are clearly revealed in his criticisms of the epistemological

43 See for Example Beiser’s Hegel. 69-73, and Rockmore’s Hegel’s Circular Epistemology.
commitments of others. This discussion is very important given the increasing attention Hegel's work has been receiving by contemporary analytic philosophers such as Brandom and McDowell.44 For without a careful consideration of whether Hegel actually has an epistemology is important before we use Hegel for as support or as foil for our own epistemological commitments.

With few exceptions the current debates have focused on Hegel's mature works to the neglect of his earlier philosophical writings. Some attention is paid to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, or *Science of Logic*, but for the most part Hegel's epistemology has been gathered from the mature *Encyclopedia* of 1827. In the following I undertake to show the way that a) Hegel has a very clear epistemology in his early Jena works, and b) that the intimate connection between epistemology and history shows that any interpretation that reduces Hegel to either a historicist or an epistemologist pure and simple is reductionistic and not helpful to understanding Hegel's work as a whole, or specifically his views on history or epistemology. Thus if we are to consider Hegel as having an 'epistemology' inseparable from a theory of history, the difficult problem of understanding the kind of historical epistemology Hegel has rises up. Part one of this paper looks at the *Differenzschrift* and Hegel's epistemological distinction between reflection and speculation. This distinction is essential for understanding his critique of his contemporaries (Jacobi, Fichte, Schelling). Part Two looks at *Faith and Knowledge* and shows the way reflection is characterized as a historical standpoint that must be overcome. I conclude by arguing a) that it is only by way of the early philosophical works that Hegel’s sometimes obscure statements regarding the nature of knowledge in his later works can be adequately understood, and b) Hegel’s early works emphasize an epistemological pluralism that helps us to understand the focus on “historical and dialectical process” of his later works.

44 See for example McDowell's *Having the World in View*. 
Part One: the Epistemology of Reflection in the Differenzschrift

A careful analysis of the relation between speculation and reflection in the Differenzschrift reveals the epistemological climate in which Hegel takes himself to be writing. Hegel provides analysis of his philosophical contemporaries as a way to justify his own project. He notes their shortcomings, the problems they were trapped within, and in general the limits of their comprehensiveness. Hegel associates his own project with the standpoint of reason, or speculative philosophy adequately conceived, and the projects of his contemporaries with the standpoint of the understanding. These two standpoints represent two distinct epistemologies- the speculative standpoint of reason as we would have guessed stands beyond the standpoint of the understanding and reflection. There is much textual evidence to support this characterization, yet there are also passages which seem to contradict it. The following engages these contradictions and offers an interpretation that recognizes two distinct kinds of reflection which are both to be distinguished from the penultimate standpoint of speculation.

A careful reading of the text shows that Hegel most consistently associates the finite and dualistic cognitions of the understanding with the standpoint of reflection, and the absolute cognitions of reason with speculation. This does not seem to be a controversial point. First we see the pairing of reflection with dualism: "Reflection as the capacity of the finite and the infinite which is opposed to it are synthesized in Reason, the infinity of which contains the finite within itself." 45 The dualism that is the trapping of reflection is overcome in reason. Thought at the level of reflection identifies itself with the finite and thinks of the infinite as beyond or outside/other

than it. This passage establishes that the oppositions that characterize reflection are united in reason, but it does not present us with the determinate support for the analogy that we want, i.e., reason is to the understanding as speculation is to reflection. The following passage helps to make this analogy approachable: “In order to construct the Absolute in consciousness thought raises itself to speculation and has grasped its own foundation in itself.”\textsuperscript{46} Is it that thought which has grasped its own foundation in itself has raised or gone beyond the understanding? Hegel is unclear. Speculation is characterized as having no foundation other than itself, and it therefore does not need to posit a thing-in-itself or sensibility as the outside or beyond of thought in relation to which it knows itself. This characterization of thought as having an outside is part of how characterizes the dualisms of reflective philosophy is caught in. This is important since the demand of speculative thought is to have no outside, nothing outside of thought- pure analysis. In the same passage Hegel writes: “Speculation is the activity of the one and universal Reason upon itself.” In speculation there is nothing over and against reason in relation to which reason determines itself or constructs the Absolute in consciousness. The dualisms characteristic of reflection are resolved when thought lifts itself to the standpoint of the absolute, reason, or speculation. Thought thus leaves the standpoint of reflection behind.

So far it seems clear that in contrast to reflection, the standpoint of speculation as the cognition of reason overcomes all dualisms. However the following passage introduces us to our first set of difficulties: “Only to the extent that reflection has reference to the Absolute is it Reason and its act a scientific knowing. However, through this relation its work ceases and only the relation exists and is the sole reality of the knowledge.”\textsuperscript{47} The first clause of this passage suggests that reflection is not limited to the standpoint of the understanding.

\textsuperscript{46} Ibid. 9.
\textsuperscript{47} Ibid. 18-9.
Hegel here seems to suggest that reflection *becomes* reason in assuming reference to the absolute. As such this passage supports the interpretation of reflection as the broadest category of theoretical knowing. Reflection would include reason and understanding as two different standpoints within itself. In other words, the cognition of reason and that of the understanding are both kinds of reflection. This seems a little more palatable than what I take to be Hegel’s more consistent view that reflection and speculation are two distinct styles of philosophizing. But this more palatable interpretation cannot account for the subsequent clause where Hegel claims that through the reference to the absolute the work of reflection ceases or comes to an end. This second clause suggests that where the standpoint of reason is assumed the cognition of reflection is overcome. In this way the ‘becoming reason’ is a becoming that brings one kind of knowing, reflection, to an end, and inaugurates another kind of knowing, reason or speculation. This gives strong support for the view that the cognition of the absolute is not a kind of reflection. Speculation and reflection would be two radically distinct standpoints that correspond to reason and the understanding respectively.

But let us develop more carefully the interpretation of reflection as the broadest category of thought by showing which kind of reflection is to be associated with the understanding. “There is no truth of the isolated reflection of pure thinking, other than that of its cancellation.”\(^{48}\) The reflection that is proper to the understanding would be this ‘isolated’ reflection that is without truth, and worth cancelling. The only truth proper to this kind of reflection is its cancellation. Is there another kind of reflection? Is this ‘cancellation’ not the same as the cessation of the work of reflection that we saw before? Does this not provide us contrary to expectations more evidence that where reflection ceases reason begins? No, for the simple reason that Hegel here emphasizes that it is ‘isolated reflection’ (isolierten Reflexion) that is characteristic of the understanding.

\(^{48}\) Ibid. 19.
This allows us to preserve the possibility that speculation would be a kind of reflection that is oriented to the Absolute, and which is not ‘isolated.’ But the ability to preserve an interpretation is distinct from having direct confirmation of it. We can suggest here only that it is the reflective cognition of reason that lifts thought beyond the isolated cognitions of the understanding into the systematic whole of thought itself.

In discussing and criticizing Fichte’s method of philosophy Hegel provides further support for the idea that there are two distinct kinds of reflection, one associated with reason, the other with the understanding. "One sees in general that this entire manner of postulating has its ground only in the fact that it proceeds from the one-sidedness of reflection; this one-sidedness demands for the completion of its deficiency, the postulating of the opposed moment which is excluded from it."49 In contrast to the one-sided or isolated reflection which can be associated with the understanding there would be a kind of reflection that is associated with reason. This kind of reflection would recognize the necessity of the opposing postulate, and would recognize the contradiction or paradox as natural to thought. Is it that Hegel is really suggesting that reflection attains the standpoint of reason or is it rather that the necessity of the opposed postulate is a reflection proper to the understanding consecrated in some way associated with reason? If such is indeed the case, which I believe it is, then reflection is always primarily associated with the understanding: either the understanding by itself, as the one-sided reflection, or the understanding consecrated by reason, as the reflection that recognizes the contradiction as natural to thought.

The following quotation presents further problems of interpretation. "Philosophy, as a totality of knowledge produced by reflection, becomes a system, an organic whole of concepts, the supreme law of which is not the understanding but

49 Ibid. 30
Reason.”50 This passage can be read in two ways and thus as supporting two distinct interpretations. First it can be seen to suggest that reflection produces knowledge that is then given systematic form through reason. In such an interpretation reason and reflection remain distinct. The other possible interpretation is that reflection produces the totality of all knowledge in the form of a system. It is not simply that reflection produces finite cognitions of the world and then reason imposes systematic order on those cognitions as the first interpretation would have it. On the contrary, by Hegel emphasizing that reflection produces the totality of knowledge he is clearly indicating that reflection can be oriented by reason alone. As such reflection is not something that ought to be overcome if adequate knowledge is to be attained. If we interpret reflection as that which gives systematic form to knowledge when it is under the power of the supreme law of reason, then reflection is clearly distinct from the understanding. Reflection as understanding is ‘isolated’ reflection, while reflection from the standpoint of reason is systematic. Reflection seems as it were to stand in between the finite cognition of the understanding and the infinite cognition of reason.

Yet, however strong this interpretation may seem, even within the same paragraph there is evidence supporting the contrary interpretation. Again, in discussing Fichte’s philosophy Hegel writes about the limits of reflection:

“It can be required of the system, taken as an organization of propositions, that the Absolute which lies at the basis of reflection also be present in it according to the manner of reflection as the absolute axiom. ... for a proposition, as something posited by reflection, is for itself something limited and conditioned, and it demands another proposition for its foundation and so on into infinity. This delusion that

50 Ibid. 23
something posited only for reflection would necessarily have to stand at the apex of a system..."\textsuperscript{51}

Hegel’s criticism of reflection here cannot be mistaken. He claims that to think that a proposition of reflection can stand at the apex of a philosophical system is a delusion (Wahn). The suggestion here is that it is delusional to think that something posited ‘only for reflection’ can be taken as a principle for a system. It implies that reflection as a kind of knowledge is not adequate for securing a first or foundational principle. From this passage it is easiest to maintain that reflection is generally one-sided, rationating, and isolated. In contrast it is reason or speculation that grasps the organic whole of all thought, and constructs the absolute for consciousness. It would thus not be that the understanding and reason are two distinct species of reflection. “Speculation only acknowledges the Being of knowledge in the totality to be the reality of knowledge; everything determinate has reality and truth for it only in the known relation to the absolute.”\textsuperscript{52} It is speculation that is the kind of cognition proper to reason and not reflection. Reflection or the standpoint of the understanding is dualistic and can offer only finite determinations of the infinite or the absolute. Speculation grasps the totality of knowledge by virtue of all cognition’s relation to the absolute. On this view, reason as speculation could not stand more opposed to reflection and the understanding. It takes as its very beginning and end the unity in thought of the outside and the inside, of the infinite and the finite.

Thus although unclear at times, the \textit{Differenzschrift} presents us with a simple problem: the relation of reason, reflection, and the understanding as different standpoints of knowledge. I turn to Hegel’s other most powerful Jena works, \textit{Faith and Knowledge} to develop more clearly the thesis that at Jena Hegel associates reflection with a middle term uniting the

\textsuperscript{51} Ibid. 24
\textsuperscript{52} Ibid. 20
finite and the infinite—of course this conception of reflection is only possible from the standpoint of the speculative.

**Part Two: the Epistemology of Reflection in Hegel’s *Faith and Knowledge***

*Faith and Knowledge* is one of the major works that Hegel completes during his time in Jena. For a number of reasons it is an essential text for understanding his complex relation to Kant, and for understanding some of the issues that were generative of his more mature works. First, understanding how Hegel sees the impact of Protestantism and the Enlightenment on philosophy is essential for understanding his early criticisms of Kant. Secondly, understanding the significance Hegel attaches to the distinction between reflection and speculation, as two different ways of doing philosophy, is essential for understanding the nature of the speculative dialectic characteristic of Hegel’s later works. The connection of these two issues will be explored in this paper with the hopes of shedding light on Hegel’s early conception of “Idealism” and its relation to epistemology and history.

**A) Reflection as Historical Standpoint**

The introduction to *Faith and Knowledge* claims that the philosophies of Kant, Jacobi, and Fichte are in each case exemplifications of a particular way of doing philosophy. On Hegel’s view each of these thinkers develops their own philosophical system from within the confines of the same standpoint. Hegel refers to the philosophies of Kant, Jacobi and Fichte as *reflective* and suggests that together these thinkers complete or exhaust the possibilities of this kind of philosophy. He then contrasts reflection with speculation.

In contrast to the *Differenzschrift*, what is unique about *Faith and Knowledge* is the way that Hegel understands distinct epistemological standpoints (reflection and speculation) to be the expression of historical movements. We have already in *Faith and Knowledge* the recognition of the intersection of history and epistemology essential to Hegel’s later works.
Reflection thus conceived is a set of epistemological commitments that are the expressions of historical developments or processes. The same can be said for speculation—these two epistemological standpoints represent distinct ways of knowing, where knowing is seen as the outgrowths of organic historical processes.

Hegel sees two distinct historical movements expressed in the respective philosophies of Kant, Jacobi and Fichte. First, Hegel suggests that the Enlightenment is fulfilled in the ‘culture of reflection.’ The Enlightenment as presented in the introduction to Faith and Knowledge represents for Hegel an attitude that takes human finitude to be the standard by which reality can be known. On Hegel’s reading, this idea of the finite individual acts as a first principle for the world-view, or standpoint, of the culture of reflection. For Hegel the Enlightenment philosophy has both theoretical and practical aspects that culminate in the idea of the individual as rational, autonomous, and capable of free activity in all dimensions of life. On Hegel’s reading, the specifically epistemological dimension of the Enlightenment worldview consists in the claim that finite cognition is the limit and ground of all possible knowledge claims. This represents the positive contention that the individual can claim to know only that which can be given as “evident” to any individual. This conception of evidence is grounded at least indirectly in the conception of the empirical, sensible. If I perform an experiment and am certain that anyone could carry out the same experiment, following the same methodological steps then I “know” the result can be determined as objectively true or false. This means that the knowledge claim is objective—the criteria of truth and falsity only validly pertains to claims made about the empirical/objectively evident world. The Enlightenment thus conceived posits knowledge claims that cannot be independently verified as invalid knowledge. Thus, this position also makes a negative claim: knowledge or any kind of science of the supersensible is impossible because its object is not universal in this sense of repeatability or verification. The
"unconditioned" or the "absolute" cannot be an object of knowledge in the same way that objects of the physical universe can. Thus only claims about objects subject to the conditions of space and time can be objectively verified. On Hegel's view this is one of the major arguments involved in the Enlightenment critique of superstition and scholastic metaphysics: Only arguments that can be verified by others constitute a contribution to the picture of the objective world constructed by the sciences. What is beyond this objective picture of the world is merely a matter of faith and feeling, and cannot be given as something objective or verifiable, i.e., as repeatable. The relation of the unconditioned to the individual is left as something 'subjective' or private. What is interesting about Hegel's reading is that in the Enlightenment the individual becomes the sole arbiter of truth at the very moment that the region of truth is deprived of the unconditioned, and reduced to the empirical.

Hegel also sees in Kant, Jacobi, and Fichte the distinct influence of Protestantism, or what he also calls the philosophy of the North (57). In rejection of the traditional conception of religious authority as mediating the relation of the individual to the divine, the Protestant movement sought to establish the individual as the pinnacle or religious life. The individual becomes as Hegel puts it the altar of religious truth. The only ground of religious truth is the 'heart' of the individual. Hegel describes a process where the hierarchy of authority implied a rejection of much of scholastic or medieval theology was likewise rejected, or discredited as dogma. Reason and argumentation were no longer taken to be a direct path to religious truth. The truth of religion is posited as beyond the bounds of objective knowledge. Thus Hegel claims the highest and most valuable ideas of reason are left without validity or credibility. One consequence of this for philosophy but also for culture in general is that the rational cognition of God or the human soul amounts to poetry, art, enthusiasm. "Religion builds its temples and altars in the heart of the individual. In sighs and prayers he seeks for the God whom he denies to himself in
intuition, because of the risk that the intellect will cognize what is intuited as a mere thing, reducing the sacred grove to mere timber.” (57) In order to keep the sacred exalted the Protestant movement elevates the divine beyond the capacities of human knowledge, and grounds it in the feeling of the private self. Protestantism strips reason of any justification for claims to knowledge in matters of religion because it reduces the individual’s relation to the unconditioned to something subjective, such as a feeling, or a matter of faith: “The eternal remained in a realm beyond, a beyond too vacuous for cognition so that this infinite void of knowledge could only be filled with the subjectivity of longing and divining.” (56) Hegel reads Protestantism as giving absolute authority to the individual as the basis of religious truth at the same time as the individual is denied the possibility of cognition of the unconditioned. On this point Hegel’s reading of Protestantism dovetails perfectly with the world view of the enlightenment: both historical movements posit the thinking individual as the sole basis or authority of all knowledge at the same time as they limit what can be known to what is limited or conditioned. We could say this otherwise, that it is only through the rejection of the objective determination of the absolute that the individual could be posited as the basis of all truth.

We began this section with the idea that the standpoint of reflection is the result and completion of two historical movements. These two movements are ultimately one: It is the single movement that denies the individual cognition of the unconditioned and affirms the individual and the community of individuals as the highest authority with regard to truth. How are these two movements fulfilled in the philosophies of Kant, Jacobi, and Fichte?

**B) Sovereign Determinations of Reason**

This section will show the way that Hegel thinks of the epistemologies of Kant, Jacobi, and Fichte as so many expressions of the same standpoint. Hegel’s critique of reflection as a standpoint suggests not only that it denies to
human thought an adequate cognition of the unconditioned, but also that its cognition of the conditioned is equally inadequate. What I will be calling a sovereign account of reason is what I believe Hegel intends an adequate account to consist in.

On Hegel’s reading the “discourse” of reflection culminates in Kant, Jacobi, and Fichte. These discourses of reflection constitute a culture made up of certain common epistemological commitments that manifest themselves in different ways relative to the idiosyncrasies of the particular thinker. As a discourse we should understand a certain way of thinking about or talking about something. Hegel’s emphasis is on the sameness of these philosophers: “All of them agree that, as the old distinction put it, the Absolute is no more against reason than it is for it; it is beyond reason.” (56) What they all agree on is a starting point that posits the Absolute as beyond reason or knowledge. Correlatively, each of these thinkers reduces the knowable to the sphere of finitude and posits the sphere of the infinite as something proper to faith. As a consequence the philosophical discourse of each of these thinkers is trapped in dualism: “The fundamental principle common to the philosophies of Kant, Jacobi, and Fichte, is the absoluteness of finitude and, resulting from it, the absolute antithesis of finitude and infinity, reality and ideality, the sensuous and the super-sensuous, and the beyondness of what is truly real and absolute.” (62) On Hegel’s view this limitation of knowledge results in a series of irresolvable dualisms. This limitation is a starting point that characterizes the common thread Hegel sees running through their particular philosophies. “Now a reason that thinks only the finite will naturally be found to be able to think only the finite.” (64) Reflection posits finitude as the limit of knowledge and the infinite as the beyond of knowledge. But this determination is itself finite. The consequence of this for the nature of genuine knowledge is that the unconditioned is posited only as something standing opposed to the sensuous and verifiable finite. A discourse of reflection can think the one only with reference to the other, and yet they are held to be absolutely
independent of each other. As a consequence a sovereign account of either term is impossible: “But since this reason is simply and solely directed against the empirical, the infinite has a being of its own only in its tie to the finite.” (63) The unconditioned is constituted in the discourse of reflection only as something that is in relation to or opposed to the conditioned existence of finite things. The opposition itself is a mark of finitude. “They understood the sphere of this antithesis, a finite and an infinite, to be absolute: but [they did not see that] infinity is thus set up against finitude, each is as finite as the other.” (63) Hegel’s position is that the characterization of the unconditioned or of thought within reflection remains interminably trapped in antitheses. This fact indicates that for Hegel the conception of the infinite from the standpoint of reflection is inadequate: “This infinite is itself not the truth since it is unable to consume and consummate finitude.” (emphasis added, 66) For Hegel the true infinite must be grasped as consuming and consummating the finite, rather than as simply opposing it by being its other. The true infinite brings the finite to life (or consummates it) in the same moment that it takes it over or becomes it (consumes it). Hegel’s critique here is simple: Kant, Jacobi, and Fichte have not adequately conceived of the unconditioned in the first place, nor have they developed the true philosophy of it.

Hegel levels similar criticisms of reflection in the Differenzschrift. The true infinite “nullifies both of the opposed realms by uniting them; for they only are in virtue of their not being united.” (D, 96) The faulty infinite and the faulty finite are both nullified in the true infinite that Hegel associates with the speculative standpoint: “Reflection, the faculty of the finite, and the infinite opposed to it are synthesized in Reason whose infinity embraces the finite within it.” (D, 96) Reason is here identified as the infinite which embraces the finitude of the opposition, while the discourse of reflection is trapped in dualism. “Through this connection with the Absolute, however, reflection’s work passes away; only the connection persists, and it is the sole reality of the cognition.” (D, 97) The work of
reflection passes away, or is nullified in the very moment when thought takes the absolute back into itself as its own most immanent act. This connection with the absolute is what we saw Hegel associate with the standpoint of reason or speculation. If we identify what in the \textit{Differenz} essay is called both the ‘nullification’ and the ‘embrace’ of the finite with what in \textit{Faith and Knowledge} is the ‘consummation and consumption,’ then we can say that the essential movement of the genuine infinite is a synthesis that preserves and destroys the opposition of the finite and the infinite. "What reflection lacks is the middle term (\textit{Mittelgleid}), which is Reason..." (FK, 94) Here, reason as the middle term synthesizes the opposition of the infinite and finite. This synthesis is unthinkable from the standpoint of reflection. The ‘culture’ of reflection refuses to connect the antitheses of reflection with the absolute, because they are already committed to the exclusion of the infinite from the horizon of knowledge. “Within this common ground these philosophies form antitheses among themselves, exhausting the totality of possible forms of this principle.” (FK, 62) The culture of reflection makes the sphere of finitude the beginning and end of all knowledge and accepts the irreconcilable dualisms that result. “Kant’s so called critique of the cognitive faculties, Fichte’s doctrine that consciousness cannot be transcended, Jacobi’s refusal to undertake anything impossible for reason, all amount to nothing but the absolute restriction of reason to the form of finitude.” (FK, 64) Let us repeat this for emphasis: they “… all amount to nothing but the absolute restriction of reason to the form of finitude.” This ‘amounting to nothing but’ is a direct result of the refusal of reflection to think the dualisms of finite/infinite or mind/body in connection with the Absolute—reflection refuses to pass beyond itself and become reason. The culture of reflection is only too happy to stay within its own boundaries; it is content to leave for faith what it can find no place for in knowledge. To provide an adequate account of either term of the opposition the standpoint of reason or speculation would have to be achieved, where the terms of the opposition are seen to be complementary expressions of the self
same absolute. It is this standpoint that gives a sovereign expression to both since their dependence on one another is nullified and embraced from a higher standpoint. The true infinite is that which speculation is able to take up as its epistemological starting point. Yet, and this is what the following section shall show, this starting point of speculation or reason is made possible through the overcoming of the standpoint of reflection - it is an absolute beginning that is at the same time the result of the nullification that embraces.

