The Proceedings of the Southeast Philosophy Congress is a publication of the Philosophy program at Clayton State University, collecting original undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate research presented at our annual Congress, hosted by Clayton State University. Authors retain full rights of publication to their materials.

The 2010 keynote speaker was George Rainbolt from Georgia State University, Chair of the Philosophy Department.
Contents
William Baird (Georgia State University) - Friends with Benefits: Epicurus on Friendship ................................................. 4
Steven J. Burdette (Eastern Kentucky University) - Scrutinizing Scruton: Is Film an Art Form? .................................................. 26
Anthony Fernandez (Eckerd College) - Being Depressed: A Phenomenological Investigation In Light of Heidegger’s Being and Time ........................................................................................................... 30
Douglas R. Fishel (University of Kansas) - Aristotle and Embodied Emotions .................................................................. 48
Dana Fritz (Eastern Kentucky University) - The Heat Is On: Dante’s Inferno vs. Tolstoy’s Expressionism .................................. 61
Georgi Gardiner (University of Edinburgh, UK; Northwestern University) - Defending Robust Virtue Epistemology .................. 66
Fauve Lybaert (University of Leuven, Belgium) - Is it essential to self-consciousness that I situate myself in an intersubjectively shared space and time? .................................................. 77
Benjamin W. McCraw (University of Georgia) - Epistemic Trust .................................................................................. 89
Amanda Mills (Georgia State University) - Locating Arendt in Inglorious Basterds ................................................................. 100
Isaac Payne (Emory University) - Heidegger’s Unveiling of Truth in Art and Pablo Picasso’s The Old Guitarist ......................... 110
Simone Cherie Perry (Savannah State University) - On Bertrand Russell: Where he falters in Christian Analysis ......................... 117
Paul Pheilsheiefter (Georgia State University) - How To Understand Posttraumatic Stress Disorder as a Natural Kind ....... 124
Corey Edwin Sawkins (University of Saskatchewan, CA) - Determining Underdetermination ................................................. 138
Robert Scott (University of Georgia) - Heidegger’s Poet, Haraway’s Cyborg, and the Future of Technoculture .................... 153
Michael Spicher (University of South Carolina) - Pragmatics as a Necessary Ingredient for Legal Interpretation .............................................. 165
Kyle Walker (Georgia State University) - Marx and Nietzsche on Ideology: Is There a Future for Communism? .............................................. 176
Zane Ziegler (Emory University) - In Praise of Evil .............................................. 189
General bibliography ...................................................................................... 193
William Baird (Georgia State University) - Friends with Benefits: Epicurus on Friendship

Abstract: Friendship and hedonism are both major components of Epicureanism. I attempt to relieve the tension that seems to follow from endorsing both of these. I argue that Epicurean friendships require caring about the well-being of one's friends, not merely treating one's friends well. I argue that the engendering of such friendships becomes a maieudic end – one that is satisfied by taking on a new set of ends. Thus, Epicurean friendships avoid any psychological doublethink that appears to follow from embracing friendships that require choosing to care about another's interests because doing so will further one's own interests.

Introduction
Friendship and hedonism are both embraced by the Epicureans. At the face of it, holding both of these to be vitally important to one's philosophy seems problematic, as a hedonist is generally understood to consider only one's own well-being, and friendship requires the consideration of another's well-being. The overall aim of this paper is to show that this tension in Epicureanism can be relieved.

Torquatus, the Epicurean spokesperson in the first book of Cicero's On Moral Ends, describes three different understandings of friendship that he says have been ascribed to the Epicureans. In the first of these, the one that is most plausibly attributable to Epicurus, seeking out friendships is

\[1\] I am not going to argue for this point, but for arguments supporting the position that one should attribute
motivated by hedonistic considerations, as friendship is sought solely because the greatest pleasure will be attained by doing so. However, this understanding of friendship also holds that Epicureans must love their friends at least as much as they love themselves. This gives rise to an apparent problem for this formulation of Epicurean friendship – I must love my friend in order to attain for myself the greatest amount of pleasure. There seems to be a serious conflict between ends in such a friendship. In this paper, I will argue that the Epicurean position on friendship is the following: one decides that one ought to pursue friendships by way of an egoistic utility calculation, but, once one has made the decision to embrace friendships, the pleasure of one’s friends must be valued to the same extent as one’s own.