C) Reflection as Transition and Discourse

There are two different ways Hegel talks about reflection in Faith and Knowledge. Reflection can be either 1) a moment in a process, or 2) a standpoint, or culture.

First, for Hegel reflection is part of the process of coming to authentic knowing. In Faith and Knowledge we begin with the one-sided cognitions of the understanding. The understanding makes judgments about objects, and does not question the possibility of its knowing the objects about which it judges. Also, the understanding affirms the principle of non-contradiction - it assumes that two opposed postulates cannot be true of the same object. It simply says 'the apple is red', or 'the student works expeditiously.' It brings particulars under universals. Next reflection comes along and disturbs the straightforward simplicity of the knowledge of the understanding. Reflection is described as putting into doubt the straightforward cognition of the understanding by revealing the contradictions implicit in it. Reflection reveals to the understanding that the universal that is predicated of the particular in a judgment is not the only thing that makes the particular object what it is. Equally important is the opposite of that universal which is predicated of the particular. For the thing to be what it is it must equally be actively the negation of what it is not. I take Hegel to mean that the object's not being what it is not is just as important for that object as is that object's being what it is. As such reflection leads the understanding into a fundamental perplexity: it appears to
violate the principle of non-contradiction if an object is as much what it is in not being what it is not as it is in being what it is. Reflection introduces this doubt or seed of skepticism into the understanding with regard to the very way in which the knowable is framed. The next step in the process, the third moment on the way to adequate knowledge, is the transition from reflection to speculation. Here the contradictions reflection reveals to the understanding are resolved through their connection with the Absolute. This connection forces thought to seek a standpoint beyond the criterion of the understanding, i.e., the principle of non-contradiction. Reflection in this sense is the second step in the process which must in turn be superseded by another. The virtue of reflection as part of a process is that it impels thought beyond the standards of the finite understanding towards those of infinite reason. Reflection therefore in this sense is a moment in the process that impels thought beyond the understanding towards reason.

Reflection in the second sense that Hegel uses it is as a standpoint. Reflection becomes a standpoint when it does not allow thought to fulfill the natural movement towards the speculative standpoint. It prevents thought from going beyond reflection. Reflection is no longer a moment in the process of knowing, but takes itself to be the end or highest standpoint of knowledge. All three members of the culture of reflection are said by Hegel to have failed to let thought take the next step in the process. They hesitate in the face of the possibility of the cognition of the unconditioned. Yet they recognize that the understanding is not an adequate condition of all knowledge. This reminds us of the Differenz essay where both Kant and Fichte are said to provide philosophies of the understanding "consecrated" by reason. They recognize reason as what ought to be, but are unable to fully transition from the understanding to reason itself.

Reflection thus becomes a standpoint when it refuses to allow thought to transition into speculation. Insofar as reflection is a pure transition from understanding to reason, it
is an essential moment in the genesis of the true philosophy. But insofar as reflection refuses to pass beyond itself to the speculative standpoint, it cuts short the natural movement of thought and becomes a fixed standpoint. It is reflection as a fixed standpoint towards which Hegel is more often critical, and which most often functions as a foil by which he develops his concept of a speculative philosophy. It is with respect to both of these two senses of reflection that we must approach and construct our interpretation of Hegel’s critique of Kant as a philosopher of reflection.

D) Conclusion: A Humble Sovereignty
Hegel notes that the culture of reflection regards itself as possessing the virtue of humility because it denies to human thought the ability to know the infinite or unconditioned. The standpoint of reflection as embodied in these three philosophers takes great pride in having suspended the unconditioned beyond knowledge and making it thereby a matter purely of faith. Hegel criticizes this as a false humility. It is false because it claims that it cannot bring the absolute to mind, and yet still clings to the finite as its basic standpoint. “Truth, however, cannot be deceived by this sort of hallowing of a finitude that remains what it was. A true hallowing should nullify the finite.” (65) The humility of the culture of reflection is false because it makes the finite supreme at the same time as it claims that the finite is what takes away from us the possibility of the cognition of the absolute. It makes the individual the supreme arbiter of truth in the same moment it takes away from truth its cognizance of the unconditioned. The humility of the reflective philosopher wants us to see that they have denied themselves something by exalting the unconditioned beyond the capacities of the human subject- it is as if Hegel wants us to understand that philosophies of reflection gloat over their depriving of thought its highest object. Hegel opposes this false humility and pale truth to a ‘true hallowing’ which nullifies or negates the finite. The true hallowing consummates and consumes, nullifies and embraces
the finite ‘within’ the infinite. The true hallowing is one which restores to thought the possibility of adequate knowledge of the unconditioned.

We have seen the way in which Hegel’s criticisms of the Enlightenment and the Protestant reformation foreshadows Hegel's criticisms of Kant. In both cases philosophy remains at the level of reflection and is unable to ascend to a higher standpoint. It is trapped in dualism because it has isolated the infinite from the finite. The standpoint that overcomes these epistemological barriers is that of absolute knowing or philosophy as speculation. In Hegel’s early works this standpoint is characterized by intellectual intuition, while in his later works the only way for this higher standpoint to be achieved is through the dialectic. Once Schelling leaves Jena, what comes to mark the definitive overcoming of the Kantian philosophy and the standpoint of reflection, is not only the standpoint of reason or speculation, but also the method. It is the speculative method that is able to give voice to the sovereignty of reason, by overcoming the dualisms characteristic of reflection.

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Barbara Fortier—Classical Ballet Based on Platonic Forms and Reconciliation of Plotinus’ Formless Form

In classical ballet, on a professional level, the ultimate movement to achieve is the allegro, or the jump. In order to perform a jump which appears to be executed with ease, a dancer must prepare the muscles by engaging in a series of exercises. These different exercises are arranged in particular sequence within the structure of a ballet class, and must be rigorously practiced on a daily schedule throughout the duration of a career. In this paper, I demonstrate that the perfection of alignment that is desired in ballet can be perceived to be based on Plato’s theory of forms. I argue that his theory of forms is based on the idea of perfectly shaped geometrical designs that reside on the ethereal plane of consciousness. In addition, I also contend that classical ballet can serve as a comparison to an aspect of Plotinus’ doctrine of The One. That is, how each can reconcile the paradox of the Formless Form.

Before I introduce Plato’s theory of forms, I offer a definition of classical ballet: Within the major ballet schools and companies of the world, such as France, Italy, Denmark, England, and Russia, classical ballet developed slightly differently from each other. Although influenced by one another, each marked its own style by a variation in its training methodology and its chorographic creativity. I tailor this paper, specifically, to the Russian school and choreography, not only because I have a deep understanding of it, having been trained in the style of the Russian school, but also because the epitome of classical ballet originated and developed in St. Petersburg, Russia. Under the last four tsars at the Imperial Theatre, Frenchman Marius Petipa worked as ballet master for sixty years (Petipa, xv). He is revered as a genius and recognized
worldwide as being the architect of classical ballet. Classical ballet, then, refers to the “Petipa Era,” when during the second half of the nineteenth century Petipa choreographed hundreds of ballets based on stories, fairy tales, or poems. Some of these ballets include: The Nutcracker, The Sleeping Beauty, Swan Lake, Don Quixote, La Bayadere, and Le Corsaire. By 1903, however, Petipa’s work had been dismissed as being outdated and Petipa, himself, receded into retired discard (Roslavleva, 123).

In regards to Plato’s theory of forms, Gail Fine, a professor of Philosophy and Classics at Cornell University, delves into various possibilities for Plato’s seemingly contradictory beliefs on forms, but extricates the following two consistent points: (1) Plato believes that “forms are perfect, everlasting, and unchangeable, the basic objects of knowledge, and definition, objects suitable for a discarnate soul’s reflection” and (2) Plato does not believe that “forms – those objects of great reverence – are dependent on mundane sensibles” (Fine, 280).

In response to Fine’s general interpretation that perfect forms A are the basic objects of knowledge and not dependent on the mundane B, then it follows logically that the mundane, i.e. humans, are dependent on perfect forms: (1) if A is the model and independent; (2) if B is a copy of A and dependent; (3) then A is the model and independent of all things, B is a copy of A; (4) therefore B is dependent on A. Fine describes the forms as “objects of great reverence,” which alludes to the idea that forms are separate from humans and reside on an ethereal plane; hence, her description of forms being “perfect, everlasting, and unchangeable.” According to Fine, Platonic forms are “objects suitable for a discarnate soul’s reflection.” This indicates a transcendence of mundane sensibles (B) back to a divine existence (A). As earlier stated, B is a copy of A, and B is dependent on A. The word reflection connotes a return from a
copy of perfection B to the absolute original form of perfection A.

To relate this formula to the perfect form desired in classical ballet: Forms being described as having the characteristic of perfection correspond to the desired perfection to be achieved in a ballet dancer’s technique. Without the idea of perfectly shaped geometrical designs that reside on the ethereal plane of consciousness, ballet form would then have no guide to follow. High caliber training holds the ideal alignment, shapes, and patterns as a model for the dancer to master. This ideal is based on a 180° turnout of the hips. The concept of perfection is introduced in the most primary and simple stance of first position en face (facing front with heels together and toes turned outward). To the untrained eye it may look as though only the feet are doing the turning out, but true turnout is achieved by a deep, penetrating circular stretch of the muscles away from the centre of the body. Based on the perfection of a straight vertical line, the feet seem to grow roots as they push downward through the floor, and the head seems to push through the ceiling as the spine elongates. In this manner, the turnout occurs when the muscles of the legs actively wrap themselves around their corresponding bones in the comportment of a double helix spiraling outwardly from each other, as in an inside-out direction. That is to say, the heels not only push downward but simultaneously push forward as the toes push backwards. Concurrently, the calf muscles wrap around the tibia and the fibula bones, rotating the bones inside out, as the thigh muscles wrap around the femur rotating this large bone deep inside the hip girdle. Turnout is not only in the legs and feet, but also, the body seems to turnout as each side stretches away from the other. In addition, the dancer must seek symmetry of his/her shoulders, ribs, hips, legs, feet, arms, hands, fingers, head, and eyes. Symmetry is maintained by turnout. This creates the needed 180° that is required to execute magnificent adagio, tours, and allegro.
It is important to note, here, the difference between a Platonic 180° line and a dancer-made 180° line. The Platonic 180° line, as described by Fine, is "everlasting" and "unchangeable." This suggests a quality of absolute in reference to the perfection of forms. Something perfect endures and can be neither changed nor be perfectly copied. The dancer-made 180° line is, then, an imperfect copy of the absolute perfect Platonic 180° line. But good classical ballet technique is everlasting and unchangeable. Meaning, one cannot improve upon the perfect lines already established. Thus, regarding the height of the leg, if 25° is ankle height, if 45° is calf height, if 75° is knee height, if 90° is hip height, if 120° is shoulder height, and if 180° is a perfect split or penché, then there is nothing to change this. This means that by rotating or splitting more than 180° would not be considered better or more perfect, but rather, it would be considered a distortion of both form and function. That said, because classical ballet technique is merely a copy of the ideal, these various degrees in leg height are not measured by a ruler (which is also an imperfect copy of the ideal), but rather by an established sense of artistic taste (form) and the logical execution of step (function).

J.A. Faris, a professor of Logic and Metaphysics, contends that the forms have three main characteristics: (1) "they are real, objective entities but our knowledge of them is obtained not by sense-perception but by some sort of purely intellectual apprehension or intuition." The usage of the word "intuition" reminds me of how a dancer must "feel the music" or "become one with the music." Without music ballet would have no meaning. Music is very organized and is essentially arranged in a square. For example, begin by placing a number in each corner of a square: 1-2-3-4. If one places a series of 4, each into 4 corners of a square, one would have another square: 1-2-3-4 (in the top left corner), 1-2-3-4 (in the top right corner), 1-2-3-4 (in the bottom left corner), and 1-2-3-4 (in the bottom right corner), and this can continues, exponentially.
Faris states (2) that forms “exist apart from individuals but many individuals have a special relationship to each form which consists in some sort of resemblance and perhaps even participation.” I find Faris’ insight, especially unique and personally apropos. Liken to what he describes, I have a “special relationship” to each “form” or exercise or variation (solo). Each time I “participate” or routinely practice, I attempt to “resemble” my Russian ballerina predecessors who have gone before me and who have achieved the ultimate ballet form.

Faris puts forth in (3) that “unlike individuals, which are in a continual flux and change, they [the forms] are eternally unchanging” (Faris, 4). This idea emphasizes the struggle that the ballet dancer confronts, simply by being human; a human who is innately subject to “continual flux and change.” On a daily basis, a ballet dancer is required to address his/her emotions, injuries, limitations, challenging technique and choreography, and to negotiate a relationship with the music and other humans, all while attempting to shape his/her body to the “eternally unchanging” ideal form.

The concern, then, is the direct correlation between ballet forms and ideal forms. The ballet square, circle, line, and pattern all relate to the Platonic square, circle, line, and pattern. The following are several examples of how ballet uses perfect geometric forms: (1) The Platonic square: a dancer aligns the body to a square for balance and symmetry. By utilizing this square the dancer angles the body in appropriate croisé, effacé, ecarté directions. It is within these specialized angles that, from the perspective of the audience, appear to be the most appealing lines. (2) The Platonic circle, spiral or curved lines: balanced tours that are always quick in movement and with an impetus that always ends upward; and the shape of arms, hands, and fingers, arranged just so, framing the waist or head. (3) The Platonic line: the extending poses of arabesque and attitude. (4) The Platonic pattern: the tight closing “zigzag” of a firm fifth position or of battu; the front, side, back, side
configuration of en croix; and the many designs created by the interlacing movement of the corps de ballet.

Progressing from the cosmology of Plato to Plotinus, Eugene F. Bales, a professor at Conception Seminary College, organizes Plotinus’ theory of The One into three modes of discourse, which he refers to as: (1) the “meontological” (me on, the non-being where it transcends beyond Self); (2) the “ontological” (within Being, the Transcendental Self); and (3) the “paradoxical” (the relationship between the meontological and ontological modes) (Bales, 41).

It is the paradoxical aspect of the three modes that I only focus on. This is the nexus where Bales is able to intertwine Plotinus’ two contradictory descriptions together, that is, The One is both meontological and ontological. Bales concludes that the characteristics of non-being and within Being distinguishes The One as being intrinsically self-contradictory. He describes The One as being the “Formless Form, as everywhere and nowhere, as all things and nothing, as Being and Non-Being, and preeminently Self-caused” (Bales, 41). It is this concept of a spatially non-committed Formless Form that is most striking to me, because this idea of a Formless Form goes beyond the framework of Plato’s theory of forms, and seems to radiate beyond the confines of the universe. The idea of the Formless Form suggests power, creativity, and movement. Some other words that Plotinus uses to characterize The One or the Formless Form are: *energeia, dynamis, ousia* (substance), activity, potentiality, unity, and beauty (Bales, 44). The classical ballet dancer, having paid years of attention to Platonic form, leaps into the air with *ballon* and seems to create a momentary illusion of mind-body-soul oneness. Where does this originate? Bales quotes Plotinus from the *Ennead*: “The Authentic Beauty, or rather the Beyond-Beauty cannot be under measure and therefore cannot have admitted shape... the primal Beauty, the First must be without Form...” Bales adds, “it
is the unshaped that gives shape; the formless that gives form” (Bales, 42).

How does one reconcile the paradox of the Formless Form? According to Philippus Villiers Pistorius, professor of Hellenistic and Patristic Greek at the University of Pretoria, the age-old problem since the ancient philosophers of Parmenides, Heraclitus, Anaxagoras, and Plato has been to “reconcile the continual change of the universe with the concept of a higher stability, superseding all the change, unifying all the diversity.” Pistorius argues that unlike the philosophers aforementioned, Plotinus has reconciled the paradox of the Formless Form and the contradiction of movement and stability by recognizing the nature of the One, that “God is a One-in-many” (Pistorius, 38-9) and that The One cannot be explained (Bales, 47).

It is here that I would like to address this contradiction of movement verses stability, using ballet again as a metaphor. The adherence to a traditional form, such as in classical ballet, perhaps alludes to a sense of an unchanging stagnation. But Petipa's outworn traditional ballets were salvaged by Agrippina Vaganova, who had been a ballerina at the Imperial Theatre working under Petipa. When Vladimir Lenin came to power, Vaganova, who by then had an impeccable reputation as a ballet teacher, was enlisted to develop a superior ballet training methodology in order to create the Soviet Union's first ballerina (Roslavleva, 199). Today, the Vaganova training method is still used in Russia. She is considered to have been a progressive teacher because she combined the old with the new. She had a profound loyalty to classicalism, ignited by her work with Petipa, and she had a flexible embracement of the nouveau, inspired by her curiosity of the young choreographers of the day. Vaganova combined the solid traditions of the past with the fluid innovations of the present. She also, (using Pistorius’ words), unified “all the diversity” by extracting the best qualities from the French and Italian schools to help create a ballet training methodology that was uniquely Soviet.
Plotinus believes that the visible universe is the imperfect copy of the perfect ideas of God, or the mind of God. This perfect vision of God is forever changing and developing. Correspondingly, humans, too, are also changing and developing while making their way through various phases of human history. “It is the teleological goal of the visible universe, the vision in the heart of the artist who... succeeds in translating that vision... in music, but never perfectly. Plotinus sees the visible universe a striving after God” (Pistorius, 30). True reconciliation occurs when the imperfect form returns whence perfect form is derived.

Bibliography


Robert M. Guerin—Seeking Solutions to Unconscious Conflicts: Reflections on Kant’s Imagination

The task of this essay is to understand Kant’s view of imagination. To this end, I lay out two possible routes. First of all, I follow Sellars’ account because of its emphasis on the specific function of imaginative synthesis, the bringing together of sense impressions and conceptuality. But there are shortcomings to this first way for reasons which I will indicate below. Consequently, my solution will be to switch tacks and ask the question, What if we start from unity and work our way to difference? To provide an answer, I will borrow the psychoanalytic concept of cathexis (Besetzung) and argue that concepts have meaning because they are originally occupied (besetzt) by their referent. Thus I will suggest that Kant’s imagination be conceived as (1) the mental capacity to combine sense content and conceptuality and (2) an original unity from which concepts and objects are differentiated. The upshot to this dual aspect is that it provides answers to various questions which I raise in Sellars’ account of imagination.

Imaginative Synthesis and a Proto-Theoretical World

As it happens, the imagination makes its first appearance on Kant’s transcendental stage in the Metaphysical Deduction, section 10. Here he writes, “Synthesis in general is...the mere effect of the imagination, of a blind though indispensable function of the soul, without which we would have no cognition at all, but of which we are seldom even conscious.”53 A few remarks are immediately in order. First of all, synthesis, at least

as it appears in this passage, is the exclusive function of the imagination. And this Kant defines as the “action of putting different representations together with each other and comprehending their manifoldness in one cognition.”  

Second of all, the imagination is blind, which is typically understood to mean that it synthesizes without the use of concepts. And finally, the imagination works unconsciously. In other words, we are not aware of the synthesizing in the course of experience. Rather, we become aware of this mental act from the transcendental standpoint, a reflective position from which we analyze the various acts of the mind which make experience possible in the first place.

But what, exactly, does Kant mean by synthesis, the grasping of different representations in one cognition? If we are going to understand the productive imagination at the transcendental level, we must have an adequate understanding of this special act, at least as it is portrayed in the first Critique. Unfortunately, this task is not so easy. For as Heidegger notes, the term itself is ambiguous: “If one maintains that the essence of knowledge according to Kant is ‘synthesis,’ then this thesis still says nothing as long as the expression synthesis is allowed to remain in ambiguous indeterminacy.”

According to Heidegger, there are three meanings of synthesis within the first Critique. First, synthesis is ontological or veritative: “The original union of pure, universal intuition (time) and pure thinking (the notions).” For Heidegger, this is really the crux of the Critique because it is the answer to Kant’s question, How are synthetic a priori

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judgments possible? But synthesis is also understood in terms of what Kant calls “reflected representation.” In the Jäsche Logic, Kant tells us that a concept is formed by (i) the comparison of various representations, (ii) the reflection as to how they can be unified in one consciousness, and (iii) an abstraction from the differences. These three mental acts constitute a synthesis of similar marks (a concept) shared by various representations. Or, as Kant puts it in the Critique, a concept refers to an object “mediately by means of a mark which can be common to several things.” In other words, they constitute a predicate, and for this reason Heidegger aptly names this act a predicative synthesis. Finally, Kant understands synthesis as apophantic: the joining of the subject and predicate in any categorical or propositional statement.

Heidegger suggests that we understand Kant’s radical, more original use of synthesis on the part of the imagination in terms of a veritative synthesis. This is what Kant has in mind, he thinks, when he notes that the “spontaneity of our thought requires that this manifold first be gone through, taken up, and combined in a certain way in order for a cognition to be made out of it.” Since Kant is so emphatic in his demand that sensibility and understanding depend on each other to produce empirical knowledge, and since the synthesis of the imagination is the function by which this is made possible, we can understand why Heidegger places so much importance on the possibility of veritative synthesis. Without this synthesis,

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60 Kant, Critique of Pure Reason (Cambridge University Press, 1998), A77/B102, my emphasis.
61 This can easily be seen from Kant’s oft-cited phrase, “Thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind.” See Kant, Critique of Pure Reason (Cambridge University Press, 1998), A51/B75.
concepts would lack content or meaning. They would be empty, as Kant memorably puts it. And hence knowledge would be relegated solely to abstract logical analysis. But now a new question arises. What is the imagination producing by running through the manifold and synthesizing it in a certain way?

Kant’s response in the A-Deduction is informative. The so-called second way of the A-Deduction begins from the empirical and works its way back to the necessary concepts of the understanding. Accordingly, Kant writes,

The first thing that is given to us is appearance, which, if it is combined with consciousness is called perception... But since every appearance contains a manifold, thus different perceptions by themselves are encountered dispersed and separate in the mind, a combination of them, which they cannot have in sense itself, is therefore necessary. There is thus an active faculty of the synthesis of this manifold in us, which we call imagination, and whose action exercised immediately upon perceptions I call apprehension. For the imagination is to bring the manifold of intuition into an image [Bild]; it must therefore antecedently take up the impressions into its activity, i.e., apprehend them.62

Here Kant seems to suggest that the imagination produces an image, which is the synthesis of a manifold of impressions. But I want to exercise caution at this point. For Kant is at times so loose with his terms, how can we be sure about the distinction between images, impressions, appearances, and perceptions? Though there are many routes one could take, I will treat impressions as Hume does: they are simply the immediate sensible affection from the world. An appearance, then, is the combination of a manifold of impressions, which, because it is

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the work of the imagination (Einbildungskraft), Kant calls an image (Bild). Finally, and as Kant indicates, consciousness of the image or appearance is perception. Kant’s answer to our previous question, therefore, is that the imagination creates a phenomenological experience.