The first two sections of this paper will be mostly exegetical, as I will describe the Epicurean views on pleasure and reason, both of which are vital to my project. Then, I will give an overview of the philosophical debate that surrounds Epicurean friendship. The more orthodox view is that friendship only requires treating one’s friend as well as one treats oneself. To the contrary I will argue that the requirement of loving one’s friend as much as oneself should be understood as requiring that one actually care about the well-being of one’s friend. In order to do this, I will use a thought experiment to show that living in a community where everyone truly cares for the well-being of

---


---

everyone’s friends is the best stage for a tranquil life. As such, a community of this kind is what the Epicureans should have attempted to instantiate. Finally, I will argue that the engendering of such a friendship becomes what David Schmidtz has termed a maieudic end, rather than merely an instrumental end to achieving one’s own pleasure. Understood this way, Epicurean friendship will be seen to avoid the psychological doublethink that may appear to be required in embracing a friendship that requires truly caring about a friend because doing so will further one’s own interests.

**Epicurean Pleasure**

Epicurus holds a pleasant life to be the telos, that which is valued as an end in itself – an end that is not a means to any further end.\(^3\) Also, while all pleasure is good, pleasure is not always choice-worthy, as it is sometimes necessary to choose to undertake some pain with the anticipation that greater pleasure will result in the long-run. Likewise, one must sometimes choose to forgo some pleasure, with the foresight that embracing this pleasure would inevitably lead to a more intense, painful state.\(^4\) Epicurus’ notion of pleasure is developed further by making two key distinctions between types of pleasure: kinetic and static pleasures that differ in kind, and bodily and mental pleasures that differ in degree. The following chart sorts out the different pleasures along these lines:

\(^3\) Ibid., Book I, 42.

TYPES OF PLEASURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kinetic</th>
<th>Static</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Titillation of the senses or the process of fulfilling a desire</td>
<td>Not being in bodily pain, which includes having all desires fulfilled (aponia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joy of reflecting upon past, present, or future pleasures</td>
<td>Having confidence in being free from pain in the future and no regrets of the past (ataraxia)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kinetic pleasures are those arising from 1. the titillation of the senses, such as tasting something that is pleasantly sweet, 2. being in the process of fulfilling a desire, such as being in the act of eating barley cakes to sate hunger, or 3. joyful reflection on some past, present, or future pleasure, such as remembering how good those barley cakes really were. These pleasures are active, in the sense that they involve some movement of the senses or the mind. Kinetic pleasures, which are understood by some to be hedonism’s highest good, are taken by the Epicureans to be subordinate to static pleasures (which are also called katastematic pleasures).

---

5 This chart is adapted from Tim O’Keefe, Epicureanism (Durham: Acumen, 2010), 118-120.

6 While “movement of the mind” may sound odd to some, the Epicureans believed the mind to be composed of atoms, so describing it as undergoing “movement” is actually quite accurate.

Static pleasure is a different kind of pleasure than kinetic pleasure. Static pleasure is being in the passive state of lacking pain, and, like kinetic pleasures, static pleasures come in both bodily and mental forms. Aponia, or lacking bodily pain, is straightforwardly defined - one is in aponia when she is not currently feeling bodily pain. Aponia is the conjunction of not having throbbing limbs, nor suffering the pangs of hunger, nor having unsatisfied desires, and so on for every bodily pain. Ataraxia, which is often translated as “tranquility,” is understood as lacking mental pain, and this type of pleasure is not as straightforward as the others. Torquatus claims that ataraxia is the “highest pleasure.” Ataraxia is the lack of “regret, fear, and anxiety” that arises from the conjunction of not being in distress over one’s past, being confident that one will be in the state of aponia in the future, and not fearing death as something evil. Ataraxia is supposed to be the utmost limit of pleasure, so it is of a higher degree than aponia.

In addition to the distinction between kinetic and static pleasure, the Epicureans also distinguish between mental and bodily pleasures, a distinction that I have already spoken of indirectly. Bodily pleasures are those that are tied to one’s body, such as the pleasurable sensation arising from tasting good food (kinetic) or the pleasurable state of not currently experiencing hunger (static). Mental pleasures, on the other hand, arise from reflection on past and present pleasures (kinetic), and in being

---

8 For the Epicureans, all pain is kinetic.
9 Cicero, Book I, 38.
10 O’Keefe (2010), 120.
confident that all future desires will be fulfilled (static).\textsuperscript{11}\n
Furthermore, Torquatus claims that “mental pleasure and pain may be much greater than bodily pleasure and pain,”\textsuperscript{12} and Epicurus is famed to have written that the joy of reminiscing about past pleasurable discussions with a friend (a kinetic mental pleasure) overshadowed and canceled out the “unsurpassed” bodily pain he was feeling while dying from kidney disease.\textsuperscript{13} The fact that mental kinetic pleasure can overshadow bodily pain will play a key role in one of my later arguments.

Understanding these different types of pleasure is necessary in order to understand Epicurean friendship. Friendship, for Epicurus, is supposed to be indispensible in the pursuit of ataraxia because it gives us the confidence that, in the future, our friends will help us satisfy our then-present bodily needs, and thus, in the future, we will be more likely to attain aponia.\textsuperscript{14} But, more on this in a moment.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{11}Cicero, Book I, 55.
\item \textsuperscript{12}Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{14}Cicero, Book I, 66.
\end{itemize}
Epicurean Reason

Epicurus has an instrumental conception of reason. Its function is to determine which beliefs and actions will bring us to the state of lacking pain – aponia and ataraxia. He thinks a properly functioning reason performs “sober calculation which searches out the reasons for every choice and avoidance and drives out the opinions which are the source of the greatest turmoil for men’s souls.” Reason is an instrument that, through proper use, will rid our lives of unnecessary bodily and mental pain.

Epicurus thinks that we should use reason to determine which ends, if pursued, will result in the most pleasant life. Reason bids us to weigh all the foreseeable pains and pleasures associated with each set of ends under consideration, in order to determine which ends, if chosen, will enable us to attain the state of painlessness in body and mind. For Torquatus says, “Nor again is there anyone who loves pain or pursues it or seeks to attain it because it is pain; rather, there are some occasions when effort and pain are the means to some great pleasure.”

---


16 Epicurus does not explicitly distinguish between necessary and unnecessary pain, but, as briefly mentioned in the last section, he implies that there is such a distinction in his acknowledgment that some pains should be undertaken in order to secure greater pleasure or avoid greater pain. These pains are what I refer to as ‘necessary,’ as they are required to reach the desired end. See Diogenes Laertius, “Letter to Menoeceus,” 10.129.

17 Cicero, Book I, 32.
David Schmidtz’s discussion on choosing ends in Rational Choice and Moral Agency is helpful in clarifying how this works. Schmidtz claims that there is a “distinction between pursuing a final end (which by definition we do for its own sake) and choosing a final end (which we might do for various reasons).”

Applying this to Epicureanism, we pursue our final ends because they are good in themselves, or their attainment brings us pleasure. However, my choice of which final ends to pursue is going to be based on some reason other than simply that the result of achieving my final end will be pleasant, as satisfying any end brings me pleasure on the Epicurean account. Thus, if my reason is functioning properly, I will see that the final ends I should choose are those that allow themselves to be easily achieved and that are necessary for continuing a pleasant life.

Epicurean hedonism acknowledges that, while our final end is always that which is pleasant, we can seek or desire harmful pleasures if we lack the foresight and understanding that we must sometimes make sacrifices so as to bring about a greater confidence that we will avoid future dangers. For “those who do not know how to seek pleasure rationally great pains ensue. ... [P]leasures are rejected when this results in greater pleasures; pains are selected when this avoids worse pains.” Properly functioning reason allows us to see which ends, if chosen, will lead to a truly pleasant life. It shows us that the ends that ultimately allow confidence of our future security from pain lead to such a tranquil existence, and these ends are thus worth choosing. Therefore, we should embrace friendship because “[s]olitude, and a life without friends, is filled with fear and

---


19 Cicero, Book I, 32-33.
danger; so reason herself bids us to acquire friends."  
Determining the kind of friendship that is dictated by reason, 
that which will best free us from the fear and danger of solitude, 
is what is at issue in this paper.

**Epicurean Friendship**

One preliminary note on Epicurean friendship is that, since 
individual friendships are connected in a web of a communal 
network of friends, there is significant pressure from all in the 
community to act properly towards one's friends. Also, stepping 
out of line is thought to cause long-term pain that will outweigh 
any immediate pleasure gained by doing so.  

The strong communal pressure to follow through on one's commitments 
allows for one to be confident that one's friends are legitimate. 
According to the Epicureans, "[w]e cannot maintain a stable and 
lasting enjoyment of life without friendship; nor can we 
maintain friendship itself unless we love our friends no less 
than we do ourselves."  