Corroboration to my interpretation lies in Wilfred Sellars’ The Role of the Imagination in Kant’s Theory of Experience. Here Sellars argues that the productive imagination creates sensible intuitions (particulars), which are, he says, “complex demonstrative thoughts which have implicit grammatical (and hence categorical) form.” Sellars point is that perception is composed of demonstrative thises and thats, heres and nows. But within each this-here and that-now is embedded, inchoate conceptuality. But that is just to say that in its production of perception the imagination produces a prototypical worldview.

To make his case, Sellars begins by pointing out that perceptions consist of what he calls “occurrent beliefs.” Traditionally, occurrent beliefs are about the object seen. They serve a predicative function; hence they are propositional in form, i.e., a judgment. But Sellars notes that perceptual beliefs are not that sophisticated. What is really occurring is what he calls a “perceptual taking.” Thus he writes, “I suggest that what is taken is best expressed by a referring expression, thus ‘this cat on this mat.’ We should think of perceptual takings as providing subjects for propositional thought.” In Kant’s language, a perceptual taking is just a sensible intuition. The

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64 Sellars, Kant’s Transcendental Idealism, (Ridgeview Publishing Company, 2002), 408.
65 Kant states in the Jäsche Logic that an intuition is a “singular representation (repraesentatio singularis).” It is the representation of a particular, which is expressed syntactically as a demonstrative pronoun. See Kant, Lectures on Logic, Jäsche Logic (Cambridge University Press, 1992), 9:94; 592.
point to be drawn from this is that perceptual takings or sensible intuitions are not judgments with predicative content. Rather, writes Sellars, “what is taken or, if I may so put it, believed in is represented by the complex demonstrative phrase [e.g. This brick with a red and rectangular facing surface].”\(^6\)
The perceptual taking yields a this-such, and nothing more.

But what is the nature of a complex demonstrative? When we consider a perception of a house (the front, say), what we really see is nothing more than a limited impression. We do not see an inside, a back, sides, etc. Perceptions are, as Sellars notes elsewhere, “point-of-viewish.”\(^6\) Yet as J. Michael Young points out, human beings ‘see more than meets the eye.’ We interpret our limited perspective as something which we do not entirely see. Sellars asks how we do this. And his answer, simply put, is that we imagine it. Accordingly, every perceptual experience consists of an image-model of the immediate sensible affection (an impression, in Kant’s language) and a “filling in,” so to speak, on the part of the imagination. The phenomenological conclusion is that aspects of objects which are not seen are yet experienced as actually present for the perceiver. The synthesis of the imagination unites various possible perspectives (possible images) together with the immediate sensible affection (the front of a house, in our example). Or, as Sellars puts it, “Perceptual consciousness involves the constructing of sense-image-models of external objects. This construction is the work of the imagination.”\(^6\)

We are now in a position to see the way in which the imagination produces a proto-theoretical world. Two points are in order. First of all, Sellars notes that the construction of an image-model of an object goes hand in hand with the


construction of an image-model of a perceiver’s body. The point is crucial because the body is a constant focal point from which objects will vary when seen from different locations. Second of all, and still more important, is the fact that “although image-models are perspectival in character, the objects in terms of which they are conceptualized are not... Thus we must distinguish carefully between objects, including oneself, as conceived by the productive imagination, on the one hand, and the image-models constructed by the productive imagination, on the other.” Sellars’s point is that the productive imagination constructs image-models in accordance with a rule which it itself supplies. But the rule sheds its perspectivalness, so to speak.

Kant calls this rule a schema of the imagination, which is, he says, “a hidden art in the depths of the human soul.” Yet as Sellars sees it, this hidden art is simply “an innate conceptual framework...of spatio-temporal physical objects capable of interacting with each other, objects...which are capable of generating visual inputs which vary in systematic ways with their relation to the body of the perceiver.” That is to say that human beings innately relate and distinguish a I from a not-I or a thing-over-there. And as the relations vary (as the perceiver changes her position in the environment) a family of image-models arise (a sequence of perspectives, according to Sellars). So although a child does not possess the conceptual framework to identify objects with categorical features such as ‘S is P’ or ‘X implies Y,’ she does possess a schema, which is an innate

capacity to hold together a variety of perspectives of oneself-confronting-the-object.

But how is the schema proto-theoretical? We have to consider what the child’s innate conceptual framework yields in perceptual experience. It cannot be a bare this or a pure demonstrative. For Sellars’ point is that since the imagination synthesizes a family of perspectives, since the demonstrative has content and is thus complex, the sentence 'This house facing me' implies the categorical form "This is a house facing me.” As Sellars puts it, “However thin—as in the case of the child—the intuitive representation may be from the standpoint of the empirical concept involved, it nevertheless contains in embryo the concept of a physical object now, over there, interacting with other objects in a system which includes me.”

The schema of the imagination is that innate prerequisite, we might say, for the acquisition (or, in Kant’s language, application) of concepts of the understanding.

Cathexis and the Original Unity of the Imagination

At this point I want to switch tacks. And to do so, I want to draw out the presupposition of openness from Sellar’s theory of imagination. Here is how McDowell puts the issue:

This image of openness to reality is at our disposal because of how we place the reality that makes its impression on a subject in experience. Although reality is independent of our thinking, it is not to be pictured as outside an outer boundary that encloses the conceptual sphere. That things are thus and so is the conceptual content of an experience, but if the subject of the experience is not mislead, that very same thing,

that things are thus and so, is also a perceptible fact, an aspect of the perceptible world.\textsuperscript{74}

McDowell’s point is that there really is no ontological gap between what one means and what is the case. Sense and reference, concepts and intuitions, are ultimately one and the same. Yet I think that the language of openness obscures more than clarifies the idea, at least initially. For the idea of openness suggests a relation, which, in turn, presupposes duality. For his part, Sellars alludes to an original unity when he invokes the idea of a proto-theoretical worldview where concrete demonstratives embed conceptuality. But like McDowell it is hard to see from his language of ‘sequences,’ ‘family of perspectives,’ and the ‘constructing of sense-image-models.’ When we begin from perspectives as ‘point-of-viewish’ and build our way to a referent, we seem to be bridging gaps. But I want to suggest that from another aspect the gaps are illusory.

I suspect that Sellars and McDowell inherit this problem from Kant. He himself stresses throughout the \textit{Critique} that the concepts of the understanding must be applicable to empirical content, and hence we have, from the very beginning, duality. A Transcendental Deduction is, after all, “the explanation of the way in which concepts can \textit{relate} to objects \textit{a priori}.”\textsuperscript{75} But why is Kant so emphatic that concepts must have a referent in the first place? Why not dispense with it as his Rationalist predecessors had done? I think there are two possible answers. First, Kant wants to talk about the world. The point of the first \textit{Critique} is to provide an account of the way in which human finite knowledge is possible. But this just means that Kant is shoring up our ability to make objective claims in the natural sciences.

\textsuperscript{74} McDowell, \textit{Mind and World} (Harvard University Press, 1996), 26.

\textsuperscript{75} Kant, \textit{Critique of Pure Reason} (Cambridge University Press, 1998), A85/B117, my emphasis.
But I believe Kant has another concern in mind. This is what Hans Loewald calls the autonomy of words: “Meaning and the links between thing-presentations and word-presentations are thinned out to more or less tenuous threads. In excessive abstraction verbal thought processes give the impression of acquiring a mechanical or automatic activity of their own, like puppets manipulated by invisible hands that are connected with them only by thin threads attached at certain joints. Verbal thought then may have a lifeless nimbleness all its own.”\(^{76}\) I think by 1781 Kant sees the abstract logical concepts of the German Rationalists as lifeless marionettes because, as he himself notes, they are beyond the bounds of sense, beyond life.\(^{77}\) The concepts do not have a referent by definition. And so what could be more meaningless?

A similar concern can be found in psychoanalysis. The analysand typically lives in a world where language has lost its meaningfulness. Speech seems empty because his words have become unoccupied (uncathected). All in all, his experience is in crisis. Now according to psychoanalytic theory, this is due to repression, a mental activity whereby language is severed from things (memories, fantasies, infantile wishes). And although Loewald notes that this severing of “verbal thought and its primordial referents makes it feasible for language to function as a vehicle for everyday rational thought and action,” he also warns us that “human life and language are no longer warmed by its [the unconscious’s] fire.”\(^{78}\) Abstraction is cold, as so many existentialists have pointed out. And so although there appears to be a necessary compromise, the analysand fails to strike the


\(^{77}\) Of course, the second half of the *Critique of Pure Reason* is designed to wipe away the very pretensions of specialized metaphysics concerning God, immortality, and freedom.

right balance and seems to walk about like a philosopher with his head in the clouds.

Kant is like the patient who enters analysis because she recognizes that life has lost its meaning. The patient knows that something is wrong, she may even put her finger on it in the first session, but the words alone do not provide psychic relief. Kant recognizes that the link between concepts and intuitions has been thinned out to a tenuous thread. This is the problem. But to show that concepts are *applicable* a priori does not provide the kind of relief we want. It solves some problems, but it covers over a deeper issue. Might there be a different approach?

Here is what Kant says in the A-Deduction of the *Critique*: “We ourselves bring into appearances that order and regularity in them that we call *nature*, and moreover we would not be able to find it there if we, or the nature of our mind, had not originally put it there.” Kant’s language suggests something like the Platonic notion of recollection. Reason remembers what it once knew. In this sense, reason seems to be *reuniting with itself*. And this at least recalls Kant’s offhanded remark that synthesis “must originally be unitary and equally valid for all combination, and that the dissolution (*analysis*) that seems to be its opposite, in fact always presupposes it.”

So what if we start from unity and work our way to difference? What if we attempt to describe that moment at which nature and reason are one and the same?

The key is to posit an original unity from which difference arises. But this difference, in turn, must be shown to come about through an organizing function. To this end, consider what Kant says immediately following a discussion of the imagination in the A-Deduction. He writes, “It [the understanding] is itself the legislation for nature, i.e., without

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understanding there would not be any nature at all, i.e., synthetic unity of the manifold of appearances in accordance with rules.”\(^{81}\) Here the imagination seems to be the organizing function we are looking for, insofar as it follows rules of the understanding. Unfortunately, though, Kant is otherwise mute on a transcendental description of this original unity. Let us see, then, whether we might benefit from a psychoanalytic description.

Here is Loewald’s description of the mother-infant field (the original unity):

Sensory perception in its initial stages is a global affair... A thing, event, act, or experience given a word or words by the mother is one buzzing blooming confusion (William James) for the infant, and “the word” is part of that confusion... The words of which her (the mother’s) speaking is composed form undifferentiated ingredients of the total situation or event experienced by the infant. He does not apprehend separate words—words separate one from the other and separate from the total experience—but he is immersed, embedded in a flow of speech that is part and parcel of the global experience within the mother-child field.\(^{82}\)

For Loewald, the infant does not distinguish words from things (Sachen). Indeed, Sachen in a wider sense encapsulates events, states of affairs, actions, and words. As Loewald puts it, “The mother’s flow of words does not convey meaning to or symbolize ‘things’ for the infant—‘meaning’ as something differentiated from ‘fact’—but the sounds, tone of voice, and

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\(^{82}\) Hans Loewald, *Primary Process, Secondary Process, and Language* (University Publishing Group, 2000), 185, my emphasis.
rhythm of speech are fused within the apprehended global event... The linking of thing-presentation and word-presentation is a process that is secondary to an original unity where ‘word’ is embedded in ‘thing.’ At this primordial level, things and words, meaning and facts, are united as simply Sachen.

We might say that this original unity is play (Spiel). It is not a space where things are tied down by conceptual functions such as "S is P" or "X implies Y." It is not as if the leading strings of the conceptual puppeteer are at work, determining and structuring. It is a space of loosely hovering Sachen, what Heidegger calls a space of play (Spielraum). Here even the concrete demonstrative is absent, for the differentiation required to point, pick out, or name is undeveloped. Who is doing the pointing? What is being named? There are neither subjects nor objects at this stage.

Yet much like Sellars' account, there are seeds of conceptuality and objectivity embedded within this space of play. Consider Loewald's remarks on cathexis: "I propose to interpret cathexis as a concept for organizing activity...an organizing mental act (instinctual in origin) that structures available material as an object." "Such cathexis," he writes, "creates...the object qua object." Cathexis is a mental activity which organizes and differentiates. Lying at the heart of Sachen, it splits the latter for the first time into a thing which stands against (ein Gegenstand) a subject. This is the principle which first allows for the relations of openness according to McDowell and Sellars. But it must be noted that even in its differentiation there is at the same time a link, which of course is meaningful only because it arose from an original unity. The link points

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84 Hans Loewald, Primary Process, Secondary Process, and Language (University Publishing Group, 2000), 195, my emphasis.
back to a meaningful union between the word and object. It recalls an original Sache.

I think we can find moments in the first Critique where Kant alludes to this organizing principle. Take for instance this remark from the First and Second Introduction: “All that seems necessary for an introduction or preliminary is that there are two stems of human cognition, which may perhaps arise from a common but to us unknown root.” Here Kant famously points to an original source of human cognition. Yet he simply leaves it at that. But if we take into account the notion of Sache, we could say that the imagination is that root and that its function is not simply a putting together, combining, or synthesizing, but also a splitting, dividing, analyzing. From Kant’s transcendental standpoint, we could say that the imagination splits off the concept from the sensible content.

The upshot is to see that Kant’s imagination is understandable from another perspective. Kant of course favors the standpoint of synthesis and difference, yet I hope to have shown that unity and analysis is equally important insofar as we can isolate that moment at which concepts are their referents. The point was to assuage an old concern over tenuous links. To that end, we had to isolate the source of meaning in order to determine why there is such a link in the first place.

Bibliography


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Amy Hayes—Neighbor Love: Ned Flanders Channels Kierkegaard

Ned Flanders is a character in the series The Simpsons, played by Harry Shearer and created by Matt Groening, and is the kind-hearted but unfortunate neighbor of the Simpson family. Flanders is a faithful evangelical Christian with a seemingly perfect family. He is a caring and compassionate man that is friendly to everyone regardless of social status, wealth, faith, etc. His personality throughout the show’s twenty-four seasons is guided by his Christian faith and displayed through goodness, generosity, honesty, charity, kindness, and compassion. But his most notable quality is his constant attempts to comply with God’s “love thy neighbor” command. Given that his neighbor, Homer Simpson, is the most annoying, frustrating, lazy, and incompetent person imaginable, Flanders’ ability to execute the act of ‘neighbor love’ is amazing and can be understood through the works of Søren Kierkegaard, and perhaps even to the extent that one could say Flanders channels Kierkegaard.

In Provocations, Kierkegaard explains ‘neighbor love’ as being a love that is unpreferential and undistinguishable. He writes, “romantic love and friendship are preferential...Christian love, however, is self-renunciation’s love... According to Christ, our neighbor is our equal.” (98). This means that you do not love your neighbor because he is better than you or inferior to you, because “loving your neighbor” means that you do not differentiate his characteristics from your own; you must understand and love everyone as the same and love them as you love yourself. This love is different than the love you feel for your family or friends, because those relationships are ones that you choose to develop and nurture, but you do not and cannot choose your neighbor.
The difference between preferential love and unpreferential love is that with preferential love you choose those you love. You choose the person to take as your spouse and you choose those people that you consider as friends, but you do not choose those people that are your neighbors. According to Kierkegaard, "Your neighbor is every person...He is your neighbor on the basis of equality with you before God." (99). Here, 'neighbor' means every single person outside of yourself, not just your literal neighbors next door, and you should view every person as your equal, while remembering that everyone is equally loved by God. Flanders embraces this concept through genuine care and concern for all people, not just the Simpson family. In the 500+ episodes of The Simpsons that feature Flanders, nearly every one of them displays him partaking in random acts of kindness, volunteering for various organizations, donating time or money for a myriad of causes, or simply praying for the safety and happiness of everyone. He is continuously portrayed as a person going above and beyond to ensure that the needs of others are met before his own.

In The Simpsons Movie, Flanders practices this act of loving others the same as he loves himself by being a positive mentor to Bart after a dare-gone-bad that resulted in Bart being left completely naked in town for all to see. Homer made a half-hearted attempt to rescue Bart from the humiliation but in his attempt he forgot to bring Bart's pants and underwear, and ultimately decided to abandon Bart in order to avoid persecution from the townspeople. When Flanders discovered Bart was in desperate need of clothing, he provided him with a spare pair of pants that belonged to his children. Bart, being skeptical, asked Flanders why he was helping him. Flanders said that it was simply because they were neighbors and that he felt Homer would do the same for his boys. Bart displayed a need for something and without even thinking, Flanders helped. He took Bart under his wing and invested his love and energy just as if Bart were his own child – it was not because Flanders
expected something in return or literally thought of Bart as one of his own, it was because Bart was his ‘neighbor’ and he loved him without any expectations of reciprocation. Throughout the movie and the twenty-four seasons of the show, Flanders acts as a father-figure to the three Simpson children on numerous occasions in efforts to fill a need in their lives – not because of social obligations or closeness to the Simpson family, but because he tries to do unto others as he would have done unto him. It did not matter that the person needing help was a Simpson because Flanders would have done the same thing for anyone else. Through loving the Simpsons, his neighbors, he displays his love for God and his efforts of trying to fulfill his obligations to God, by loving even those people that are painfully difficult to love.

Season after season, Flanders dealt with the aggravations associated to living next to the Simpson family and he frequently found himself grasping to find the strength to treat them as his equals. In episode 2.06, “Dead Putting Society”, after learning of all the things Flanders owns, Homer began to think that every action Flanders made was an act of boasting, and when he accused Flanders of this, Flanders got livid and threw Homer out of his house. Later that night, Flanders woke up from a nightmare in which he relived the confrontation with Homer and immediately called Reverend Lovejoy for guidance stating that he felt like he had violated Matthew 19:19 (“love your neighbor as yourself”). To amend the situation, he decided to write Homer a letter, in which he stated, “You are my brother. I love you...neighbors forever.” This profession of love was not received well by Homer, who instantly began to mock and poke fun at Flanders.

To sit and watch a few episodes of the show, it becomes clear that Homer and Flanders are not exactly friends and it is often shown that Homer actually loathes Flanders. If it were not for Flanders’ good nature and Christian beliefs, it seems the relationship would be quite volatile. When Flanders wrote the
apology letter to Homer and in it professed his ‘love’ for him, it can be construed that Flanders was channeling Kierkegaard. Regardless of how big of a buffoon Homer was and regardless of Flanders being continuously mocked and shamed by Homer, Flanders does actually love Homer as his equal and he considers Homer as his brother in the eyes of God. It seems there is nothing that Homer could do to cause Flanders’ love to diminish because his love is through God, because of God, and for God, which is a love that is unwavering and unconditional.

Neighbor love is the form of love considered as unconditional because you are expected to love everyone, regardless of whether they are friend, foe, or ambivalent. Kierkegaard writes, “the distinction of friend or enemy is a distinction in the object of love, but the object of love to your neighbor is always without distinction. Your neighbor is the absolutely unrecognizable distinction between one person and another; it is eternal equality before God – enemies, too, have this equality.” (100). What seems supererogatory to outsiders is really obligatory to Flanders because it is what he sees as something he MUST do because of God. An outsider looking at the relationship between Flanders and Homer would most certainly think that Flanders has every reason to despise Homer. Episode after episode, Homer shows a disdainfully loathing attitude towards Flanders through various phrases such as “Stupid Flanders!” and “Screw you, Flanders!,” which would suggest that the two should be enemies that detest each other, but for Flanders, that is not the case at all. In episode 20.12, “No Loan Again, Naturally”, the Simpson family lost their home due to their inability to pay their mortgage and because Flanders could not bare to see the family homeless, he actually bought the house and rented it back to them. The Simpsons rejoiced over Flanders’ kindness and celebrate him as if he were a king or a god. However, since he was now the landlord and the Simpsons were the tenants, they quickly took advantage of his generosity by demanding that he fix everything that was wrong with the home due to their previous negligence, and as
soon as he refused to fix something, the family publicly blasted Flanders as being a slumlord. This infuriated Flanders to the point of evicting them and began looking for new tenants, but his love wouldn’t allow him to rent the home to anyone else while knowing that the Simpsons had moved to a homeless shelter, so he allowed them to move back in and life proceeded as normal.

In *Provocations*, Kierkegaard writes,

“He who sees his brother in need, yet shuts his heart”—yes, at the same time he shuts God out. Love to God and love to neighbor are like two doors that open simultaneously. It is impossible to open the one without opening the other, and impossible to shut the one without also shutting the other (325).

Homer continuously pushes Flanders beyond what should be a breaking point, but Flanders’ love for God always allows him to keep his love for Homer as equal and unconditional. If Flanders were to stop loving Homer as his neighbor, he would be shutting out both God and Homer because he could not love God without also loving Homer.

In a time when media is the largest source for information, it is vital that exposure to significant concepts, such as those given through Kierkegaard’s words on ‘neighbor love’, be delivered through many different avenues. Though *The Simpsons* isn’t typically viewed as a go-to place for learning of God’s wonders, the fact that such a show provides a character that truly loves others and wants only to live a life serving God is remarkable. Kierkegaard’s works on love carry an importance for humanity, and, given that there are probably more people in modernized countries, like America, that know who the Simpsons are but have no idea of who Kierkegaard is, having characters like Ned Flanders, that channel
philosophically and theologically great minds, such as Søren Kierkegaard, provides exposure to the masses of important and life-altering concepts.

Bibliography


Rich Holmes—God, Evil and Moral Requirements

Introduction

One of the most familiar arguments against theism is the argument that if evil exists, then it is impossible for a perfectly good and omnipotent God to also exist. In this paper I shall argue that the most convincing form of this argument relies on a premise which could be false, and therefore this argument is flawed. This premise is as follows.

(1) If one ought to do anything and s is a state of affairs which one knows is bad, then one ought to try to prevent s from occurring unless

(a) one can reasonably be expected to believe that one’s efforts will lead to a state of affairs that is at least as bad as s, or

(b) one can reasonably be expected to believe that one can only prevent s by doing something wrong.

For the purposes of this paper, I shall call (1) the Principle of Beneficence (hereafter PB).

I shall proceed as follows. In Section One I will reconstruct what I take to be the standard argument from evil and state how PB is included as a premise in this argument. In Section Two, I will provide an argument for why we do not know that PB is true. Finally, in Section Three, I will consider an objection to my argument and show why it does not create a difficulty for my argument.