The view that the Epicurean should "love" his friend at least as much as himself gives rise to a 
debate as to what exactly "love" means here. The general 
consensus among Epicurean scholars is that "love" refers to 
something other than caring about one's friend by valuing her

---


Brad Inwood and L. P. Gerson, 2nd edition, (Indianapolis: 
Hackett, 1997), XL.

22 Cicero, Book I, 67, emphasis added.
pleasure in its own right. However, I will argue that this view is mistaken, and that the Epicurean should actually care about her friend by taking her friend’s painless state to be valuable in itself. Before setting out to show that “love,” in regards to Epicurean friendship, should be understood as taking another’s final end as intrinsically valuable, however, I would first like to address an obstacle to such a reading put forward by Matthew Evans.

Evans claims that “the self-regarding attitudes prescribed by the egoist hedonism are incompatible with the other-regarding attitudes required of genuine friends.” He understands these other-regarding attitudes as consisting in the endorsement of “the valuation condition,” which is formulated as “if X is a genuine friend of Y, then X values Y’s well-being for its own sake, or for Y’s own sake.” The charge is that accepting this valuation condition is inconsistent with Epicurean hedonism because “(i)f each friend values the other for the other’s own sake, then presumably each would be disturbed by – and hence has grounds for worrying about – the other’s suffering, departure, or death.” Worrying about such things would

---

23 For example, O’Keefe argues that “love” must be understood behaviorally in order to maintain Epicurus’ hedonism. See O’Keefe (2010), 150.

24 Evans, 408.

25 Ibid.

26 Ibid., Evans is restating this supposed inconsistency that is originally put forward in Phillip Mitsis, Epicurus’ Ethical Theory: The Pleasures of Invulnerability, (Ithaca:
undermine the very reason for choosing to be a friend in the first place – having friends is supposed to help us to avoid worrying about satisfying our future needs. Having friends is not supposed to create new problems that cause us additional worry.

This objection is misguided. The Epicureans present a number of arguments aiming to establish that death is not bad for the person who dies. My friend’s death is not bad for her on the Epicurean account, so valuing her for her own sake will not lead me to worry about her death in this regard.

However, it may be argued that I will worry about my friend’s death because, since I genuinely care about her and have some sort of emotional investment in her well-being, I will be negatively affected by her death through the emotional pain it causes me. This objection also misses its target, as the Epicureans believe that “we have within us the capacity to bury past misfortune in a kind of permanent oblivion.” Thus, once my friend has died, I have the ability to blot out her memory and the emotional pain of losing her.

My friend’s death, it may be charged, is bad for me in a third way. If my friend dies, I will lose the security provided by her friendship. However, I have no more reason to worry about this because I value her intrinsically than if I did only

---


28 Cicero, Book I, 57.
instrumentally. The typical response to this worry is that I would likely have other friends whose friendship will allow me to maintain this security. Given these Epicurean positions on death, the acceptance of the valuation condition provides no reason to worry about my friend’s death.

As for Evans' claim that I will worry about my friend leaving me because of our emotional attachment, it seems that the ability to blot out memories of painful occurrences in my life will allow me to move on from my friend’s departure rather quickly. Therefore this departure is not something that will worry me to any significant degree.

Thirdly, to overcome Evans' charge that valuing my friend for her own sake will make me disturbed at, and thus worried about, my friend's suffering, I point out that this disturbance and worry is exactly what makes friendship worth choosing to pursue at all for the Epicurean. When I am in pain, my friend is supposed to share my suffering by being thoughtfully concerned about my well-being. This is what is desirable in friendship. If Evans' point is simply that my reaction to my friend's suffering should not be one of grief, then I see no problem here for friends accepting the valuation condition, as valuing my friend for her own sake does not necessitate that I will grieve her suffering. In fact, I will have the same reaction to her suffering that I do to my own – I will try to do whatever is in my power to remove her pain. There is no room in Epicureanism for me to pine away in grief over my own suffering, so valuing my friend in the same way I do myself does not require my grieving her sufferings.

Having shown that valuing my friend's ends for their own sake does not cause me a great deal of worry regarding her death,

---

29 "The Vatican Collection of Epicurean Sayings,” Vatican Saying 66.
departure, or suffering, I will now entertain the plausibility of an Epicurean friendship in which one values a friend’s ends in themselves.