Before proceeding any further, however, it may be necessary to explain why my thesis is not trivially true. It may seem to be
trivially true that we ought not to accept any ethical proposition without argument, including PB, since to claim otherwise to beg the question against a number of ethical positions. Since many ethicists might deny that anyone is morally obligated to do anything, one might ask how anyone can claim to know PB to be true without an argument for it. However, the acceptance of PB does not commit one to the claim that any moral agent is obligated to do anything. Rather, it only commits one to the claim that if a moral agent is obligated to do anything, then he should act in the kind of beneficent manner described in PB. Therefore, the claim that we do not know PB to be true is not the same as the uninteresting claim that certain ethical positions (such as a moral error theory) might be true.

Section One: PB and the Standard Argument from Evil

In order to consider how PB is included in the standard argument from evil, we should begin by considering how John Mackie famously argued that the existence of evil creates a lethal problem for theism. Mackie argued that one cannot believe that God is both omnipotent and perfectly good on one hand and believe that evil exists on the other hand without contradicting oneself. Mackie does not argue that one directly contradicts oneself in being committed to both of these claims, but we can see how a contradiction arises when we add some “quasi-logical rules” or additional premises that further define what it means to be completely good, evil and omnipotent. These premises would state, for example, that a completely good being would seek to rid the universe of all evil and that an omnipotent being would be able to accomplish this task. According to Mackie, since a being who is perfectly good and capable of doing anything would not allow evil to exist, it follows that if God exists then either evil does not exist, or God lacks at least one of the following properties, namely perfect goodness or omnipotence.

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Mackie (1955:201).
PB is not a premise in Mackie's argument, but this is only because Mackie's argument is invalid for two reasons. First, as others have noted, it is possible that evil could exist in a world with a perfectly good and omnipotent being if such a being did not know about the existence of evil.\footnote{See A. Plantinga (2007), especially pp.321-322.} Second, it is not clear that an omnipotent and perfectly good agent would rid the universe of everything of which evil could be predicated, even if such an agent is also omniscient. To see why, let us imagine that there is an evil but inept agent whose plans always go wrong. If things never work out as this agent plans, one might question whether an omnipotent, omniscient and perfectly good being would necessarily prevent this agent from making plans which accidentally result in good states of affairs obtaining. What seems unquestionable, however, is that this being would at least prevent some bad states of affairs from obtaining. This is not to deny that there may be more to morality than simply preventing bad states of affairs from obtaining.\footnote{For this reason, I have constructed PB to allow for the possibility that someone might do something wrong even if she is preventing a bad state of affairs from occurring.} But let us suppose that a moral agent could prevent another agent's having evil intentions on one hand or prevent a bad state of affairs from obtaining on the other hand but she could not prevent both. If everything else is equal, then it seems the agent should prevent the latter rather than the former.

With these revisions of Mackie's argument in mind, we will now consider how PB is included in the standard argument from evil. According to this argument, if any bad state of affairs in the universe obtains, then an omnipotent, omniscient and perfectly good agent does not exist. This argument is as follows.

(1) If one ought to do anything and \(s\) is a state of affairs that one knows is bad, then it is always the case that one ought to try to prevent \(s\) from occurring unless
(a) one can reasonably be expected to believe that one's efforts will lead to a state of affairs that is at least as bad as \( s \), or 
(b) one can reasonably be expected to believe that one can only prevent \( s \) by doing something wrong.

(2) If an agent fails to do what she ought to do in (1), then the agent has done something morally wrong.

(3) Any agent who is perfectly good will never do anything morally wrong.

(4) If an agent is omnipotent, and \( s \) is a state of affairs that this agent knows to be bad, then this agent can prevent \( s \) without either doing something morally wrong or causing a state of affairs to obtain that is at least as bad as \( s \).

(5) Therefore, if an omnipotent agent exists in a world in which \( s \) obtains, then this agent is not perfectly good.

**Section Two: A Counterexample to PB**

In order to argue that we do not know (1) to be true, I think we should consider a case in which it seems as though an agent knows that a bad state of affairs could obtain and he could try to prevent this state of affairs from obtaining without either doing something wrong or causing anything equally bad or worse to happen. But this must also be a case in which it does not seem that the agent is morally required to prevent the bad state of affairs from obtaining.

Let us now turn to such a case. Let us suppose that for the past thirty years, Jerry has been an adult with plenty of spare time. Jerry's health has also been such that at no point during this thirty year period would it have posed a danger to him to donate a pint of blood. If these facts obtain, it seems reasonable
to claim that at some point during this time period, Jerry should have either donated a pint of blood, or performed a morally comparable act at least once. In order to simplify our case, however, let us put these morally comparable acts aside, and imagine that Jerry lives in a world where the only way he can ease widespread suffering is to donate blood. Moreover, let us also suppose that two other facts obtain. First, during 29 of the past 30 years Jerry has donated a pint of blood each year. Second, no one else has donated as much blood as Jerry. If these facts obtain, then it seems to be the case that although it would be nice of Jerry to donate another pint of blood this year, his refusal would not be wrong.

One possible reason for why it might be permissible for Jerry to forgo performing such an act is because requiring him to donate blood every year would seem to demand too much of him. Bernard Williams has famously argued that morality should not demand so much of human agents that its demands would interfere with the agent’s ability to live a fulfilling life. But if this is the reason that it seems morally permissible for Jerry to forgo giving blood one year, then the case of Jerry could not be a counterexample to PB. PB entails that one must prevent a bad state of affairs from occurring unless preventing it will lead to an equally bad or worse state of affairs. But if Jerry cannot prevent suffering without leading a miserable life, then this miserable life could be at least as bad as the suffering that he is trying to prevent.

But surely Jerry’s life would still be worth living even if he were to spend (roughly) an hour each year donating a single pint of blood. If such an annual activity were to interfere with an adult agent’s pursuit of a healthy and fulfilling life, we would have to wonder how healthy and fulfilling their life was to begin with.

The reason it seems that Jerry is morally permitted to forgo giving blood one year is not because this act would interfere with his pursuit of a fulfilling life. The reason it seems morally

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89 See Williams (1995), for example.
permissible is because Jerry seems to have done his fair share of beneficent acts. Thus, it seems to be the case that if an agent has done many beneficent acts in the past, it could be unreasonable to demand that she perform a future beneficent act, even if she can do it without doing something wrong or causing something bad to happen.

What follows from Jerry’s case about the argument from evil is this. Even if a God who knows everything and can do anything exists, it may be the case that God is not morally required to prevent anything bad from happening. This is because it does not seem that we can make justified claims about what any agent is morally required to do without knowing something about what the agent has already done and how this compares to what other agents have done. If an omnipotent and omniscient God exists, then although it would be very nice for such a being to create a universe in which no bad states of affairs ever obtain, this being may not be morally required to do this if it has already done things which are more beneficent than what anyone else has done.

Section Three: An Objection from the Defender of PB

Let us now consider an objection to my argument. According to this objection, while I have shown that we have a reason to doubt that PB is true, what I have not shown is that we have any reason to doubt that another proposition which closely resembles PB is true. This proposition is as follows.

(6) If one knows that $s$ is a bad state of affairs, then it is always the case that one ought to try to prevent $s$ from occurring unless

(a) one can reasonably be expected to believe that one's efforts will lead to a state of affairs that is at least as bad as $s$, or
(b) one can reasonably be expected to believe that one can only prevent $s$ by doing something wrong, or
(c) one can reasonably be expected to believe that $s$ is the member of a set of bad states of affairs, the prevention of which will lead to a state of affairs that is at least as bad as $s$.

Let us now consider the reasons for why the case of Jerry could raise doubts about (1) without raising doubts about (6). According to the objection we are presently considering, it is true that it is not asking much of someone to require him to donate a pint of blood to a blood bank every year. This is a small act of kindness. However, if one never refused to do a small act of kindness, then one could spend one’s entire life doing small acts of kindness. Thousands of individual small acts add up to a lifetime of acts which could interfere with pursuing a fulfilling life. What one must therefore do in order to lead a fulfilling life, according to this argument, is to choose a point at which to refuse to do a few small acts of kindness here and there in order to make room for one’s own personal projects and commitments.

I will reply to this objection by granting that if (6) were true, then this fact would seem to explain why Jerry may not be morally obligated to donate any more blood. However, I think this is a mistake. To see why, let us imagine that if a blood bank received only three pints of blood it would end all human suffering forever. Let us also imagine that Jerry donates two pints of blood. However, no one else donates any blood, even though Jerry lives in a world that is populated with many other adults, all of whom could donate at least one pint of blood without endangering their health. If these facts obtain, it would certainly be nice of Jerry to donate the third pint. But it does not seem obvious that he is morally required to do this, even though Jerry’s refusal could not be justified in light of any concerns he might have about living a fulfilling life. Since the only thing that would ever be required to end all human suffering is donating one more pint of blood, all Jerry has to do is spend one more hour of his life at the blood bank and he will be free to spend the
rest of his life doing whatever he desires. Nonetheless, it does not seem obvious that Jerry is morally required to donate a third pint of blood precisely because he has already donated his fair share of blood.

**Conclusion**

Let us now summarize our findings. I have argued that while many philosophers and theologians seem willing to grant that we know the Principle of Beneficence to be true, this is a mistake. The consequence of this mistake is that those who debate about the problem of evil are often willing to grant the truth of a premise in arguments about this problem which they should not be willing to grant.

I have argued that we do not know PB to be true by imagining a case in which an agent knows that something bad could be prevented without doing something wrong or causing something else bad to happen. I argued that in this case, the agent could be morally permitted to allow the bad thing to happen provided that she is comparatively better than other agents when it comes to preventing bad things from happening.

An objection to my argument which we considered is as follows. While it would seem morally permissible for the agent in my imaginary case to allow a bad state of affairs to obtain, this is not because the agent is comparatively better than other agents when it comes to preventing bad states of affairs from obtaining. The reason it is permissible, rather, is because the bad state of affairs in question is the member of a set of other bad states of affairs, all of which the agent cannot prevent from obtaining without causing something else bad to happen. However, we found this objection to be unconvincing for the following reason. It is easy to conceive of a case in which a moral agent who is better than most could allow for a bad state of affairs to obtain even if that bad state of affairs is not the member of the kind of set that is under consideration in this objection.

**Bibliography**


Reilly Kidwell—Blurring The Real: A Phenomenological Account Of Imagination, Hallucination, And Schizophrenia

“Tell me one last thing,” said Harry. “Is this real? Or has this been happening inside my head?”

“Of course it is happening inside your head, Harry, but why on earth should that mean that it is not real?”

-Albus Dumbledore (Harry Potter VII)

Imagination and hallucination are two entities which have classically been considered distinct. This is primarily based on a claim centered about our sense of self-agency as well as the positive reinforcement associated with imagination and the negative connotation of hallucination. However, I believe that these two elements are more closely related than has been initially suggested and are most phenomenologically significant when addressed together, specifically in the context of schizophrenia\(^90\). In this paper I will explore the phenomenological context in which each term is most frequently discussed and argue that imagination and hallucination are not fundamentally as distinct as has been previously suggested. I will also consider the phenomenological implications of schizophrenia within the framework of imagination and hallucination.

\(^90\) In this paper my discussion of schizophrenia will be concerned with purely philosophical implications. I acknowledge that schizophrenia often has devastating consequences for individuals and my discussion of the phenomenological implications of the disease do not nullify these additional considerations
Phenomenology of Imagination

Imagination is an integral facet of the inner workings of the human mind. Entering into imaginative thought seems, at least in a general sense, to parallel our perception of the real world and relate to the fundamental framework of human experience. Rather than catalogue imagination with the often closely-linked concepts of memory and phantasy, it is essential to recognize that the phenomenological constructs of imagination are significant in their own right. In his extensive writings on the phenomenon of imagination, Husserl grants imagination mutual if not equal status with perception91. To understand his argument for the primacy of imagination we ought to consider imagination as productive, rather than reproductive – that is, as a faculty which can generate a ‘product’ in absence of perception rather than merely recall what has already been perceived. In this sense, we are immediately separating imagination from memory as an independent faculty.

According to Husserl, imagination is akin to perception – it is as-if perception92. The objects of our imagination are as immediate and direct as our perceptions. There is a sensory quality to our imaginings which explains why our imaginary experiences are often described using sensory terms – as if we were living through them in the real world. For this reason the imagination is subjective because we imagine as we would perceive: as lived bodies with our own way of relating to objects and the world. Because we ‘perceive’ the objects of our imagination in this way, as-if we were facing them in reality, we can broaden the concept of experience to include classical perceptions as well as as-if perceptions. Thus, in a relativistic

91 Brian Elliott, *Phenomenology and Imagination in Husserl and Heidegger* (New York: Routledge, 2005); 77.
sense, the moments and relations that are made evident in imagination can also be taken to be applicable for perception, or for experience in general.\(^93\)

At a certain point however, we have to consider the fact that imagination is not essentially the same as perception. Whereas our perception of the world is generally concerned with 'real objects,' imagination is not concerned with the reality of a thing. Instead, imagination constitutes absolute possibility; we can imagine not only what is real, but whatever we can perceive as being possible (or can possibly perceive). This does not mean that we have to construe an image as being 'possible' in the sense that one might stumble across it in real life perception. Here, what is possible is essentially what can possibly be imagined – all that can be mentally created and constructed. This frees us from the limits of actual perception in that we can entertain possibilities purely for their own sake. Thus what can be seen as an as-if appearance of an actual object (imagination-perception of a real world perceived object) is also an actual appearance of a possible object (true perception of an imaginary object)\(^94\). In this realm of possibility we can imagine real world objects or complex imaginative objects that are wholly unreal (e.g. a Chimera or a Jabberwocky). This is because "to imagine an object is not to commit oneself in thought to its unreality; it is to be wholly indifferent to its reality."\(^95\) However, despite our ability to imagine such an object we cannot say that we actually perceive it. While a real object as subject of the imagination can be perceived in a separate context in the real world, an unreal object can never be perceived at any time unless the framework of the world is


\(^{94}\) Ibid, 126.

shifted and such objects come into actual existence. Unreal objects can only be *as-if* perceived through the imagination.

It is also the case that this ‘perception’ goes hand-in-hand with a certain sense of agency. Imagination has classically been discussed in terms of agency and creation; imagination is a willed experience in need of active participation. This centers about the idea that ‘I create, I generate, I perceive in my own mind’. Philosopher Douglas Rabb details a sort of phenomenological ‘reflexive awareness’ that seems to be applicable and illuminating with regards to imagination. In a state of reflexive awareness, each experience becomes reflexive – what is implicit is made explicit – and consciousness is turned back upon itself so that one is not observing another object, but is hyper-aware of perception itself in the moment of perceiving\(^96\). Thus I become reflexively aware of perceiving – I am not only aware of the object X that I perceive, but I am also aware of my perceiving X as an agent. In slipping into this state in the moment of imagination we come to realize that the imagining consciousness is *intentional* – it must be a consciousness *of* something, and we come to be aware of this consciousness as a sort of agency. I, as a consciousness, perceive X. For Husserl it is the idea that “‘Consciousness’ consists of consciousness through and through, and even sensations as well as imaginary constructions are ‘consciousness’”\(^97\).

Maurice Merleau-Ponty utilizes this Husserlian framework of imagination as analogous to consciousness, perception, and our relation to the world to make what are perhaps the most crucial assertions to our discussion of imagination. For Merleau-Ponty, the foremost proposition of the primacy of perception favors neither the interior psychological self nor the external physical world; rather it treats as paramount the ‘relation’ between the perceiving self and the

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\(^{96}\) Douglas Rabb, “Prolegomenon to a Phenomenology of Imagination” in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* vol. 36, no. 1 (1975); 75.

\(^{97}\) Husserl, *Husserliana*, vol. XXIII, 249.
perceived world\textsuperscript{98}. It is not my direct action as an agent that is most important, but rather the relation between myself as agent and the world as agent. The existence of the world is inseparable from human experience and thus it does not make sense to say that perception favors either the self or the world. There is no one-sided preference. Thus the preoccupation with agency becomes less significant. Instead, we contemplate the perspective of each self in-and-of the world as a relation in which there is a continuous exchange between self and world in a particular context. All experiences exist in the framework of a focal theme whose comprehensibility emerges from the background that encloses it – what we have come to know as Merleau-Ponty’s structure of perceptual horizons.

These horizons frame our perceptual field which, according to Merleau-Ponty, is always already meaningfully organized for us so that every observed phenomenon has meaning for us already at the moment of its emergence\textsuperscript{99}. All forms of perception are intricately coupled to our horizons. Thus if we consider imagination to be a relative faculty of perception – an as-if relation – we can come to understand that the imaginary is already woven into the very texture of the perceptual world. For Merleau-Ponty, the “the real is a closely woven fabric” which contains the threads of our perception tightly knitted to our perceptual horizons\textsuperscript{100}. In this way, imagination plays a significant role in everyday perception. Even the most complex subject–world or subject–subject interactions contain fibers of imagination. We can extend this to our relations with others, which can be seen to have an

\textsuperscript{99} Ibid, 95.
\textsuperscript{100} Maurice Merleau-Ponty, \textit{Phenomenology of Perception} (New York: Routledge, 2012); x.
imaginary character\textsuperscript{101}. Though the problem of other minds is distinct from the focus of this paper, we can briefly consider this notion that our knowledge of other minds is not objectively verifiable. Instead, we believe in others as we experience them just as we understand the world as we perceive it. The world is just as it is. This is how we perceive others – imagining that what we see and believe to be true is, in fact, the actual state of affairs of the world. Here imagination seems to oppose the classical constraints of agency. Imagination is not accompanied by a strong sense of creation, nor is it the conscious willing \textit{I} that is reflectively directing, generating, or unfolding. Rather it is case that the imaginary is a dimension of the spectrum of experience – that which we come to know through a relational exchange. There is an element of our experience that unfolds before us, that we do not consciously create, and imagination can do this as well. We may still say that “imagination is not considered ‘real’ [in the sense that what is real can be directly perceived], yet few would deny that it is the very driving psychic force behind human motives – for better or worse” for it is always present in the background of our experience, whether self-motivated or in relation to the other\textsuperscript{102}.

**Phenomenology of Hallucination**

Hallucinations manifest as mentally generated images that seem as real, vivid, and externally perceived as objects in the world. Hallucinations present themselves directly as


perceptions. They have sensory qualities such that hallucinating subjects will describe their experiences in sensory terms, much like one might describe an imaginary object that has suddenly appeared in the real perceived world. In beginning our discussion of hallucination as it relates to imagination it seems necessary to first address the assertions of philosopher Edward Casey, whom I believe has mistakenly attributed what he claims to be ‘exclusive conditions’ for hallucination. My refutation of these propositions will, I believe, give greater merit to my later comparison of hallucination to imagination in the context of schizophrenia. Casey qualifies hallucination as having 5 distinct and necessary properties. Here it is helpful to elaborate on each of these claims in order to determine if this phenomenologically exclusive description is valid.

(i) **Paranormality**

Casey asserts that hallucinations depart radically from the usual course of perceiving to generate what is considered obviously abnormal perceiving. Hallucinatory experiences characteristically arise alongside normal perceptions or replace them momentarily by diverting one’s attention away from the ‘normal’ experience. The argument is that, unlike hallucination, we can imagine and perceive concurrently. Thus imagination, which does not seem to manifest as true perception in the real world, neither rivals nor replicates

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103 Edward Casey, “Comparative Phenomenology of Mental Activity: Memory, Hallucination, and Fantasy Contrasted with Imagination” in *Research in Phenomenology* vol. 6 (1976); 11-12.
perception – this quality is exclusive to hallucination.

In a large portion of the first section of *Phenomenology of Perception*, Merleau-Ponty illustrates and asserts that there is not an exact correspondence between sensory data and perception. We are often fooled by illusion: we take a shadow to be another person in what is truly an empty room, or a leaf rustling across the cobblestones to be a wayward mouse. We learn over time to sort out the misconceptions from the ‘real’ – habit teaches us to favor familiarity in perception. Habitual perceptions become privileged appearances which provide a standard of correctness for perception. Thus a correct perception will be one that is consistent with the privileged appearances, whilst an incorrect perception will be one that is inconsistent. However, the reality of the perceived world, treated as knowledge by the naive everyday ‘natural’ person, is actually no more than a matter of what Merleau-Ponty might call ‘opinion’. Merleau-Ponty knew that the disengagement and alienation of the subject in phenomenological reflection did not necessarily offer a surefire route to reality or the truth that these orientations are, in fact, as capable of distorting the nature of human experience as of revealing it. Thus in taking this into account we cannot conclude that what is in competition with what is ‘real’ must be hallucination exclusively. Here we cannot distinguish between hallucination and imagination based on an assumption that what may be ‘real’ and what may opposite it are wholly separate.

104 Merleau-Ponty, *PhP*, 212.
(ii)  **Sensory Vivacity**

Because hallucinations occur as suggested perceptions, Casey claims that they must be more vivid and sharp than the mere musings of our imagination. We can therefore imagine a sort of sensory ‘intensity threshold’ which, unless reached, will not allow an evoked hallucinatory response for the subject—there simply will not be sufficient sensory input to compete with what is occurring in the real world. The primary assertion is then that hallucinations must have the sensory qualities of true perceptions—that is, they must always appear and possess qualities of space, time, direction, distance, obtrusiveness, mine-ness, motion, measurability, and objectivity. This is not a demand of imaginings, which do not compete with the real world.

Merleau-Ponty claims that hallucinatory presence is not robust enough to be real, nor is the representation of senses involved in hallucination clear and distinct. There is no true sensoriness, only whatever simulacrum an embodied consciousness can generate. Even if Merleau-Ponty is not entirely correct in saying that all hallucinations are not robust, we can logically say that some hallucinations may appear more sensory than others. We can imagine a case in which we have two hallucinations, the

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second being seemingly more 'sensory' and 'real' than the first. In this case we still 'perceive' both at different times. This seems to suggest that it is not the sensory nature of the hallucination, but the way in which we relate to and understand it that can convince us of its reality. The hallucination is thus primarily dependent on the subjectivity of the experiencer; the completion of the presence is almost entirely due to subjectivity rather than any sensory threshold aimed at matching sensory regularities or typicalities of the objective world. Thus these 'real perception' qualities are not necessary for hallucination for the subject. This is also directed at the discussion of believability, which is detailed in point (v).

(iii) Projectedness

As opposed to imagination, contents of hallucination are said to be experienced as 'out there' (rather than internally, 'in here,' in the mind). The object of hallucination is then a projected presence existing externally to the hallucinator's consciousness. Imagined possibilities are instead internally generated and projected into 'spatio-temporal limbo' (Casey's articulation of the idea that imaginary objects are not perceived in the real world). Thus the objects of imagination are considered neither external nor internal to the imaginer.