**Why the Epicurean should prefer caring friendships**

Rejecting this valuation condition, both O’Keefe and Evans attempt to salvage Epicurean friendship by arguing that friendship for the Epicureans is simply not as committed a relationship as other understandings of friendship. Essentially, both sidestep a criticism put forward by Annas that, “If we treated friendship purely instrumentally, we would be allowing not friendship into our lives, but something else.” This point is cast aside in order to give what they believe is the best case for Epicurus. However, I will now attempt to give an opposing view of Epicurean friendship that is consistent with Epicurean hedonism and involves the acceptance of the valuation condition, and is thus more in line with traditional views of friendship. I will show that the utility-calculating reason of the Epicureans requires that one accept the valuation condition by taking on a new set of ends – the well-being of one’s friend. In light of Epicurus’ hedonism, I will now demonstrate that reason would bid the Epicurean truly to care about her friends, rather than merely to treat them well. A community where the valuation condition is accepted among friends will allow for its members to attain tranquility much more effectively than a community where the valuation condition is rejected.

---

30 The following thought experiment is inspired by conversations I have had with my friend, Robert Bass.

31 Julia Annas, 240. Evans explicitly acknowledges this objection and explicitly ignores it. See Evans, 409.
Suppose there are two similar communities comprised of Epicurean sympathizers. Friendship plays a prominent role in each community, but in community T, everyone embraces the understanding that friendship requires only that one treat her friends as well as she treats herself, and the valuation condition is rejected. In community C, on the other hand, everyone truly cares about the well-being of one's friend in addition to, and as much as, one's own well-being, thus accepting the valuation condition.32

Now, suppose Nikidion is an Epicurean, and she is deliberating about which community would be the most rational one to enter. What she prizes above all else, as any good Epicurean would, is her own aponia and ataraxia. So, her deliberation primarily consists in her determining which community will provide the greatest opportunity for her to attain these states. In this deliberation, Nikidion weighs the two options in regards to which one will be most effective at alleviating her fear of future danger and suffering.33

It seems that in ordinary cases of bodily needs, such as the need for drink or food, friends in both communities would act in the same ways towards their friends. If Nikidion is in need of food

32 I would like to point out that, when introducing the first kind of Epicurean friendship, in Cicero, Book I, 66, Torquatius states, “the pleasures which our friends experience are [not] to be valued in their own right as highly as those we experience ourselves.” To clarify, my view is not that a friend’s experience of pleasure is to be valued as highly as my own, but that a friend’s painlessness should be valued and pursued in the same way as I value and pursue my own painlessness.

to sate her hunger, and her friend has an abundance of food, then her friend will give her the food she needs to satisfy this natural and necessary desire. Presumably, if Nikidion considers extraordinary situations where her aponia will be threatened, similar actions will be undertaken in the communities to remedy a friend being in bodily need, but these outwardly identical actions will be motivated differently in the two communities. The following motivational differences will be found in almost all situations of aponia disruption, as the relevant differences between T and C that I am about to point to are ones of general motivation for helping a friend in need that follow from the different conceptions of Epicurean friendship in question.

If a lion enters T and begins to maul Nikidion, her friend will come to her aid. While it may not be in his immediate best interest to do so, Nikidion's friend will realize that failure to help in this situation will show onlookers that he is not

---

34 Epicurus distinguishes between natural and necessary desires, natural and unnecessary desires, and unnatural and unnecessary desires in Diogenes Laertius, “Letter to Menoeceus,” 10.127. He holds that limiting our desires to those that are natural and necessary, such as the desire for food simpliciter, is the best way to ensure that we avoid the pain that arises from having unsatisfied desires. Unfortunately, the desire for friendship does not fit very easily into any one of these categories. However, it is clear that limiting one’s desired ends is what Epicurus believes will lead to the most pleasant life. Given this, my suggestion that one should add the ends of his friends to his own may seem problematic. This is not so, though, because while my ends multiply by taking on those of my friend, the total number of ends in the community stays the same, and each end has multiple people working to make sure it is achieved.
trustworthy, and thus any security he has from his friends could be completely undermined. So, Nikidion's friend would help her escape the lion's attack because doing so will in fact be in her friend's best interest. Undertaking the unfortunately required action of helping Nikidion would be a necessary pain for her friend.

If a lion enters C and begins to maul Nikidion, her friend will likewise come to her aid. However, he will do so not because he feels external pressure from the community to maintain his loyalty to Nikidion, but because he actually cares about Nikidion's well-being, and he values her ends to the same extent he does his own. Her aponia is being interrupted by this lion attack, so her friend will jump in to try to stop the mauling because doing so will help Nikidion return to a less troubled bodily state, a state that her friend values. Thus, in C, Nikidion's friend will be motivated to help her, not because doing so will help him avoid ostracism, but because he values her pleasure to the same extent that he does his own, and he experiences a sense of joy in being able to aid her in returning to a more pleasant state.

So, the following question arises in Nikidion's deliberations about which community she should join: Which motivations are going to be most effective at furthering Nikidion's end of attaining her own aponia and ataraxia? The different motivations that drive people to help their friends in both T and C are not going to impact Nikidion's confidence that, were a lion to attack her, her friends would do everything they could to help, as the different motivations will lead to the same actions in most, if not all cases. So, there is no relevant difference between the communities in this respect. However, were Nikidion on the other side of the attack and were to have to help one of her friends who is being attacked by a lion, a significant difference arises between T and C. In both communities, again, the actions taken would not change in this situation, but the motivations for these actions would differ significantly. This
difference has implications for Nikidion’s ataraxia, as the different motivations are going to carry with them differing amounts of worry about the future.

Recall that the purpose of entering into friendships on the Epicurean account is that doing so will lead to being confident about attaining aponia in the future. This confidence of one's future painlessness is a major constituent of ataraxia. In both T and C, Nikidion will help her friend who is being mauled by the lion. However, in T, her doing so is motivated solely by her interest in her own well-being. Because of this, Nikidion has good reason to worry about having to help her friends in the future – helping may interrupt her own aponia. Scenarios like this are what lead J. M. Rist to conclude that “only a few [friendships] should be allowed to develop; [as] they are too demanding.”

The more friends she has, the higher the chance that she will have to experience pain in the future to help them. This facet of T-friendship leads to a very good reason for Nikidion to choose C instead.

Every friendship Nikidion forms in both T and C will significantly increase the chance that she will have to sacrifice her aponia to aid a friend in need. Thus, each friendship

---


36 Also, the fact that T would require a limit to the number of friends one has should call into doubt its viability as the actual Epicurean view on friendship. Nowhere in the Epicurean corpus is there mention of a “downside” to friendship. In fact, friendship is always mentioned as so unconditionally good, that one may be tempted to say that having a certain number of friendships is sufficient for tranquility.
provides good reason to worry about one’s ability to maintain one’s own aponia in the future. However, in C, Nikidion’s worry about the chance that her own future aponia will be interrupted in helping a friend is balanced out to some extent by the increased chance that her friend will be able to maintain aponia in the future, as she values her friend’s future aponia to the same extent she does her own. This reciprocity is not present in T. Thus, Nikidion’s worry about future aponia in T will be greater than that in C. This is a very good hedonistic reason for choosing to enter C rather than T.

Furthermore, in C, Nikidion would not have a negative attitude towards sacrificing her own aponia to help her friend, as the opportunity to help a friend will bring her joy. By helping to further her friend’s ends, Nikidion will also be furthering her own ends. Nikidion’s joy, a kinetic mental pleasure, will be able to balance out the bodily pain experienced at the claws of the lion in the same way that Epicurus’ joy overshadowed his excruciating pain as he was dying. However, in community T, this joy will not be available to counterbalance the pain inflicted by the lion, as joy will arise from self-sacrifice for a friend only if the valuation condition is accepted – the joy of helping a friend achieve aponia is only joyful insofar as her painless state is actually something that I value.

According to Plutarch, the Epicureans hold that “benefiting [others] is pleasanter than receiving benefit.” In C, this saying

37 See the earlier section on Epicurean Pleasure.

rings truest. Benefiting my friend simultaneously furthers my end, brings me joy, and helps secure my future aponia.

**Friendship as a Maieudic End**

While giving an overview of Epicurean friendship, O'Keefe argues that the following problems face the conception of Epicurean friendship for which I am arguing:

Either (i) the theory is inconsistent in how it describes the final ends of the Epicurean sage, asserting that the sage values only his own pleasure for its own sake and also that he values his friends and his friends' pleasures as much as his own. Or, consistently within itself, (ii) the theory ascribes an inconsistent set of motives to the wise person, making him suffer from a serious case of doublethink: the sage values his friends' pleasures as much as his own, while recognizing that he does so for the sake of his own pleasure, the only thing he regards as valuable in itself.\(^3\)

However, (i) and (ii) above are both mistaken because they take the end of fostering friendships to be an instrumental end to the final end of achieving pleasure. However, on my view, fostering a friendship functions as what David Schmidtz terms a maieudic end.