As discussed in the section on imagination, we cannot fully separate imagination from perception. What is imagined is woven into the real to form a sort of interplay between the two

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109 Casey, “Comparative Phenomenology of Mental Activity,” 13-14.
where imagination becomes integral to our experience and being in the world. As lived bodies we certainly cannot say that this being in the world can be fully internalized. If it is true, for example, that our relation to the other is somewhat characterized by an element of imagination, it would seem strange to suggest that the other or any element of my relation to the other is only internalized not also experienced 'out there' in the world. To say that my relation to another mind is solely internal would be to neglect the significance of the other – the fact that the other is, indeed, outside of me and distinct from me. Thus it is plausible to say that hallucination is projected 'out there,' but it does not follow that this projectedness is exclusive to hallucination. Rather, we see that imagination also contains an element of projectedness, at least to the extent that imagination plays a role in our relation to the other.

(iv) Involuntariness

With the exception of hallucinatory drug usage, subjects often enter into hallucinations without express consent or the expectation of doing so. Casey describes this as a violent attack on subjectivity whereas imagining only incurs 'mild surprise'. He also claims that, while we can pull ourselves from our imaginings at any moment, we have limited control over the termination of hallucinations.

The concept of involuntariness seems to hold true for hallucination but only to a certain extent. It is often the case that the hallucinating subject enters into hallucination without want or choice. However, it is also the case that many hallucinating subjects are able to distinguish between perception and

\[\text{Ibid, 14-15.}\]
hallucination. Merleau-Ponty provides examples of a man who hallucinates that he is grasping a guinea pig when shaking the hand of his superior, or that of a woman who hallucinates that there is a man standing just a bit beyond her in her garden. In both cases when confronted with the real-life correlate of each hallucination, the subject is able to identify the presence of the real guinea pig and the presence of an actual man in the garden. Involuntariness then seems to be a relative term, as individuals retain a certain level of control over how they handle each situation and whether or not they choose to react. Additionally, is it not the case that imagination can also begin involuntarily? It is quite plausible that a student in a very dull class, though trying most diligently to focus, can slip into an unintentional daydream and become consumed by the reverie. It is, of course, very easy for him/her to pull back out of the wandering rather quickly, but it is not necessarily the case that there is always voluntary control to prevent such an event from occurring. Furthermore Merleau-Ponty claims that imagination in the form of painting is both passive and active, such that imagination will never be ‘pure’ voluntary creation. The painter is inspired by opening herself to the world such that her surroundings speak to her, influence her, and the painting unfolds before her as a creation not entirely of her own doing. It is such that “there really is inspiration and expiration of Being, breathing in Being, action and passion so slightly discernible that it becomes impossible to distinguish between what sees and what is seen, what paints and what is painted.” Thus imagination can also been seen to have a sense of ‘involuntariness’.

Belief

The necessary condition of having vivid sensory quality for hallucination ties into the idea that hallucinations must be believed as perceptions of the real. Whereas imaginations are understood to be independent and indifferent to reality, hallucinations are presented as an object which supplants the accepted normal. Thus in hallucinations we place credence in the existence of some presently appearing object or event; we do not suspend committed belief and entertain pure possibilities as in imagination.

It is a common misconception that most hallucinating agents truly believe their perceived hallucinations. Voltaire claimed that ‘hallucinating is not seeing in imagination: it is seeing in reality,’ however for most cases of hallucination this is not actually true. As previously mentioned, most agents are able to readily distinguish between the hallucinatory and the real because hallucinations are not proper sense experiences and so manifest differently from normal perceptual experiences (see previous: guinea pig and garden examples). The resultant confusion then typically stems from lack of confidence in these perceptions. There is a sort of ambiguity associated with the hallucinated and the real in the sense that both are distinctly different but neither appeal to the subject as obviously ‘correct’ or ‘valid’. It is certainly possible that, as Casey suggests, some hallucinations may be so vivid that they become truly believable, but because this is often not the case, it seems that

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Casey, “Comparative Phenomenology of Mental Activity,” 15-16.
belief cannot be an exclusive characteristic of hallucination; belief is not necessary for hallucination. This becomes particularly interesting with regard to Schizophrenia, which will be discussed within a phenomenological framework in the final section of this paper.

By concluding that Casey is misguided in his classification of hallucination, we are able to look at hallucination as related to imagination, which we can find to be much more closely linked than Casey initially suggests. However, in order to fully understand this relationship I find it beneficial to look to Merleau-Ponty for a more complete account of hallucination. Merleau-Ponty suggests that hallucination occurs as a result of a malfunctioning of two properties of perception: first, what Romdenh-Romluc has termed the ‘power of summoning’ and second, what Merleau-Ponty himself has named ‘perceptual faith’. The idea of ‘summoning’ refers to the subject perceiving the world as having immediate bodily significance and value based on personal capacity and motricity\textsuperscript{115}; things appear as in relation to the subject – a jar is too high, a glass is out of reach as solely related to the subject. And because the lived subject and the world are in constant interplay, the subject is also summoned by the world to perceive it in a certain way. Merleau-Ponty asserts that this power therefore functions normally when it is exercised in response to the promptings of the world. Hallucinations then result from the ‘running wild of this power’ such that ‘appearances and values are summoned in the absence of the appropriate worldly cues – the initiative comes from the subject and has no external counterpart’\textsuperscript{116}. Hallucination is a response to the world generated in the absence of any worldly prompt.

Perceptual faith is the idea that all perceiving requires a degree of faith because perceivers are fallible\textsuperscript{117}. Just as in the

\textsuperscript{115} Romdenh-Romluc, “Merleau-Ponty’s Account of Hallucination,” 78-79.
\textsuperscript{116} Ibid, 80.
\textsuperscript{117} Merleau-Ponty, PhP, 146.
case of our relation to the other and the role of imagination in daily perception, we have to realize that we are sometimes fooled by illusion. But despite this Merleau-Ponty will maintain that still the only sensible notion of things is that of 'things-as-experienced' – we can only trust things as they appear. Our perceptual experiences cannot be independent of the world we perceive. In this faith-perception structure it is the case that

...we see the things themselves, the world is what we see: formulae of this kind express a faith common to the natural man and the philosopher – the moment he opens his eyes; they refer to a deep-seated set of mute “opinions” implicated in our lives. But what is strange about this faith is that if we seek to articulate it into theses or statements, if we ask ourselves what is this we, what seeing is, and what thing or world is, we enter into a labyrinth of difficulties and contradictions.\(^{118}\)

Even for the non-hallucinating consciousness it is difficult to make a determination about the real. We put our faith in the ‘opinions’ of the world that we generate and which seem to fit best into our framework. This framework constructed by our horizons, he asserts, is tied to our interplay with the world. He claims that, prior to perception, there is ‘a vague beckoning’ from the world. Hence, “perceived things come into being when the perceiver responds to this vague beckoning by summoning the appropriate appearances”\(^{119}\). Hallucination then occurs when the subject loses faith in the relation with the world and the appropriate appearances are lost. Merleau-Ponty argues that hallucination lacks a full horizonal structure of perceptual


\(^{119}\) Romdenh-Romluc, “Merleau-Ponty’s Account of Hallucination,” 82.
experience. What was once a readily accepted and natural understanding between subject and world becomes a source of confusion for a subject who can no longer put faith in this relation. Thus perceptual faith in its normal capacity is a sort of tolerance for the ambiguity of the ‘real’ – a fundamentally pre-conceptual acceptance of a world that can never be absolutely divided between the imaginary and non-imaginary, the hallucinatory and the ‘real’. The malfunction of perceptual faith results in hallucination in which this tolerance is diminished or negated.

**Phenomenology of Schizophrenia: A disorder of imagination**

Schizophrenia is a hallucinatory disorder which is classically characterized by a loss of the distinction between what a subject imagines and what he/she believes or experiences. As suggested by Merleau-Ponty, it is not the case that the patient necessarily truly believes either one, but rather that the patient exhibits feelings of being in a sort of ambiguous state of not knowing which perceptions to place confidence in. In this case all of a patient’s ‘thoughts’ (to use a truly general term) are neutral to the projected object/subject with regards to whether it is real or imaginary. There may be a distinction between the sensory input and mode of perception of some thoughts vs. others, but there exists the inability to sort and rank these as such. Thus we can classify schizophrenia as a disorder of imagination insofar as there is a failure to parse the imaginary from the ‘real’; the normal framework of the imagination falls away. We can imagine that if we were unable to identify thoughts as imaginings we might treat them as among the contents of our beliefs or at least attend to them and give them consideration that we would not give to what we

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knew to be imagination. Thus a loss of the capacity to identify imaginings could lead to a general loss of sense of agency\textsuperscript{121}. Ambiguity changes our relation to ourselves by supplanting awareness and connected-ness with the self and the mind.

Here we see imagination and hallucination come together. We have phenomenologically chipped away at the assertion that the two are distinctly separated by rejecting the designation of any qualities as being exclusive to one or the other. Now, in the case of schizophrenia, we find that these two entities become blurred with the real. What, then, can we conclude about the fundamental phenomenology of the two? Does hallucination, a key element of schizophrenia, result from a sort of pathological imagination? Or are hallucination and imagination one and the same? Due to the unique pathology of the disease, schizophrenia holds philosophical significance with respect to these questions as well as with regards to the phenomenological changes experienced by the subject.

Schizophrenia can be seen in the context of Merleau-Ponty as a disorder of his so-called 'intentional arc,' associated with "hyper-reflexivity, exaggerated self-consciousness, diminished self-affection, and loss of the sense of existing as a self-possessed subject of awareness or activity"\textsuperscript{122}. There is a shift in one's experience of the world. Subjects may be perfectly aware of the "more objective aspects of reality yet though they 'register and know' they do not 'feel' the reality of what they experience"\textsuperscript{123}. Blankenburg describes this as a loss of the usual common-sense orientation to reality, that is, of the "unquestioned sense of familiarity and of the unproblematic background quality that normally enables a person to take for granted so many of the elements and dimensions of the social and practical world". The subject-world framework seems to fall away or at least become severely blurred. The subject feels utterly alienated.

\textsuperscript{121} Ibid, 181.
\textsuperscript{122} Sass, "Phenomenology of Schizophrenia," 253.
\textsuperscript{123} Blankenburg, "Phenomenology of Schizophrenia," 258.
there is a sense of being outside the usual customs and concerns of the shared social world, detached from the usual taken for granted background of assumptions and practices and somehow dislodged from the usual sense of being rooted in one's own being.\textsuperscript{124}

Herein seems to be the source of what some may refer to as the 'madness' associated with schizophrenia. The resultant hyper-reflexivity of the disease becomes a make-shift solution to the sudden subjective change in the relation to the world. In this new experience "the self alters itself, transforming into a not-self and is only secondarily projected into exterior space"\textsuperscript{125}. The sudden change in social and cultural structure is difficult to deal with; for the schizophrenic,

> a paranoid delusional system is preferable to the ambiguity of not having absolute possession of his/her thoughts; the delusion of persecution eliminates the ambiguity at the heart of intersubjectivity and makes life more livable for the paranoid; an unambiguously threatening world is safer than the open-endedness of the social world – which is one of vulnerability and trust.\textsuperscript{126}

It is therefore the ambiguity of perception and understanding in the world that lies at root of what is perceived by most as psychotic behavior. The 'normal' individual has developed a tolerance for ambiguity as associated with illusion and imagination. He/she has fluency across varying levels of reality

\textsuperscript{124} Ibid, 259.

\textsuperscript{125} Kimura “Phenomenology of Schizophrenia,” 265.

\textsuperscript{126} Morley, "The Texture of the Real," 99-100.
between imaginary and real and part of a learned relation to the world. He/she can effortlessly flow between them from moment to moment (relative to the pathological). Merleau-Ponty’s discussion of child development in relation to learned objects seems to further stress this point. A growing child will eventually come to learn that an object removed from view has not fallen into non-existence but has merely been placed in a new perspective – one that he/she does not access in the given moment but knows to be possible. The child learns to imagine that the object still maintains a presence, despite what the child can immediately perceive. Thus socialization has taught us to suspend our doubts as we move on to continually recommit ourselves to the perceptual world and our relations with one another.

The normal individual understands the precarious nature of the ‘real’. As mentioned previously in this paper, Merleau-Ponty maintains that there is no good reason to believe in the reality of things. When we dream our perception of the world is altered from our perception of it in our waking state. Perception and imagination are interwoven in our experiences just as in the waking state, but to a more extreme extent. Yet we come to realize that our faith in ‘dream reality’ during moments of dreaming is as strong as that in our waking state when we are experiencing ‘waking reality’. We find that perceptual faith can be certain of a truth in one state that is false in another, so long as we are experiencing it separately in a different framework of perception (i.e. dreams vs. waking state).

...if we can lose our reference marks unbeknown to ourselves [as in dreams] we are never sure of having them when we think we have them; if we can withdraw from the world of perception without knowing it, nothing proves to us that we are ever in it, nor that the

\[127\] Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, 32.
observable is ever entirely observable, nor that it is made of another fabric than the dream.\textsuperscript{128}

For Merleau-Ponty, we can only find lucidity in the world by accepting reality as a woven fabric of real and imaginary, faith and acceptance. Eventually the reality of the world becomes a sort of habit which, like most opinions, we come to take for granted\textsuperscript{129}.

But in order to understand the phenomenological implications of the disease, it is essential to examine the schizophrenic perspective of what I will term the abnormal lived world – we must attempt to “penetrate through [and beyond] isolated symptoms to the living person to seize, in a single effort, of knowing his whole way of being,” just as we can only perceive and gain true understanding of a dream while asleep; we must attempt to examine the schizophrenic perspective through a perceptual framework different from that which is habitual to us\textsuperscript{130}. Schizophrenia is essentially a bracketing of belief in objective reality. This involves a stepping outside of the usual mode of living and a replacement of the naïve natural attitude by a hyper-reflexivity. Thus schizophrenia can be seen to reveal aspects of experience that would normally go unnoticed\textsuperscript{131}. Though there is a distinct sense of discomfort and resultant psychosis, the schizophrenic perspective in the abnormal world can be likened to the wonder achieved by a phenomenological philosopher who engages in bracketing of Husserl’s epoché. This detached awareness and “querying of normally unnoticed frameworks or social conventions” often results in a ‘hyper-abstract’ or seemingly philosophical quality in the thought and speech of many schizophrenic individuals\textsuperscript{132}. Schizophrenia can then perhaps be

\textsuperscript{128} Ibid, 6.
\textsuperscript{129} Morley, “The Texture of the Real,” 102.
\textsuperscript{130} Minkowski, “Phenomenology of Schizophrenia,” 254.
\textsuperscript{131} Sass, “Phenomenology of Schizophrenia,” 267.
\textsuperscript{132} Blankenburg, “Phenomenology of Schizophrenia,” 260.
construed as a sort of 'consciousness of self as consciousness' that is difficult for the normal but non-phenomenologist person to achieve. At least some elements of the schizophrenic condition seem to allow some such individuals to have heightened awareness of the intricacies of human subjectivity and its relationship to the world; there is a feeling that one is privy to a kind of insight more profound than is available to people more fully engaged with the concerns of normal life. The schizophrenic, having realized him/herself in the ambiguous world, finds an escape in what we have come to know as the 'abnormal world'. Thus schizophrenia is not a different way of being-in-the-world, rather it is a way of being in a different world generated by an alternate perceptual framework.

Thus it seems that hallucination, at least in relation to schizophrenia, can be perceived as a philosophical tool. Hallucination in itself appears to be a turn to psychosis as an escape from the ambiguity of the blurring of imagination and the real. Yet hallucination itself is a blurring of these two entities. It is imagination in the abnormal world. Of course, the practicality of using hallucination to philosophize is not high, as the 'normal' individual cannot readily access the abnormal world. However, the 'reflexive awareness' of imagination may, perhaps, offer a 'normal world' counterpart to hallucination based on the phenomenological similarities between hallucination and imagination. Hallucination is not a pathology in the sense that it is completely divorced from what is 'normal'; rather it is a discomfort and a refusal to acknowledge ambiguity in our lived relation to the normal world and a means of altering our perceptual framework in an effort to ameliorate this. The hallucinator posits an abnormal world to fit ambiguous perception. The resultant pathology associated with schizophrenia is merely a consequence of our perception – of our perspective as subjects perceiving in the horizontal framework of the 'normal world'. The schizophrenic subject has

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133 Kimura, “Phenomenology of Schizophrenia,” 264.
merely chosen the comfort of the abnormal world over the ambiguous nature of our ‘normal world’ that we often neglect to acknowledge.

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Greg McCreery—The Morality of the Republican Form of Government and the Justification for Rebellion

Immanuel Kant, Herbert Marcuse, and Slavoj Žižek each discuss whether rebellion is a moral action and the relationship between the republican form of government and morality. Kant's anti-consequentialist deontology focuses on right actions, their universalizability, and the freedom they produce. Marcuse and Žižek's critiques of the state also focus on actions and their moral character, in regards to whether they are right and instances of freedom. Yet, Kant cannot morally justify rebellion, while Marcuse and Žižek do, for the sake of moral rights and freedom.

For Kant, the categorical imperative states that one ought to “act as if the maxim of your action were to become by your will a universal law of nature”.\textsuperscript{134} If we assess rebellion according to the categorical imperative, then this means that if everyone were to rebel, no rebellious action would be taken seriously. Rebellious actions are authoritatively directed against authorities, and, if everyone were to rebel, there would be no authority for anyone's rebellious action to be directed against. In such a situation, no one's actions could be rebellious. Therefore, rebellious action is not moral and cannot be universal law. Yet, according to Kant, rebellion can become legitimated by its success, if it results in a more legal constitution.\textsuperscript{135} The issue is that in order to morally assess

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\textsuperscript{134} Kant, Immanuel, \textit{Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals}, translated by Mary Gregor (New York: Cambridge University Press), 4:421.

rebellion, we have to revert to a utilitarian rationale, and consider rebellious action as a means to an end rather than as an end in itself. So, though rebellion is not deontologically moral, it is potentially legitimate as a means within a utilitarian framework.

Marcuse justifies rebellion in terms of its being a higher right toward freedom. In his lecture, presented in Berlin in July of 1967, titled *The Problem of Violence and the Radical Opposition* he distinguishes between two forms of violence: the violence of oppression and the violence of resistance. He states,

> The recognition and exercise of a higher right and the duty of resistance, of civil disobedience, is a motive force in the historical development of freedom, a potentially liberating violence. Without this right of resistance, without activation of a higher law against existing law, we would still be today at the level of the most primitive barbarism.

In short, oppressive, institutionalized violence justifies its own existence based on its having established and on its maintenance of the structures of society; yet, resistance is justified insofar as humans have a “higher right and...duty of resistance” to resist oppression for the sake of the development of freedom. In Marcuse's view, rebellious actions are morally justified and right as means toward developing freedom and eliminating unnecessary oppression.

Marcuse also describes, in *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud*, the kind of repression that we

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are justified to rebel against by distinguishing two kinds of repression: 1) the forms of basic repression necessary for any society to flourish; and 2) the forms of surplus repression that exceed the minimal, basic repression needed. As a society develops, different structures and kinds of basic repression necessary for the minimal functions of that society change. If, in the development of a society, forms of surplus repression are not stripped off, then individuals are oppressed. They are denied the ability to freely seek all the pleasure that they could have, so, they lack the freedom that they could have. Their social situation makes it possible for them to eliminate surplus repression, but instead the socio-political structure continues to impose unnecessary forms of repression, fixing its existence at a point of development rather than allowing the development of freedom to occur. At this point, since individuals are repressed beyond what is basically necessary, oppression exists, and individuals have a right and duty to rebel for the sake of their higher right to develop freedom.

Žižek describes a similar argument for the right to rebel. In his book, *Violence: Six Sideways Reflections*, he argues that we “spontaneously” acknowledge as a fact that “we are all humans, with the same basic hopes, fears, and pains, and therefore [that others have] the same justified claim to respect and dignity” as we do. If we refuse to acknowledge the other’s humanity, we both “violat[e]...our own spontaneous ethical proclivity” and engage in “brutal repression and self-denial”. Žižek also argues, in *From Democracy to Divine*

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139 Ibid. 48.
Violence, that the “existing social order” is where a person “finds his substantial content and recognition” because an individual’s subjective freedom can only become actual within the “rationality of the universal ethical order” of the state, i.e. the state’s constitutional laws.\textsuperscript{140} Because an individual’s freedom can only become actual within the legal order of the state, if that legal order recognizes the individual’s ethical substance, “those who do not find this [ethical] recognition have...the right to rebel”.\textsuperscript{141} Žižek’s point is that, since every human has “the same justified claim to respect and dignity” as any other human, if one’s state does not recognize who and what one is, then one’s state does not respect the dignity of one’s ethical existence by acknowledging one’s existence in law, so, one has an ethical right to rebel.

Žižek describes, in his book Violence, how it is the socio-political framework itself that produces the possibility for justified rebellious actions against it. He distinguishes between subjective, symbolic, and systemic violence.\textsuperscript{142} Subjective violence is “directly visible,” and “performed by a clearly identifiable agent”.\textsuperscript{143} Examples include all those instances in which we could actually see the violence, if we were present when it occurs. Symbolic and systemic violence together constitute objective violence. Objective violence produces the “zero-level standard against which we perceive something as subjectively violent”.\textsuperscript{144} Objective violence is the condition for the possibility of subjective violence.

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\textsuperscript{141} Ibid. 116.


\textsuperscript{143} Ibid. 1.

\textsuperscript{144} Ibid. 2.
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Symbolic violence, on the one hand, is "embodied in language and its forms". The speaking of language produces a symbolic realm of meaning. As a result, language produces symbolic violence because it imposes a meaningful order in opposition to and destructive of other possible orders of meaning. How we linguistically discuss the world leads to violent conflict because humans see the world differently and come from different cultures and traditions. When a preference for one thing becomes embedded in linguistic expressions, whatever is not that preferred thing is disvalued, and actual subjective violence can result.

Systemic violence, on the other hand, is the "often catastrophic consequences of the smooth functioning of our economic and political systems". Systemic violence is that which makes possible "a comfortable life...[and it is] the violence inherent in a system: not only direct physical violence, but also the more subtle forms of coercion that sustain relations of domination and exploitation, including the threat of violence". Systemic violence, like symbolic violence, makes subjective violence possible.

Žižek also argues that when subjective violence occurs, the root of the problem, objective violence, is rarely addressed. For example, he says that the "fundamental systemic violence of capitalism...is not attributable to concrete individuals and their "evil" intentions, but is purely "objective," systemic, anonymous". We cannot directly perceive capitalism's systemic violence, but we can see the subjective violence that results from it, so, we typically only address subjective violence. Žižek's point is that if objective violence, symbolic or systemic, denies an individual the right to be who and what s/he is, then that individual has the right to rebel against the socio-political framework that reproduces objective violence and the

\[^{145}\text{Ibid. 1.}\]^ {146}\text{Žižek, Violence, 2.}\[^{147}\text{Ibid. 9.}\]^ {148}\text{Ibid. 12-3.}\]
subjective violence that results from it. The challenge to Kant is that even if state laws are based on universal moral standards, some individuals may have a moral right to rebel.