A maieudic end is one that is “achieved through a process of coming to have other ends.”\(^4\) When deliberating about which ends to choose, Nikidion does an egoistic utility calculation and finds that she should foster a mutually caring friendship (a calculation like the one above). Such a friendship requires her

---

\(^3\) O'Keefe (2010), 149-150.

\(^4\) Schmidtz, 61.
to adopt ends other than solely her own pleasure, namely, her friend’s pleasure as well. Once she has adopted her friend’s ends as her own, she no longer continues to pursue the maieudic end of fostering a friendship, as Nikidion has, in fact, already achieved the end of fostering a friendship. This end no longer structures her desires or guides her actions. Once a maieudic end has been achieved, it no longer impacts ones desires. Instead, Nikidion’s desires are structured and her actions are guided by the new set of ends she has adopted – to be a good, caring friend. Thus, the doublethink charge is no longer relevant.

Perhaps an analogous example of how this works will help clarify my point. Suppose I am a surgeon. As a surgeon, my end is to be a good surgeon. While the reason I chose to become a surgeon may have been to achieve the end of having a prestigious career as a doctor, as I saw this end as being in my best interest, this maieudic end disappears once I adopt the ends required of surgeons – I no longer pursue the end of having a career as a doctor because I already am a doctor, with a doctor’s ends. Likewise, while the reason I chose to be a friend to Nikidion may have been that I saw the end of becoming a caring friend as being in my best interest, this maieudic end is achieved and fades away once I adopt my friend’s pleasure as my own end. So, the problematic statement of doublethink expressed above must be amended to the less problematic “I care about Nikidion for her own sake, and doing so is in my best interest.” This seems to be exactly what happens once I have embraced a mutually caring relationship with a friend – while I can describe my friendship as being in my best interest, I am not motivated by this fact in the pursuit of my friend’s tranquility.
Is This Friendship Possible?

One may object to my position on Epicurean friendship by claiming that entering such a community may require Nikidion to enter into a type of friendship that, given Epicurus' psychological hedonism, requires giving more of oneself than is actually possible (similar to O'Keefe's [i.] mentioned above). In other words, it may be the case that, as Annas claims, “Epicurus can generate other-concern, but not enough other-concern for the agent to be prepared to accept great losses for the sake of other people.”

A similar objection is made regarding Pascal’s Wager as to the plausibility of forming a belief in God based on the utility calculation that such a belief is rational. The charge is that, contra Pascal, we cannot bring ourselves to believe something solely because of the benefits of doing so, and, contra my position, we cannot bring ourselves to take another’s ends as our own solely because of the benefits of doing so. However, as mentioned in the section on reason, Epicurus holds that we can believe something about the world solely because we recognize that doing so is in our best interest. Likewise, it seems that the Epicurean position that ends are choose-able, such that we can limit our ends to include only those that are natural and necessary, should give us reason to grant that the Epicurean sage can adopt another’s pleasure as her own final end. Nikidion finds that caring about her friend’s ends as she does her own is rationally required. This fact should be sufficient to motivate Nikidion to sacrifice her own immediate pleasure, if doing so would help a friend attain greater pleasure, out of genuine care for her friend’s pleasant state. Further evidence that such an adoption of ends is possible under Epicureanism is that Epicurus holds that one can cease fearing death upon

---

41 Annas, 243.
reason’s revelation that death is annihilation. Given these aspects of Epicureanism, it is not a far stretch to hold that Nikidion can overcome her initial desire for her own pleasure in order to pursue her friend’s pleasure in addition to her own, since this is required by a properly functioning reason.

### Conclusion

In this paper, I have argued that there is a case to be made for understanding Epicurean friendship as requiring the mutual valuing of each other’s painless state. While my argument has relied on some questionable empirical claims, all of which are explicitly endorsed by the Epicureans, I have been able to show that it is plausible that the Epicurean view of pleasure does require valuing a friend’s pleasure to the same extent as one’s own. Perhaps the Epicurean notion of friendship is not as foreign as is generally thought.

---

42 Lucretius, Book III, 830.
Abstract: In this essay I will attempt to show that film is a credible form of art while at the same time refuting an argument by Roger Scruton to the contrary. According to Scruton, the aesthetic nature of film is somehow ruined by the mechanical process of film making. I contend, however, that film is art because it uses devices similar to those employed in other forms of art and because it appeals to the audience’s experiences.