Returning to Kant, he argues in *Perpetual Peace* that, if perpetual peace is to be attained, states must have republican constitutions. I am not concerned with whether the republican form of government in every state has the potential to lead to international perpetual peace, but only with whether the republican form produces moral unity within a state by having morally universalizable laws. Kant also explains, in *On the Common Saying: That May be True in Theory, but it is of No Use in Practice*, that “a civil constitution is a relation of free human beings who...are nevertheless subject to coercive laws; for reason itself wills it so...”, Legal compulsion within a republic is not created by despotically imposing coercive laws, but by establishing laws that any rational individual would freely consent to because they are right. In his *Introduction to the Doctrine of Right*, Kant explains that constitutional laws produce freedom by “hindering hindrances to freedom”. That is, they hinder us from performing actions that would hinder the freedoms of others. In this way, law does not violate freedom, but makes freedom possible. Law defines right actions, and by living under law, an individual is afforded freedom because the individual can perform right actions. These laws constitute what Kant thinks of as a republican constitutions.

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151 *Perpetual Peace*, 39.
The republican form of government is supposed to be the best because then individuals are represented in government, and their representatives will make laws in their interest, for the sake of their freedom and rights. In contrast to Kant, though, it is precisely the socio-political structure sustained by republican constitutional laws that results in morally justified rebellion, according to Žižek and Marcuse. Admittedly, Kant argues that political leaders ought to be moral and willing to reform constitutions when absolutely necessary, but he also argues that constitutions should not be changed too often, otherwise they lose their authority. He states, “public law laden with injustice must be allowed to stand, either until everything is of itself ripe for complete reform or until this maturity has been brought about by peaceable means”. Foregoing the problems concerning how often laws should be changed, the question is how can a republican constitution satisfy the Kantian moral requirement of universality? I claim, following Marcuse and Žižek’s arguments, that republican constitutions will always fail to satisfy the moral requirement of universality because the universal application of law violates the moral rights of some individuals, and when it does so, they have a moral right to rebel.

Kant’s thought is that laws apply universally and create unity when political principles are grounded on moral principles. For example, he distinguishes between two kinds of politicians: the moral politician, who bases political principles on moral principles, and the political moralist who manipulates morality for the sake of her own political advantage. One of Kant’s hopes is that a political moralist will be led by reason toward being concerned with making the most freedom possible for citizens of her state, and therefore become a moral politician because s/he acknowledges the rationality of basing

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154 Ibid. 38-9.
155 Ibid. 37.
political principles on moral ones. Reason is supposed to lead us toward moral, universalizable political principles.

Yet, Kant also points out a few sophisms utilized by political moralists – those who manipulate morality for their own benefit – one of which is “divide and conquer”.156 The issue that I see here is that, within a republic, no matter whether representatives are political moralists or moral politicians, these representatives, intentionally or not, divide the people by the very fact of their having been chosen by majorities. Representatives might allow their people to have a say in politics, but some representatives are chosen rather than others. The result is not unity, but a divided people. The laws created by a representative can fail to be representative of some people. A majority chooses their representatives and those representatives then, in turn, make and execute laws in the interest of that majority, perhaps because the laws are moral or perhaps not. All that matters for the majority is that their representatives make laws in the interest of that majority, otherwise they choose a new representative. Republican states with civil constitutions, thus, necessarily divide the people, and the majority’s opinions concerning rights and freedom dominate those of minority groups. This means that the sophism, “divide and conquer,” is built into the framework of republican governments and their constitutions such that the choosing of representatives produces division amongst the members of a state, and conquers the interests of minority groups.

One way to make sense of this is to consider what these three have to say about democracy, the rule of the masses. Kant argues that democracy is despotic because the masses altogether both legislate and execute the law, so, we ought to have a republican government, in which the executive and legislative branches are separate.157 Marcuse and Žižek agree that democracies are despotic, but they also demonstrate that

156 Ibid. 40.
157 Ibid. 13-4.
republics fail to eliminate this despotism because republics are, at the core of it, democracies. The republican form of government does not eliminate the function of democracy within its borders, but reintroduces it, legally embedding the possibility for majority opinion to dominate minority groups. Even if the executive and legislative branches are separate within a republic, because representatives are chosen by majorities and minority groups are never or are too little represented, the separation between the executive and legislative branches is merely procedural and does not avoid tending toward despotism.

Today, despite the definition of democracy as “the rule of the masses,” it is often assumed that democracy allows for people to be free because they can freely express their opinions. It is typically assumed that democracies create freedom because expressions of opinions are tolerated. This assumption underlies an ideological underpinning of democracy, namely that anyone’s opinion stands a chance to gain representation. Marcuse and Žižek both discuss the democratic practice of tolerance and how it leads to despotism.

In *Repressive Tolerance*, Marcuse argues that the practice of tolerance within a republican democracy results in that democracy being a totalitarian dictatorship.158 Ideally, minority oppositional views should be free to express themselves within a democracy so that the majority view encompasses, includes, and is influenced by the minority view. Yet, expressions of oppositional views within democracies are tolerated only insofar as they are expressed non-aggressively and this means that the expression of the views of minority groups might not be taken seriously since they must passively subordinate themselves to the dominant view. An opposition

could turn from passively expressing their views, to action, and eventually, Marcuse says, "quantity turns into quality: on such a scale, passive resistance is no longer passive - it ceases to be non-violent." Nevertheless, Marcuse argues that we cannot tolerate all expressions of opinion, particularly not those that aim to create new forms of repression. So, he suggests the "practice of discriminating tolerance" - only those practices should be tolerated that aim to break the tyranny of the majority public opinion so that "real democracy" can emerge. As long as one's oppositional view does not produce repression, it is an instant of the development of freedom, and one is justified to rebel against a democracy that has become totalitarian in this sense. So, in Marcuse's view, the practice of tolerance reveals the tendency of democratic republics to be dictatorships.

Likewise, in his article *A Plea for Leninist Intolerance*, Žižek describes the politics of tolerance such that choices today are allowed as long as they do not "disturb the public".159 He argues that today there is no "actual freedom" within republican democracies to choose as one pleases, but only "formal freedom" because we are not actually free to choose however we please, for we are only free to the extent that we can choose what others have already determined to be tolerable choices.160 The practice of tolerance is oppressive because only a predetermined set of possible practices are tolerated within the status quo socio-political framework. There are almost no actually free choices possible for the individual to make. We are merely formally free to choose those already predetermined choices that have been made possible for us to choose from before we even began choosing.

So, both Marcuse and Žižek argue that democracy tends toward dictatorship, particularly due to the practice of tolerance, despite that the practice of tolerance is claimed to be

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160 Ibid. 543.
that which contributes to the development of freedom. For both, the only proper response to the oppression produced by the practice of tolerance tolerance is rebellious intolerance and rebellion is moral if one rebels for the sake of freedom and rights. How are we to make sense of this inconsistency between the deontological non-justification of rebellion, and rebellion’s being legally legitimated by its utility toward a better state constitution and the rights and freedom of individuals? We might attempt to make sense of this by better formulating a maxim concerning rebellious actions so that rebellious actions are universalizable and moral, but we have to formulate the maxim for the action in terms of what the action is in itself as an end, not what it aims for as a means. If we reformulate the maxim by introducing the goals of rebellious actions, then we would be introducing the utilitarian means-end framework. I don’t think that Marcuse and Žižek reformulate the maxim concerning rebellion by introducing means-end reasoning, but that they show that the Kantian republican state fails to successfully ground political principles on moral principles. I think this is because of the difference between the universality of legal principles and the universality of moral principles. Žižek and Marcuse recognizes this tendency of the law to become oppressive of rights and freedom and turn Kant’s arguments against Kant.

I chose to discuss Žižek and Marcuse because I think that they both show that rebellion is moral and that the democratic republican state’s universally applied laws fail to be universally moral. Of course, there is a glaring anachronism going on here, since Marcuse and Žižek had more than a century of republican forms of government to consider, and Kant had not. I only aim to reveal that it is impossible for political principles to successfully be based on the universalization of moral standards because of the divisions that the republican form of government produces. Representatives are representatives of majorities and the fact that there is a majority does not mean that the majority’s views and opinions are universalizable in the moral sense. Marcuse and Žižek
explicitly justify rebellion, while Kant does not, because the domination of the Kantian-type of rational universalization of rights and freedom fails to adequately account for the moral rights and freedom of all individuals. Kant's philosophy seems to inherently deny some people their rights and freedom because logical, deontological analysis fails to account for the differences between people and how majorities can become dominating. The deontological calculation avoids addressing these differences by treating everyone the same simply because all humans are rational.

In conclusion, Kant's deduction of the immorality of rebellious action is too dependent upon a deontological rationale and fails to account for the rights of those who do not gain representation within their state's republican government. Kant's republican solution for social unity instead produces conflict because of the difference between the universalization of the ethical and the universalization of the law's application. A state constitution created and executed by representatives chosen by majorities can fail to encompass the universal moral rights of each citizen of that state. So, the republican form of government cannot succeed at being based on moral moral principles without becoming totalitarian.

Bibliography


Long has been the discussion concerning the seeming conflict between science and religion. Questions surrounding the existence of God, the beginning of creation and order in nature seem to be buried in the heart of man. Both science and religion have attempted to put an end to the burning ignorance. Many philosophers have performed significant studies and put forth heartfelt inquiry pertaining to the topics above. In a nutshell, the question looming is whether or not creation points to an intelligent designer or is it self-sufficient. Is it possible that nature is self-sustaining? Many philosophers and scientists espouse a Darwinian view of the origin of the universe, arguing that nature is indeed self-sustaining and does not require, nor does it indicate, the need or presence of an intelligent designer. Philosopher Robert Pennock, author of the book *Tower of Babel: The Evidence against the New Creationism*, is one of them. On the other hand proponents of the Argument from Design posit that, since there are unexplained, and seemingly unexplainable, gaps in knowledge about this origin and the functionality of things in nature, also known as "black boxes", the only way to explain them is by employing faith and acknowledging an intelligent designer. This has become known as Intelligent Design Theory (IDT). The designer, they affirm, is responsible for the black boxes or gaps and is referred to as “the God of the gaps”. Biochemist Dr. Michael Behe of Lehigh University attempts to explain the gaps and a concept he calls irreducible complexity, as apparent signs of an intelligent designer—God. This paper will argue that although black boxes and irreducible complexity are currently unexplained, intervention of an intelligent designer is not necessarily the best explanation. 

IDT was birthed by Design advocates eager to prove the existence of God by demonstrating the need for divine intervention to account for natural processes. Dr. Behe, a
current spokesperson for the theory, describes in his book, *Darwin's Black Box*, a concept of biochemical systems that he suggests is best explained as the result of deliberate intelligent design. He calls the concept irreducible complexity. He defines it as follows:

...a single system composed of several well-matched, interacting parts that contribute to the basic function, wherein the removal of any one of the parts causes the system to effectively cease functioning...[it] cannot be produced directly...by slight, successive modifications of a precursor system, because any precursor to an irreducibly complex system that is missing a part is by definition nonfunctional (39).

In other words, these irreducibly complex systems could not have occurred by blind law or in a developmental fashion, such as one finds posited in Darwinian evolution theory. It should be noted that there are many different views of IDT advocates, even from within their own ranks, from Natural scientists to Christian philosophers. However, for the purposes of this paper they will be considered as one group favoring the notion of intelligent design in nature. One particular perspective of great interest to the discussion of nature being self-sustaining lies within the functioning of the human body. No one would disagree that the body is fascinating when considering how it has an intrinsic ability to heal itself. Many organs have the capacity to rebuild themselves in the event of injury. Take the skin for example. If the skin becomes lacerated, the body goes to work immediately to begin the repairs. How intelligent it seems to be as it knows exactly what to do to seal the opening and
continue doing so until it is virtually returned to the previous state and sometimes an even better state. Though few would argue against the wonder of physical faculties, the explanation of how the faculties operate is the subject of continual debate. As a biochemist, Dr. Behe’s particular interest in the debate is about explaining design by illuminating the complexity of some of the biological systems at play. In Darwin’s Black Box, he uses the analogy of a mousetrap to express the intertwining parts that each depend on the proper execution of the other in order to fulfill its overall function. The trap needs hammer, spring, catch, platform and holding bar in order to work (43). If just one of the parts lacks integrity, the entire system fails. Using this analogy, he focuses on the biological systems in the body.

Behe says that the process of blood clotting qualifies as an example of an irreducibly complex system. In attempt to avoid bulky technical terms and concepts foreign to those outside the community of biochemistry, it will suffice to say that during blood clotting, timing and placement for the blood to congeal are crucial to the clotting process. Certain bonds and proteins are in control of the factors that produce the effects of sealing the opening. These components use highly specific discrimination concerning when, where and how to execute; and they are only effective when they are well matched. He declares: “The absence of, or significant defects in, any one of a number of the components causes the system to fail…” (78), hence, no clotting can take place. The fact that the system is solely dependent on the execution of every part to secure the function of the whole makes it irreducibly complex. Apparently this, for him, is convincing evidence of intelligent design. Although Behe acknowledges that Darwin’s natural selection might explain many things, he does not believe it explains molecular life (5). The black boxes seem to be without explanation and design theorists would like nothing more than to deny science and attribute them to God’s intervention.

Behe uses the analogy of explaining how a ditch was crossed to convey the leaps that Darwin takes to explain evolution. He supposes someone jumping a ditch of four, eight,
and fifteen feet wide, each becoming more impossible thus requiring proof. Then he exaggerates the width to 100 feet. Now it is more of a canyon, and it was crossed incrementally by jumping buttes that appeared and then quickly eroded (13-14). There is no way to disprove the jumper’s story (Darwin’s evolution theory) but Behe implies that the method of crossing (gradual changes over an extended time) is highly questionable. Behe seems to have a problem with Darwin’s explanation of how large evolutionary “canyons” (changes that appear to require large jumps at a time) are crossed. He would rather the crossing of huge gaps appear as unexplainable black boxes in order to insert the idea of intelligent design—God of the gaps—as the best option.

While Behe claims to have opened Darwin’s black box, proponents of the long-standing theory appear to be without concern that the accusations will cause harm. Pennock holds that just because a phenomenon has not been explained does not mean it is unexplainable. The wise one would leave it open to possibility. At first glance, the explanations given by the Lehigh biochemist sound thoughtful and plausible, however, one critic of IDT, Michael Ruse, says that it does not seem like good, well-taken science and “The unanimous opinion of the scientific community... is that it is not” (Ruse). Although the American population, on the whole, claims to be more theistic than atheistic, there are very prominent voices that speak out against Intelligent Design Theory refusing the argument that relies on the God of the gaps.

Sometimes the gaps can be filled, or crossed as Behe’s analogy goes, and then, sometimes not. Pennock agrees that there are crossable and uncrossable gaps. Some that may be explored from the philosophical position to determine that an unexplained “X” may be something that can be without explanation, while some gaps need not be crossed at all. It is the business of scientists to responsibly admit uncrossable gaps. For instance, Pennock states that when attempting to answer the question “why there is something rather than nothing, we have moved beyond the limits of empirical science and into the
realm of philosophical metaphysics” (165). These seeming gaps presented by Behe, however, are not necessarily uncrossable as there is a significant difference in something being unexplained verses unexplainable.

Behe claims that blood clotting is an example of an irreducibly complex system that evolution cannot explain. However, in his article “Flawed Intelligence, Flawed Design”, Michael Ruse uses research from Russell Doolittle who reports signs that the existing parts of the system appear to have come from one or fewer basic parts, which happens in evolution. He further says that blood clotting requires fewer stages in many organisms. In reply to the biochemist comparing evolution to jumping over a canyon, Pennock suggests that this is an illusory uncrossable gap that Behe wants uneducated readers to see. He further proclaims that evolutionary biologists do not consider slowly rising and eroding buttes as a problem, seeing how the theory admits to the slow and gradual nature of [genetic] change (167). There appears to be little reason to consider evolution as an uncrossable gap, and perhaps it is premature to claim an intelligent designer.

Reviewing the triumphant crossing of previous gaps and shedding light on black boxes, consider that science once taught that earth was the center of the universe. With much more advanced technology and research methods, the contrary has been discovered, validated and confirmed. At one time, science was only able to assert that the atom was the most basic element, currently (and as research continues), the atom has been split even further which has led to the discovery of multiple layers that exist beneath its previously known and understood surface. To further credit the efforts of science Pennock recalls:

When I was an undergraduate biology major, my professors noted that no one could explain the mechanism by which spindle fibers formed
and segregated chromosomes
during cell division; fifteen
years later the newly
discovered answer would fill
in that gap in the textbooks
(171).

Although it sounds as though many of Behe’s critics
have offered compelling examples that seem to refute the idea
of crediting God as the reason for irreducible complexity and
unexplained gaps, several of the examples provided fail to
acknowledge Behe’s definition that an irreducibly complex
system requires well-matched parts. A common argument
against the notion that the malfunctioning of one part leading to
the demise of the operation is often ignored by saying that there
are other complex systems that seem to function well enough
when one part is missing (Behe, Reply to Shanks, 156). These,
however, are known as “redundantly complex” systems. The
rebuttal seems to ignore that there are possibly systems that
currently seem to require all matching parts working together
for the overall performance of the system. Even so, there are
more details to consider before accepting interventions by an
intelligent designer. For instance, given the vast number of
systems in the universe that are invariably self-sufficient and
the small number of systems that appear to be irreducibly
complex, should serve as encouragement to probe deeper into
black boxes. As it is, gaps in information have fueled the desire
for research in areas that have literally saved lives. Equipment
like pacemakers, prosthetics, and heart transplants were all
developed through persistent research though they were once
contained within black boxes. Behe’s suggestion that
inexplicable occurrences are to be attributed to God almost
sound as though there should be no further research on such
issues. Fortunately, former researchers did not yield to the
temptation to throw up their hands and conclude that God was
ultimately responsible. If they had, they would not have
illuminated the many black boxes that have led to the
development of technology for the numerous apparatuses that have changed and saved many lives.

Further research may lead to deeper probing into the functionality of these supposedly irreducibly complex systems. Behe’s definition currently states that they are independent of previous systems. It may later be discovered that before they came to be independent they were capable of functioning without every part and by some evolutionary change they became dependent upon one another. Or perhaps they seem to rely on the proper functioning of each part but it shall be discovered that the parts are not as well matched as they seemed but are indeed held together by an unknown and unseen component (as with the atom). There could be elements available to serve the system should one part fail; only current technology cannot detect them. The options are many when investigating explanations for unexplained phenomenon. Those who prematurely assign them to an intelligent designer come across slightly lethargic.

However, the idea of irreducibly complex systems is fascinating and theories exist that suggest there need not be a disagreement between advocates and critics of IDT. Suppose that there is a Designer responsible for nature. Consider also the nature of the things that have been designed. It is not unreasonable to suppose that the intelligence liable for design anticipated changes in the environment and might therefore include all components necessary for continued survival of the species, and that the necessary adjustments would be incorporated in the framework of the organism so that they would be readily available when called upon by nature. According to Ruse, design is accounted for beforehand and “...things like mousetraps...and blood clotting” qualify as design. Thus it is plausible that the Designer does not need to intervene because systems are innately equipped, rather, designed to be self-sufficient. Michael Murray, an experienced philosopher in the conversation of Design, phrases it this way: “...detection of design would not undercut methodological naturalism” (Pojman, 596). Therefore, since science and religion both share
the same sense of wonder about life, whether one chooses a method of explaining the design of nature through science or religion, given the proposition above, both can be satisfied.
Bibliography


Alex Richardson—Building a Bridge Toward Praxis: Moving from Heideggerian Thought to a Pragmatic Environmental Ethic in an Epoch of Urgency

Many thinkers have speculated on the contributions that Continental philosophy can make to a contemporary conception of environmentalism, and have sought to make applications as such. No Continental thinker is perhaps as oft mentioned in such a context as the 20th century German philosopher, Martin Heidegger. His interconnected notions of building, conservation, and dwelling (primarily the latter two), at least as some academics have claimed, can provide us with the very cornerstone for a new conception of environmental ethics: one that attempts to move us away from the allegedly pernicious presuppositions (metaphysical and otherwise) of traditional environmental ethics, which Heidegger might denigrate as instrumental, ineffective, and as simply missing the point, as far as solving ethical problems is concerned.

In this paper, I will provide an explanation of the aspects of Heidegger’s thought that contemporary thinkers seek to apply to modern environmentalism, drawing on two of his own works. I will then examine how thinkers like Monika Langer have sought the application of Heideggerian thought, and whether we can truly apply Heidegger’s reflections to contemporary environmentalism in a way that allows us to live well in this regard. I will ultimately argue that an environmental ethic that is purely concerned with Heideggerian thought is insufficient to address the pressing environmental problems of our contemporary epoch. That is to say that an ethic based solely on Heidegger’s seemingly prescriptive move toward what Langer calls “a thoughtful discussion” fails to solve persistent environmental problems on the basis that it provides only prescription for further deliberation, rather than actual and practical doing, which, I will argue, is needed to combat the
pressing environmental problems that have arisen within our contemporary epoch. Essentially, I aim toward postulating a system of ethics that gives credence to both the merits of Heidegger’s thought for environmentalism and an apparent need for pragmatic action in the face of modern environmental crises, as well as to argue that these two aspects need not be as fiercely oppositional as one might think.

I. Heideggerian Applications for Environmentalism

Heidegger’s “Building, Dwelling, Thinking,” takes up the notion of dwelling, seeking to clarify its meaning. At the onset, he asserts, “We attain to dwelling, so it seems, only by means of building. The latter, building, has the former, dwelling, as its goal,”161 telling us that dwelling is something desirable for us. As Heidegger seems to suggest, we ought to be focused on dwelling. This is generally considered the basis for the application of Heidegger’s thought to environmental issues. So too will it be my basis of application, moving forward.

Heidegger’s reflection on dwelling begins, as Heidegger often does, with etymological distinctions. He first examines the German “bauen,” meaning “to build,”162 to establish dwelling as inextricably connected to building, and compares this to the Old English “buan,” meaning “to dwell; to remain; to stay in a place.”163 More specifically, in order to remain in a place, one must “be at peace; be brought to peace; to remain in peace,” exemplified by Heidegger with the Gothic “wunian.”164 His word for “peace,” “friede,” literally means “the free” (“das frey”) and indicates that which is “preserved from harm and danger;

162 Heidegger, Martin. “Building,” 144.
163 ibid.
164 Heidegger, Martin. “Building,” 147.
preserved from something; safeguarded.” In other words, “to free” means to spare and preserve. In unpacking Heidegger’s linguistic work, we see that he has traced the notion of dwelling to its most fundamental character, which is this sense of sparing and preserving. In order to dwell in a place, for Heidegger, one must preserve, spare, and conserve with regard to that place. We dwell in a place when we are at peace, or at home (in a certain sense) in a place: when we exist in a place with a certain freedom which leads us to spare and preserve it.

In another section of the same volume, “...Poetically Man Dwells,” Heidegger seeks to examine the way in which we dwell on the earth, giving obvious credence to the title. In this essay, Heidegger seems to draw a profound distinction concerning two very different ways of being: one the one hand; what he calls the scientific, which I take to mean the way of being associated with standard metaphysical presuppositions, and on the other hand, the poetic, which he characterizes very differently. It is this sense of the poetic that Heidegger asserts is characteristic of our very being-in-the-world, or at least, seemingly, ought to be. The scientific or traditional thinker, as Heidegger suggests, is one who attempts to separate himself or herself from his or her environment in order to think, a feat which Heidegger and most other phenomenologists consider altogether impossible. Scientific thought attempts to make judgments about how things really are by attempting to step outside the metaphorical mess of human existence to make such claims. The poetic thinker, conversely, and in accordance with Heidegger’s prescription, does not seek to step outside of the mess of humanity, but simply locates himself within it. Science recognizes factual judgments from authoritative sources, while the poetic recognizes the authentic questioning of judgment, of presupposition, and of human existence. Poetry, in dramatic contrast to a scientific essay, for example, cannot be objectivized or summarized: it resists such rigid and final

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165 ibid.
readings. The poetic, then, for Heidegger, is the very basis for human dwelling.

It is this distinction between poetic and scientific thought that fuels (at least in part) work by environmental philosopher Monika Langer in applying Heidegger to environmental ethics. Langer, in her paper, “Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Merleau-Ponty: Some of Their Contributions and Limitations for ‘Environmentalism’,” concentrates on such Heideggerian conceptions of thought, as well as focusing on what she calls the question of values and the significance of language to Heideggerian thought at large. Langer begins with the question of values, since this has come to be a central tenet of environmental ethics, by its very definition: “Over the years, a number of environmentalists have argued that nature has intrinsic value and that non-human animals therefore have inherent rights, which humans must respect.”166 As Langer tells us, Heidegger criticizes the very notion of values themselves: “Heidegger's point here is that valuing something – no matter how positively – subjectivizes it, instead of letting it be. By valuing it, we reduce it to an object for our estimation.”167 Along this train of thought, Langer suggests that environmentalists manage to accomplish the direct opposite of their intentions by seeking to ascribe value to nature. Speaking to the importance of a Heideggerian sense of “meditative” or poetic thought, Langer tells us: “It is worth pondering whether so-called environmental issues require an approach that is entirely different and more original...”168

This notion of “original thinking” from Heidegger is perhaps among the most notable tenets of his thoughts, as far as

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its environmental applicability is concerned. Langer seemingly reiterates a bit of what was said and suggested in Heidegger's own "...Poetically Man Dwells," and provides clarification for us. According to Langer, Heidegger would call genuine thinking (as an echo, I believe, of "poetic thought" from "...Poetically Man Dwells") "meditative," in contrast to the form of thinking that has dominated the history of Western discourse, which he traces to a scientific revolution of sorts in the seventeenth century169: "calculative thinking" (echoing "scientific thought"). Langer reiterates Heidegger's criticism of calculative thought "as a reductionistic, coercive, means/ends-oriented thinking [that]... is concerned with productivity, efficiency, utility, management, regulation, planning, prediction, and control."170 It is Langer's contention that such calculative or scientific thinking is actually completely thoughtless, and ignorant of Being—leaving humans, as Heidegger might say, homeless. Meditative thinking, according to Langer, in addition to being "profoundly thoughtful and receptive to Being,"171 is non-manipulative, and focuses on the letting-be of both Being and beings. As Langer asserts: "this letting-be involves profound care and concern."172 It is precisely this sort of thinking with which Langer, using Heidegger as a guide, seeks to found a new philosophy for the environment. From here, the connection Langer draws to language is not a hard one to follow, for language, after all, is what distinguishes us from plants, stones, animals and gods.173 For Heidegger, and thus for Langer, it is in words and language that things are. For Heidegger, language houses Being.

II. The Urgency of Environmental Problems in a Contemporary Epoch: A Call to Action

169 ibid.
170 ibid.
171 ibid.
172 ibid.
173 ibid.
It is perhaps no secret that problems of an environmental nature are pervasive in our contemporary epoch. Hardly able to go a day without the tales of environmental woes reaching our ears, we are frequently inundated with accounts of issues like global warming, climate change, atmospheric pollution, etc. This is not simply idle conversation: issues like these have wide-ranging effects for us as humans, for non-human animals and, on a larger scale, for the earth itself. The problem of globally increasing temperature, for example, is expected, according to the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC; an American environmental action group), to disrupt, displace, or even destroy many of the earth’s ecosystems, and the non-human (and human) animals that live as an extension of them. The NRDC has found that “the first comprehensive assessment of the extinction risk from global warming found that more than one million species could be obliterated by 2050 if the current trajectory continues.”174 The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) cites similar data, stemming from the findings of a 2010 report, “Climate Change Indicators in the United States.” The overall consensus among these bits of information is that global warming and the resulting climate change stands to greatly impact every living thing on the earth, as well as the earth itself, in no manner of positivity, if left unchecked.

Atmospheric pollution is another aspect of our current environmental predicament that is particularly salient. Another publication by the EPA states that both humans and non-human animals are negatively affected by the releasing of toxic substances (gases, radiation, etc.) into the atmosphere, citing increased rates of cancer, birth defects, immunodeficiency, and neurological damage among subjects (both human and animal) exposed to toxic atmospheric pollutants over prolonged periods 174

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of time. According to the NRDC, "outdoor air pollution is associated with over one million deaths and countless illnesses each year across the globe." In addition to the primary effects of such pollution on the environment and the earth’s inhabitants, the NRDC cites more indirect ways in which such pollution can be harmful, such as food and water contamination and contamination of entire food chains as a result.

Whether one takes the word of these organizations as true or not, it remains ostensibly clear that there is a certain urgency accompanying environmental problems in our epoch and our society. Our environmental woes, if left unchecked, according to all of the data and experience we can take in, have the capacity and potentiality to effect great change and harm toward us as humans, non-human animals, and the earth itself. It becomes clear to us, when examining the scope and implications of these environmental perils, that practical action is essential in order to effect change.

Most of our environmental complications stem from humankind’s relationship with nature: a relationship characterized by subversion, domination, and control: a far cry from Heidegger's prescription of “letting-be” with reference to our environment. A synthesis of Heideggerian environmental thought and the prescription of practical action could help us attack the root cause of these problems, and set about correcting them, but neither approach can stand in isolation in order to cause a meaningful change in our dealings with the environment.

III. Traditional and Heideggerian Shortcomings: Presupposition and Pragmatic Action


What are the shortcomings of a traditional system of ethics where the environment is concerned? Let us consider Langer’s application of Heidegger’s criticisms along the vein of calculative thought, in order to provide some illumination. Langer tells us, in “Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Merleau-Ponty”, that:

Given the increasing extinction of plant and non-human animal species, the rapid disappearance of habitats, the growing mass of pollutants, the acceleration of global warming, and all the other pressing environmental issues, environmentalists may well feel increasing pressures to ‘do something’ and to wrap environmentalist concerns into the prevailing, ‘calculative’ way of speaking.\textsuperscript{177}

Langer points us to the fact that Heidegger would consider such preoccupation with action, as well as succumbing to such pressures as, “a further estrangement from Being, and the destruction of any authentic relation with nature.”\textsuperscript{178} It is Langer’s contention that we are simply concerned with a sort of “quick fix” for environmental problems, and that such a course of action is altogether impossible or unattainable: “There can be no ‘fix’ for environmental issues.”\textsuperscript{179} She notes that while “a transformation,” in this context, “cannot be willed—but can be thoughtfully prepared. A first step lies in recognizing that thought and language are internally related, and that they involve an entire way of living.”\textsuperscript{180}

It is at this point in their discussion that I break with Langer and Heidegger in at least one aspect. As Langer concedes

\textsuperscript{177} Langer, Monika. “Environmentalism,” 114.
\textsuperscript{178} ibid.
\textsuperscript{179} ibid.
\textsuperscript{180} ibid.
in a further section of her essay, "environmentalism can draw attention to the inherent limitations of a purely descriptive approach" as developed through Continental thinkers like Heidegger.\textsuperscript{181} She notes that Heidegger's phenomenological description shows us that our environmental problems “arise from a fundamentally flawed ontology,” and are, as such, perpetuated by our own hands and minds. This is perhaps the key merit of Heidegger's thought as far as applications to environmentalism are concerned: the meditative thought about and questioning of our ontology, a presupposition which has led us to believe that nature, rather than being something that ought to be left to truly be in its essence, as Heidegger seems to prescribe, is there for our control, exploitation, and use.

While I will concede to the idea that there can be no "quick fix," so to speak, for environmental problems in the magnitude with which they face us in the contemporary epoch, I am not entirely convinced that a purely phenomenological approach gets us where we need to go, with the woes of contemporary environmental issues looming overhead: “The question at hand is whether descriptive critiques and the development of new ontologies suffice, given the evident urgency of environmental problems.”\textsuperscript{182} I do believe that some action is needed if we are to be in the world and move through the world in any kind of meaningful way. Even if we do “thoughtfully prepare” to make a transformation to a new and meditative way of thinking poetically, to an existence concerned with perpetual questioning of presuppositions, history, and all else, as Heidegger might prescribe, we must still perform actions at some point and we must ensure that we do these things well, if we are to live well, rather than simply live.

A descriptive approach, as Langer herself seems to concede, is simply not enough: “there is perhaps a need to go beyond description to a thoughtful discussion of how one might best respond to the timely concerns raised by

\textsuperscript{181} Langer, Monika, “Environmentalism,” 117.
\textsuperscript{182} ibid.
But is such a “thoughtful discussion” any more sufficient to answer the ostensible urgency accompanying environmental perils? While I share Langer’s (and perhaps Heidegger’s) contention that an unreflective and non-meditative system of traditional ethics can only perpetuate the very presuppositions that aided in creating environmental problems in the first place, I do not believe that a purely descriptive phenomenological approach can carry the burden alone, either. It is my view that “thoughtful discussion,” while presenting a valuable starting point in, at the very least, encouraging us to question the presuppositions we bring to the table when talking about the environment, prescribes only further deliberation: a prescription which is alarmingly stagnant when we consider the ostensible nature of our epoch’s environmental problems. While recognizing the merits of phenomenological thought in that it causes a constantly vigilant examination of the presuppositions that put us where we are, environmentally, I cannot rest on the consideration that this is all I can do in order to effect meaningful change. But action alone, in accordance with a traditional system of ethics, is not enough either, in that it serves only to perpetuate the presuppositions and attitudes toward nature that placed us in an environmental predicament.

IV. Toward a Synthetic Environmental Ethic

What I seek to suggest and articulate a move to, then, is a theory that is able to grant deserved credence to both a need to question the attitudes that seem to have created the problem and a need to act in the face of urgent problems. In other words, I seek to suggest an ethic that attributes weight to both theory and praxis in order to move in the direction of both thoughtful and pragmatic solutions to problems of an environmental sort that face us, as moral agents in a contemporary epoch.

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183 ibid.
A close reading of Heidegger and his contemporaries allows us to see what is required of us. A primary tenet and beginning point of such an ethic, of course, and in accordance with Heidegger’s prescriptions, is the poetic or meditative thought, or the questioning of our metaphysical and traditional prejudices. From there, we can start to become aware of the fact that these presuppositions and traditions have allowed us to treat the environment in the way we do, and that this sort of attitude toward nature, as viewed as an exploitable resource for our use, is the root cause of the problem. When we start to realize our prejudices and their effects, we can begin to see the environment in a new context: one related to Heidegger’s idea of the letting-be. From here, the logical jump from there to action on behalf of this newfound thought is not hard to make.

Where action is concerned, a new ethic based on Heidegger would primarily be concerned with this idea of letting-be, and would create prescriptions for pragmatic actions involving a non-interference principle of sorts for the environment. In order to let things be as they are, as Heidegger seems to suggest we ought to, we would have to limit our interactions with environment in a way differently than we have before. With such a new ethic, we would attempt to move past our view of the environment as a resource or a tool. This consideration, alongside Heidegger’s notion of letting-be, would serve as the basis for curbing and changing our interactions with the environment, rather than the traditional way in which we have approached environmental ethics: conservation not for the sake of the earth, but for our own sake, and for that of future generations of humans. Traditionally, every ethical action we perform with respect to the environment seems somehow self-serving or promoting of human interest. A new ethic synthesizing Heideggerian thought and pragmatic action would prescribe similar actions, but begin to do it in such a way that is consistent with Heidegger’s notion of the letting-be of things as things, particularly of the letting-be of earth as earth, as opposed to as resource.
V. Criticism and Response: Instrumental Reversion

In considering my attempts to synthesize pragmatic ethics and Heideggerian phenomenology, some might raise the objection that I have simply reverted to a scientific or instrumental way of thinking, and have prescribed that others ought to do the same. I would answer such a criticism by arguing that poetic thought and pragmatic action, which are reminiscent of the age-old distinction between theory and practice, do not have to be mutually exclusive ventures. Swiss thinker Hanspeter Padrutt notes this conflict and alleged exclusivity where Heidegger’s thought and its applications to environmentalism are concerned, in his essay, “Heidegger and Ecology.” Padrutt suggests that, “from the philosophical point of view, the so-called practical or political dimension of the attempt is rejected, whereas from the ecological point of view the so-called theoretical, philosophical dimension is rejected. But deeper reflection and decisive action need not contradict each other.”184 Those who retreat to the theoretical aspect, and shy away from decisive action, according to Padrutt, “may one day be confronted with the fact that no decision is still a decision, and one that can have consequences.”185 I believe that this is the case that plagues an ethic whose focal point is the notion of Heideggerian thought, exclusively. Avoiding practical decision-making still constitutes decision-making, and the consequences of this, as far as environmental issues are concerned, could be dire. Time spent in deliberation, regardless of how honest and thoughtful said deliberation may be, is time spent not acting, and it is acting, too, that is necessary to confront environmental problems of such urgency as those that plague our modern society.

185 ibid.
This criticism goes both ways, however. Those who retreat to the more practical side, and disregard the role of critical thought, fail to recognize, according to Padrutt, that "no philosophy," i.e., a non-meditative philosophy concerned with science, presupposition, and calculative thought, "is also a philosophy and that it has consequences" as well. Effectually, a non-meditative way of living is no more practically useful (and certainly no less arrogant) than a purely contemplative and critical one. In approaching the environment in this way, one would only perpetuate the very presumptions that constitute the problem in the first place.

Thus, it is in this way that I, echoing Padrutt, believe that neither theory nor practice, particularly, neither Heidegger’s notion of critical thought, nor pragmatic ethical action, can stand alone as a "catch-all" fix for the environmental problems that present themselves to our epoch. Action without critical thought and pure contemplation without action are equally folly. We must make an attempt to make the two notions cooperate and supplement each other. A synthetic ethic, applying notions from Heideggerian philosophy in order to critically found prescriptions for some of the very actions that are prescribed by contemporary ethical theory seems a pertinent way to begin building this bridge: a bridge between contemplation and what Langer calls “thoughtful discussion,” on the one side, and, on the other, the actual, pragmatic action that seems required to solve our epoch’s striking environmental problems.

Bibliography


\(^{106}\) ibid.


Introduction

On January 21, 2010, The Supreme Court of The United States decided *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, a controversial case that significantly changed the American political landscape. At the core of the case was the question of whether corporations and unions have the right to spend money on electioneering advertisements and publications. The Court ruled in a 5-4 decision to strike down precedent regulations established by *Austin v. Michigan Chamber of Commerce* and *McConnell v. Federal Election Commission*, effectively ending government restrictions on private donations for political causes. In his concurring opinion, Justice Antonin Scalia states, “Indeed, to exclude or impede corporate speech is to muzzle the principal agents of the modern free economy. We should celebrate rather than condemn the addition of this speech to the public debate.” Implicit in Scalia’s conclusion is the idea that money equates to a form of speech, and this implication has been the subject of considerable backlash. However, the purpose of this essay is not to examine the effects of *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, but to explore the concept of money as speech, and whether a distinction exists between speech in the marketplace and speech in the political state. Doing so will lay a framework for ethical discourse pertaining to cases like *Citizens United v. Federal Elections Commission*. I will begin by illuminating certain ways

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in which money can and should be considered speech. Then, I will highlight distinctions between the marketplace and the political state. Finally, I will conclude that money should be considered speech in the marketplace, but not in the political state.

I. MONEY AS SPEECH

A popular objection of those disgruntled by the Supreme Court’s decisions regarding political finance is simply that money is not speech. This is true insofar as money does not come out of an individual’s mouth when she talks, nor does she simply sketch various forms of currency on a sheet of paper when she writes a letter to a friend. However, to focus on the material incongruity of money and speech oversimplifies the connection that money has with an individual’s ability to communicate with the world. Money not only helps individuals express themselves, but it expands the range, scope and impact of their expressions far beyond what is achievable by traditional speech methods such as talking or writing. Take, for example, my purchase of skim milk at a local supermarket. The act of exchanging my money for the milk is a vehicle for three distinct messages that I send in the process: 1) I have the ability to patronize that supermarket, 2) I prefer skim milk over other milk products sold at that supermarket and 3) I am willing to pay that supermarket’s price for the milk. All three of these communications, which originate in my handing money to the cashier, enter a consumer calculus to which a multitude of actors participating in the grocery and dairy industries will inevitably respond. The money I exchange forges a connection between the overall production hierarchy’s supply with my personal demand. Such communication is not particularly voluminous, as it is only one of millions of messages sent throughout a complex and interconnected marketplace, but it covers a vast amount of space and influences an array of
marketplace actors when combined with the consumer calculus at large.

The point of the example is to show that money is an enabler of speech, a type of speech delivery, or a method by which sentiments can be communicated. In that sense, there is no conceptual difference between exchanging money for milk or burning a flag in political protest. In both scenarios, a material object is put to some use in expressing a preference, desire or goal. Timothy Sullivan illustrates this fact, explaining

[Money] exists not only in currency and coin, but in the form of mediating exchanges and measuring value. Money exists properly in these ways and almost accidentally as currency and coin. Like language, this does not exist in the alphabet or the lexicon, but in expression and exchanges...money, like language, is an instrument of thought.¹⁸⁸

Sullivan is pointing out a crucial similarity between money and language: both are value-laden because both are used as mediums of exchange. Some might understand money as a medium of exchange because it is value-laden, but such an understanding would require the paper of which money is made to be intrinsically valuable. Paper money is simply paper; its value is bestowed upon it because, like language, it is collectively trusted as a stable medium of exchange. As such, there is no conceptual difference between a dollar bill and a string of letters in the alphabet; they are both valued because they are mediums of exchange.

One objection might hold that there is a substantive difference between exchanging money and political expressions like flag burning. Deborah Hellman claims,

While giving money to a child or...organization does express love or support for the recipient of the gift...in these cases, unlike in the case of flag burning, draft-card burning, and arm-band wearing, one cannot say that the 'medium is the message.' This is because the action (giving money) does not carry a specific meaning.\textsuperscript{189}

Hellman's objection is based on the fact that money's message depends on spatial and temporal circumstances. In other words, spending money doesn't have a singular meaning; rather, the meaning is defined by where, why, and for what the money is exchanged and who is involved in that transaction. In contrast, burning a flag consistently expresses ill feelings towards a political state or ideology. However, this objection is only significant as long as we demand consistency and specificity as necessary conditions for defining a mechanism for meaningful expression. These thresholds are important limits that are useful for regulating monetary speech in the legal sense, but the lack of specificity does not preclude money from being a medium of exchanging sentiments in the abstract. Hellman's objection does, however, provide an important tool for delineating particular forums for speech, a subject I will presently turn to.

\section*{II. FORUMS FOR SPEECH}

The preceding section illuminates ways in which money can and ought to be thought of as a form of speech. To that end, I have shown that something is amiss about the activists' argument that 'money is not speech.' Their concern would be more useful if aimed at

\textsuperscript{189} Hellman, D., "Money Talks but It Isn't Speech." \textit{Minnesota Law Review} (2011) 969.
establishing separate forums in which money may be sanctioned, or repudiated, as speech. This is the foundation of Hellman's objection, which is essentially pressing at whether money's capacity to speak is symbolically clear enough to warrant legal protection as political expression. To understand this subject, we must examine distinctions between speech in the marketplace and speech in the political state, and human behavior in each forum.

The marketplace, in general, is a forum of competition, self-regarding welfare enhancement, and private discourse. Money speaks for our private sentiments, and others are affected by those sentiments only as by-products of satisfaction or realization of those sentiments. Buying the milk at the supermarket satisfies my private desire, and only secondarily affects those involved in supplying my demand for the milk. Even 'selfless' charitable contributions originate in the desire to express a private sentiment.\textsuperscript{190} As such, the marketplace is a vast aggregation of private, individual preferences; money happens to be the chief medium and measure of this aggregation. Of course, those with lesser incomes have more constraints on their preferences, but they nonetheless are expressing their preferences when they spend money. In light of this fact, a restriction on the private expenditure of money is a restriction on private expression. The question is, then, should the political state be thought in the same terms? Jon Elster poses this concept eloquently, stating, “The economic theory of democracy...rests on the idea that the forum should be like the market, in its purpose as well as in its mode of functioning. The purpose is defined in economic

\textsuperscript{190} My giving to the Red Cross expresses my belief that the Red Cross needs, and is worthy of, my donation. While the action benefits others, the expression is not \textit{speaking for others}. 

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terms, and the mode of functioning is that of aggregating individual decisions.”

Under this understanding of the political state, spending a dollar is no different than casting a vote; each action expresses a private preference, and the medium is conceptually identical, only the preferences expressed are different. There is only a singular forum in which both private and political speech are subject to the same ascription of rights and laws.

There are, of course, competing visions concerning the distinction between an economy and a body politic. In opposition to the market theory of democracy stands the view of politics as a substantively separate arena of human expression. Elster illustrates, “A long-standing tradition from the Greek polis onwards suggests that politics must be an open and public activity, as distinct from the isolated and private expression of preferences that occurs in buying and selling.” This view of the political forum hinges on a difference in the type of preference being expressed in order to craft a space distinct from the marketplace. According to Robert Goodin, this distinction manifests itself in the way preferences are “laundered” when confronted with collective choice. He states,

When considering social projects, people do seem to take a far longer view than would make sense in their private lives, voting for projects that would hardly begin to pay off until they have long been in their graves. The reason... is that in the context of collective decision-making people operate on the basis of

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192 Elster, Foundations, 111
social ethical preference functions rather than upon their private egoistic ones.\textsuperscript{193}

The point here is that individuals tacitly understand and act upon a conceptual difference between private, market-oriented expression and expressions that enter a larger social decision calculus. As previously noted, other-regarding effects of private expression in the marketplace only materialize \textit{ex post} private satisfaction. In the social decision process, however, the effects of the decision are at least minimally established\textsuperscript{194} \textit{ex ante}, which changes not only the individual’s formation and expression of preferences, but also the meaning of those preferences once expressed. Accepting this view would appear to include acceptance of the notion that the marketplace and the political state are substantively different. Elster summarizes, “the core of the theory, then, is that rather than aggregating or filtering preferences, the political system should be set up with a view to changing them by public debate and confrontation.”\textsuperscript{195} This set up implies that speech in the marketplace is supposed to be supervised by speech in the political state, which, in turn, implies that the two types of speech are worthy of, to some degree, different definition and legal treatment.

To this point, I have illuminated some important similarities and differences between the marketplace and the political state. I have shown how those characteristics might effect the treatment of

\textsuperscript{193} \textit{Ibid}, 91
\textsuperscript{194} As Goodin notes, people vote on projects that will produce effects significantly downstream. This is only possible because some illustration of the projects consequences is established beforehand.
\textsuperscript{195} \textit{Ibid}, 112
individual expression in each realm. Now, the task is to decide exactly how money enters into the equation, and establish a formal conclusion regarding the subject.

III. NON-IDENTITY OF MONETARY AND POLITICAL EXPRESSION

Lurking in the background to this point is Hellman's original objection. Does the amplitude of political symbolism and expression outweigh that of monetary speech enough to warrant differing legal treatments? A strong iteration of her argument holds that “Wearing black armbands, conducting a sit-in by blacks in a ‘whites only’ area, and wearing military uniforms in the context of a presentation each carry a specific meaning or message, while the giving of money does not.”

As previously noted of Hellman's objection, the problem being uncovered is that money, unlike symbolic gestures or even individual words, has its meaning defined by spatial and temporal relations more directly. In this sense, Hellman might well agree with Goodin's distinction between private, egoistic preferences and social-ethical preferences due to his acknowledgment of those spatial and temporal differences. On one hand, money is the medium of exchange for private, self-regarding preferences. Therefore, any one particular exchange of money is going to mean something unique and intransitive to the meanings of other exchanges performed by other private parties. This is an integral characteristic of the nature of the marketplace. On the other hand, because social decisions involving the political state force a collective revaluation of preferences and are understood to have far more concrete and inclusive downstream consequences, speech expressions

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196 Hellman, *Money Talks*, 969
regarding such decisions require a degree of spatial and temporal persistence that private, monetary speech simply does not obtain.

The combination of Hellman's objection with Goodin's view of the collective decision process make a compelling case against treating monetary expression the same as political expression. However, Elster provides two important perspectives contrary to this view by questioning whether 1) “the body politic as whole is better or wiser than the sum of its parts,” and 2) “the need to couch one's argument in terms of the common good will purge the desires of all selfish arguments.” The first objection challenges the belief that individuals acting out of self-interest will necessarily produce an inferior political system than one in which individuals are more cognizant of the other-regarding consequences of social decisions. If we were to accept this objection, it could be said that money as political speech might theoretically produce a better political landscape than one in which such egoistic expressions were minimized. This fundamentally challenges the idea that the aggregate of individual preferences is inferior to Goodin's social decision calculus. The second objection reminds us of scenarios in which decisions supposedly related to a common good are voted on out of pure self-interest. For example, I might vote against the imposition of a local tax on fatty foods simply because I do not want to pay more for fatty foods, not because I care at all about others’ ability to pay for fatty foods in the present or the future.

The first objection, however, is irrelevant if we accept Goodin's preference laundering theory. Since each individual is instinctively re-ordering her

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197 Elster, *Foundations*, 116
198 Ibid, 118
preferences in preparation for the social decision making process, the political state doesn’t have to be better or wiser than the sum of its parts in order for there to be a distinction between it and the aggregate of private, egoistic preferences. The state is distinct from that aggregate precisely because the sum of its parts’ behavior – re-ordering private wants and preferences in preparation for something ‘bigger than the individual,’ so to speak- indicates the distinction. Furthermore, if money is treated as a primary medium of speech and exchange between the political state and the individual, it is unlikely a ‘better or wiser state than the sum of its parts’ is logically achievable. For the state to be better and wiser than the individuals who comprise it, those individuals must appeal to a forum for expression bigger than themselves.

The second objection is more problematic. How can Goodin’s theory be accepted if it is shown that individuals frequently act without regard for others even in the social decision making process? If people make social decisions egoistically, then it might be acceptable for the egoistic expressions of money to be accepted in the political state as well. This objection is diminished when we consider the type of decision being made. Even if an individual decides based on her own egoistic preference, the fact remains that she is still being asked to evaluate two or more answers to a collective question. Offering a private, egoistic expression does not mean that a more other-regarding option was not evaluated. In the collective decision process, “the citizen is asked to express [her] preference over states that also differ in the way in which they affect other people.”199 In some situations, the individual’s preference re-ordering in preparation for collective choice may result in the same ordering of

199 Ibid, 111
her purely egoistic preference. This does not mean that the individual did not consider other-regarding options, and thus does not mean that the distinction between the aggregate of egoistic preferences is not distinct from the political realm.

CONCLUSION

The popularized argument that ‘money is not speech’ is flawed. Money exists as a medium of exchange for desires, preferences, and sentiments in many similar ways as symbolic gestures and languages. However, this does not mean that speech in the marketplace and speech in the political state can or ought to be offered the same treatment. By contrasting the spatial and temporal dependencies of monetary expression with the persistence of meaning in mediums such as symbolic gesture and language, and applying that distinction to Robert Goodin’s dichotomy of private, egoistic and social-ethical decision processes, I have shown that money may not be worthy of the degree of legal protection and ascription of rights afforded to traditional conceptions of political expression. In practice, this does not mean that money cannot ever be used in political discourse. Certainly, candidates and groups should be able to finance the production of campaign stickers and signs. However, we must ask when and for what purposes a disbursement of money should be protected by legal mechanisms such as the First Amendment. My argument is merely a foundation upon which more exact discussions pertaining to such legal and ethical treatment of political finance in particular cases could be based.
C. Moose Wylde—The Story of Our Body: A Phenomenological Approach to the Body as a Narrative and Results of The Body Being Different From The Narrative

The tradition of Phenomenology begins by questioning what we can know and the way we can know. It rejects objective knowing and demands that we accept our subjectivity as the starting point for knowledge. Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Iris Marion-Young move subjectivity from a detached conscious subjectivity to an embodied subjectivity. I will begin this essay in section 1 by telling a story about how we come to know about our own body. In section 2, I will present a case which shows the danger inherent in this method of understanding our body. Finally, in section 3, I will discuss four specific negative results of a person whose body is different from the story she has been told about it.

I. How do I come to know my body?

"Truth here comes down to being, being-real" - Martin Heidegger

In exploring the methods with which we come to know our own body, several writers have given us different starting points. Merleau-Ponty writes, "we must recognize a kind of inner diaphragm which determines... what our reflexes and perceptions will be able to aim at in the world, the area of our possible operations, the scope of our life." This way of being-in-the-world is the first understanding of body that I will show. Iris Marion Young counters this deterministic perspective in her essay "Throwing Like a Girl." According to Young, even our first-person understanding of our body is shaped by stories we are told about our body. She shows how even very young girls

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200 Heidegger p.277
201 Merleau-Ponty p.429
understand the capabilities and limits of their bodies through a social construction of femininity. As I begin to explore my body, I cannot know all of which it is capable, and rely largely on observations of others as well as stories that I am told about what my body is capable of.

What of our modern medical science, then? In our age of scientific understanding, we have a huge amount of knowledge about how the human body functions. The best the medical institution can provide for us, however, is a tale about how my body should function. It does nothing to tell me of how my body functions. Perhaps I have any number of conditions which make my body an exception to this normative tale. Does this mean that my body is broken or wrong somehow? In order to know whether my body conforms to the normative tale, I have to know all of the facts relating to my body. Even if it were possible to do so, it would only be relevant for that moment in time. My body is ever changing. The moment after that full analysis is complete, it will be no longer true. Trends can be extrapolated based on how other bodies have behaved in similar conditions, but that extrapolation is a subjective judgment by a person who brings bias, history, and culture into that understanding. In the end, I receive yet again a social tale about the “facts” relating to my body.

Given the ambiguity of biological facts about the body, that my body is ever changing and that there is no specific essence or deterministic inner diaphragm, I return to the question which opened this section. How can I know my body? I will pose a list of ways, yet each method of knowing cannot be separated from any other. The interconnectedness of our bodily experience creates a living story in which we are the main character. This living story is a socially constructed dialogue which involves many voices other than my own.

The first voice in this dialogue is my own. I use my own body to move throughout the world and learn about how my body works. I learn about how high I can reach or how long I can hold my breath. I explore how my body responds to sexual arousal and how much I can eat before feeling sick. I want to
stress that this exploration happens within a socio-cultural context within this epoch. My explorations are colored by my environment and the people within it, and even the sorts of things which I try to do to explore my body are influenced by other people.

This method of inquiry allows me to add my voice to the living story of my body through first-hand experience. Other voices often drown out my own voice when I speak of my own body, however. The tall, muscular boy is told he isn’t trying hard enough when he cannot lift a weight which another boy of similar body can lift. The girl who is short of breath during gym class is “simply out of shape” compared with other girls who can run further. These are society’s assumptions rather than listen to the accounts of spinal pain from the boy or asthmatic symptoms from the girl. Our society has improved on this tendency over the years, especially with children, but it still remains a prejudice to make assumptions about a person’s body via comparison to other specific bodies or to what Merleau-Ponty calls the “customary body.” Merleau-Ponty’s customary body represents an aggregate of our own bodily experience as well as our experience with other bodies.202 As we perceive other bodies and their capabilities, we project that image onto our own body and wonder about the differences. Are they like me? Do they move like I do? Does theirs work like mine does? Should they?

The second conglomerate of voices which contribute to the dialogue of this living story of my body are those of specific individuals. In their specificity, they interact with me as an individual rather than as a member of a social category. These individuals know me personally. They perceive and react to my body and I to theirs. They communicate to me their perception in words and actions, and these words and reactions forge a strong voice in the dialogue of the living story of my body. My friends, lovers, family, and trusted acquaintances all relate to me as I am embodied. I am also able to perceive the way they

202 Merleau-Ponty p.431
speak of and interact with other bodies. These interactions teach me about my own body as I perceive interactions with those who I assume to be similar to or different from me. The primacy of this group of voices rests in the way that I trust these people. I expect that they have my best interests at heart and are being honest with me when they are relating tales about my body to me.

They are limited in their understanding of my body, however. They simply do not experience my body in the way that I do. Their only recourse in speaking of my body is to relate my body to their own, others they have perceived, or to an aggregate “customary body.” They grasp an abstraction of me, and then reflect it back to me. I then add their voice to the living story of my body, trusting that their experience gives validity to the tale they have to tell. Iris Marion Young speaks eloquently of this phenomenon in discussing the way that girls are taught about their bodies. She writes, “Women in sexist society are physically handicapped. Insofar as we learn to live out our existence in accordance with the definition that patriarchal culture assigns us, we are physically inhibited, confined, positioned, and objectified.” The dialogue about our bodies changes the way we physically act, and the voices given us by those we trust are very influential within the story of our embodiment.

The last group of voices which I will discuss here are the voices of those whom I do not know, who I do not trust to have my best interests at heart, yet whose perceptions of me and interactions with me write themselves into the story of my embodiment and onto my very body itself. Put simply, I come to know my body in the ways that society at large relates to me. Though certain isolated instances can profoundly impact the story of my body (such as assault or a misguided attempt at modeling), I am speaking mainly of a preponderance of experience in the way I am perceived and related to. These preponderances of experience fall into what Young calls “social

203 Young, Throwing Like a Girl p.42
institutions” and represent large-scale treatment of certain types of people. While these institutional experiences are made up of individual reactions, “their form and the ways they constrain and enable cannot be reduced to effects of particular interactions.” These institutional voices add to the story of my embodiment by telling me what I can and cannot do, where I can go, what opportunities I have. I wear certain clothing, accentuate certain physical characteristics, and style my hair according to these social institutions.

At the end of all of this, I am left trying to understand my body amidst a cacophony of voices explaining myself to me. The story of my body is constructed often without my consent yet I commit to it. The story about my body is alive because it changes and grows with me. It is influenced by a multitude of factors which I cannot even name in entirety and shows me the futility in searching for deterministic biological facts about myself. I commit to this story because it is my way of knowing myself. It writes itself onto me as I diet to avoid unhealthy consequences, express my gender as I am told I should, and even expect others to do the same. This is not simply a psychological portrayal, however, it becomes a biological one. Told that I should have had children by this point in my life, I experience a physical anxiety as I wonder about my validation as a member of my sex. My body is conditioned through what I should and should not eat, reflecting a lifestyle committed to the story of my embodiment. To stop playing my part in this story is to deny this body which we have all created, to experience an existential panic as I lose myself in the attempt to recreate a new dialogue about what my body has become now.

II. What happens if the story is wrong?
“We teach our children to respect the differences in others, yet adults create a state of emergency over the size and shape of genitals.”

204 Young, Lived Body vs Gender p.20
205 Morris, Beyond the Monologue p.11
"Mayer-Rokitansky-Kuster-Hauser Syndrome is a condition that involves congenital absence of the vagina, fallopian tubes, cervix, and/or uterus. Some women have uterine remnants, or horns. External genitalia are normal. Chromosome karyotype is 46XX (normal female). The incidence rate is approximately one in 5,000." Further, "most times, the condition isn’t diagnosed until puberty, when the teen notices she hasn’t started her period and seeks medical advice." This teen has grown into her own story of embodiment. She has learned to use and shape her body and interacts with social institutions at large accordingly.

Perhaps her story involves a traditional family with a rich meaning of motherhood. The older women in the family are very involved in training the younger girl how to conduct her own family one day. Conscious of her own body, she eats well and wears clothing to accentuate what she finds (and has been told) to be her most attractive features. She experiences anxiety (a physiological and psychological experience) over getting her period. She is surrounded by sexual discourse from peers and authorities, giving her advice, normative tales, and expectations. She experiences desirous affections from others, and wonders what losing her virginity will be like. Will it hurt? Will it mean that the person she has her first sexual encounter with accepts her and loves her? As she nears completion of high school, she begins to apply to different universities and considers joining a sorority.

All of these interactions reflect her embodiment and the story she has been told about her body. Every one of these actions she takes, thoughts, emotions, and physiological experiences are a result of the story she has been given of her embodiment. It is not enough to suggest that she is an actor or is somehow performing her part in the story. It has written itself onto her body and being. Perhaps her story is different from this one. Perhaps she grew up in a poor family in an

206 Morris, The Missing Vagina Monologue p.1
207 Boston Children’s Hospital web
economically depressed area. Violence is never far and a large part of her embodied story is the vulnerability she feels when alone and the ways she compensates for that. Each and every girl experiencing MRKH has a unique story of her embodiment, but all of them include ideas on womanhood, sexuality, gender, and reproduction. Those themes are necessarily part of her story given our society and its treatment of women.

III. Retelling the body’s story

“My body’s nobody’s body but mine. You run your own body, let me run mine!”

In realizing that her particular story of embodiment does not account for her body as it has been given to her, she is confronted with an existential crisis. Her being exists at odds with itself as she struggles to retell her own story. She finds herself in conflict with all of the other voices who wish to contribute to her body’s story for, at the very least, she no longer trusts them. Yet she cannot live without them, cannot exist alone, and is forced to create some kind of story about herself to tell to others. Apart from her own bodily story, she must face down institutional expectations regarding her womanhood, sex, and gender. Sexuality remains a mystery, yet now a whole new kind of mystery as she explores herself. In her essay *The Missing Vagina Monologue*, Esther Morris writes,

Trauma. It spirals, touching down at different times in my life. In a scary way I hope it never ends. True, the conflict and shame I would be well rid of, but the presence of mind keeps me holding on, ever hoping to grasp or accept my origin of being.

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208 Alsop, *My Body*

209 Morris, *The Missing Vagina Monologue* p.1
Not only must she rewrite her own body’s story, but she must first objectify the story itself so that she can understand all of the ways that story has written itself on her. Iris Marion Young, writing on feminine bodily comportment, identifies three modalities of feminine motility as “an ambiguous transcendence, an inhibited intentionality, and a discontinuous unity.”

There is a lot more to be said than transcendence, intentionality, unity, and repression, but I hope that this contributes to our understanding of the (specifically social) challenges of those with MRKH and others who have to rewrite their own bodily story.

According to Young, the lived body begins in immanence, but finds “transcendence as pure fluid action, the continuous calling forth of capacities that are applied to the world.” Feminine bodily existence, however, is rooted in the world and in the body as object. It does not overcome this constant awareness of the body and is tied to it in immanence. The woman with MRKH experiences this ambiguous transcendence as a mode of feminine comportment, but yet again as she is rooted to her body in consideration of what it has become for her. It has become something new, though her biology has not changed. Thrust into a mode of uncertainty, she wonders constantly if her experience is through her unique body or if it is experienced by others as well.

Particularly in social situations, she is not free to transcend her body, but must question whether or not she belongs. Esther Morris writes that she has “been physically assaulted by women who presumed I was transgender and too active in the women’s community.” Her immanence is also profound when approached by amorous men. Does she have the right to return their affections, given they are driven by the assumption that she has a vagina and that they may desire (vaginal) sexual intercourse? What of amorous affection from

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210 Young, *Throwing Like a Girl* p.35
211 Young, *Throwing Like a Girl*. p.36
212 Morris, *The Missing Vagina Monologue* p.8
other women? Will they see her as something other than a woman when they discover her condition? A woman with RMKH was asked by a sexual partner, “Can’t you fix that thing?” This immanence prevents her from fluid action socially until she can thrust herself confidently into a world which does not understand her and approaches her with institutional assumptions about her body. Her transcendence depends upon whether or not she can create a story of her body which reflects her body as it has been given to her and then live confidently as she approaches her various projects in the world.

Both Merleau-Ponty and Young focus their discussion on physical bodily orientation, but I suggest that the way in which we orient ourselves socially also represents a valid and important intentionality. The story of our body is told socially. The way in which our body rises to meet others is then of utmost import. In the case of the body’s story being contrary to the way the body is given, one finds herself with an inhibited intentionality. For Young, “an uninhibited intentionality projects the aim to be accomplished and connects the body’s motion toward that end in an unbroken directedness that organizes and unifies the body’s energy.”

The social uncertainty of the woman with MRKH inhibits her “I can.” She feels uncomfortable interacting with social institutions which are markedly feminine, such as joining a sorority or changing in the girls’ locker room. She distances herself from older female relatives, avoiding judgment or pity for her inability to have her own children. Until her body’s story is retold in harmony with the way her body has given itself to her, her intentionality remains limited. Further, she begins questioning other bodily experiences, wondering if she may have weak kidneys or whether she is at greater risk for certain types of cancer, as some studies of women with MRKH have shown. Her every use of her body becomes an act of uncertainty as she works to retell her body’s story.

213 Morris, The Missing Vagina Monologue p.8
214 Young, Throwing Like a Girl p.37
Finally, Young speaks of unity. "Within the same act in which the body synthesizes its surroundings, moreover, it synthesizes itself." Understood within the embodiment of one whose bodily story does not reflect the body as it has been given, this unity becomes broken, discontinuous. The body finds itself at odds with the world physically and socially. Physically, the woman with MRKH will never experience her period, vaginal intercourse, or pregnancy, to name a few. Socially, she is no longer united in commonality with other women. She is unlike them, and they do not understand her. The body’s synthesis of its surroundings continues unabated however, and her otherness becomes a part of her body’s story. It writes itself onto her and expresses itself in her difficulty in finding belonging in a social group. Discontinuity becomes a mode of being for her. This can lead to a repression of her body as it has given itself to her and a clinging to her story-that-never-was.

In Merleau-Ponty’s “The Body as Object and Mechanistic Physiology,” he gives an account of repression in relation to embodied motility. He describes repression as “the transition from first person existence to a sort of abstraction of the existence, which lives on a former experience, or rather the memory of having had the memory, and so on, until finally only the essential form remains.” In the case of the individual whose story of her body is different from the way her body has given itself to her, she easily lives in a sort of repression. Her repression is a living in her previous story of embodiment. She mourns for a body she was never given, and lives in a story that is no longer. Perhaps she dates men but will never encounter them sexually. She may simply not share her full story of her body and continue to interact with social institutions as if her body were different.

In Merleau-Ponty’s discussion the repression in which the patient lives is fully present to the patient. The person with

215 Young, *Throwing Like a Girl* p.38
216 Merleau-Ponty *The Body as Object and Mechanistic Physiology* p.432
the phantom limb feels pain in that limb which does not exist. In many ways, the woman with MRKH is treated as though her body is similar to Merleau-Ponty's "customary body." Even those who know of her condition will contribute to this repression of her current embodiment. The never-was becomes currently-present as she plays a role in the story of embodiment given to her by society. In this modality, her transcendence, intentionality, and unity are fully present only so long as she avoids ever having to confront her current body as-given. Rather than tell anew the story of her embodiment and face the ambiguous transcendence, inhibited intentionality, and discontinuous unity and face all of the difficulties and challenges of that embodiment, she lives a never-was former-present which is comfortable and known to her. Each time she is presented with her current body as-given in a way she cannot deny, however, her story comes crashing down upon itself again and again.

I have shown some of the impact upon a person who's body is different from the story they have to tell about it. The secondary purpose of this essay is to raise awareness of MRKH. According to Esther Morris, "one in 5,000 is NOT that RARE."\(^\text{217}\) We also need to further explore how concepts of sex and gender relate to our treatment of women, and the ways in which the stories of our bodies are formulated. As we come to a more informed and healthy understanding of the stories of our bodies, we are in a better position to tell more accurate stories. We would also be in a better position to respond compassionately to those women with MRKH. Along with other recommendations in her essay *Beyond the Monologue*, she states, "Daily reminders that one does not fit into social or medical standards are emotionally exhausting. When one is treated as a threat to the culture, the burden may feel overwhelming. Patients need help in carrying that burden."\(^\text{218}\)

\(^{217}\) Morris, *The Missing Vagina Monologue* p.4

\(^{218}\) Morris, *Beyond the Monologue* p.13
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