Compared to other forms of art like painting and music which have a long history, film is relatively new. Though we no longer debate if such artistic practices with expansive histories are credible forms of art, we still debate if film is even a form of art at all. In this essay I will attempt to show that film is a credible form of art.

An influential argument against film as art is proposed by Roger Scruton and reformulated by Murray Smith. Scruton argues that film is not art because “the fiction depends on the recording, visually and aurally, of an actual space and time.”¹ The implication of his argument is that the aesthetic nature of film is somehow ruined by the mechanical process of film making. Under this implication, film is reducible to merely an advance in technology incapable of producing a pure aesthetic experience.

The problem with such an argument is that it begs the question. I believe the simplest response is that film is provocative and can evoke our own experiences. Scruton contends that a scene in Gone with the Wind between Rhett and Scarlett in the world of Georgia is contingent on the depiction of Clark Gable and Vivien Leigh in a studio made to look like the south.

Scruton seems to be reducing the finished product to its construction and finding fault there. The creation of art is a process. Under Scruton’s definition we can no longer call music art unless we hear it live, since the recording of a piece is incapable of producing a pure aesthetic experience. By the same token, a painting is capable of producing a pure aesthetic experience in us only if we watch the painter paint. When we watch Gone with the Wind, we do have emotional responses. We do recall our own experiences because it appeals to our experiences in life. Scruton argues thus, “Before the imagination can arrive at its truth, it must pass through the world of fiction.” I fail to see how this is in any way a problem. Sure, when we watch a film we must go through the world of fiction, but how is this any different from a painting? If an artist paints a scene from a war realistically and creates faces in the mob without knowing any true identities of any soldiers involved, then that painter is creating a fiction that is striking in its lifelikeness and the painting is created in an actual space and time, but it does not meet Scruton’s criteria for being a work of art. If we accept this, then we must rethink not only film but also painting.

I believe that what makes film an art is really no different than what makes literature an art. The authors of great works of literature take words and create beautiful stories by being creative in their usage. If film were only the recording of events, then I would agree that it is not art. However, take for example the film The Godfather. Throughout the film oranges represent death. In reality, oranges do not represent anything other than oranges.

---


3 For this, I am referencing the first film only and with four specific scenes in mind. First, oranges are present when Tom Hagen is negotiating with Jack Woltz, who wakes up the next morning with a horse head. Second, Don Corleone plays with an orange moments before he dies. Third, Sonny Corleone drives past an advertisement for oranges before he is assassinated. Fourth, Salvatore Tessio is given an orange at
This type of visual metaphor and use of foreshadowing technique are employed as artistic devices to enhance the narrative. Scruton is correct that before we can arrive at truth we must pass through fiction. But he says this as if it were a liability. In fact, it is an advantage. Along with the oranges used by Francis Ford Coppola in The Godfather to represent death, the film also presents us with fictional characters. How is it that a crime family in 1940’s New York can resemble my own life? I believe that the construction of the film is an artistic one because I relate to the characters and the story even though I have no reason to. It appeals to my experiences.

There is still another, albeit less compelling, reason to show that film is a credible form of art. Our capabilities for capturing images have advanced throughout the years—from chiseling to sculpture to painting to photography to film. None of these has witnessed the rapid advancement that movie making has had. The length of time between The Birth of a Nation (1915) and Avatar (2009) is relatively short, but look at the technological advances developed between those two films. Because of this, some people are quick to argue that film is just an exercise in showing what we have accomplished technologically. Noël Carroll, as noted in the Murray piece, observes that the matter of film fulfilling artistic criteria given this constant change is far from settled.¹ I do not see the advancement of technology as something which necessarily undermines the aesthetic nature of film. Painters recently have enjoyed technological advances as well. The creation of the PC Tablet has enabled painters to work on their computers. They control the brush through a stylus, they work on a canvas through the tablet, and the finished product is something unique to a computerized painting. Should we then say that because of the method of production the artist employs, this painting is no longer art?


the beginning of the film at Connie Corleone’s wedding; he is murdered at the end of the film.
Despite the constant change film undergoes, that change is only superficial. The underlying reasons for why we should see film as a credible art form do not change. I do not argue that the sole criterion for something to be a work of art is that it appeals to our experiences, but I certainly believe that that is one of the most significant. It is difficult, perhaps impossible, to specify a set of criteria in full, in order to satisfy universal requirements for a film to meet before it is to be considered art. But this is true of all art. What, then, shall I conclude if I admit that no conclusion can be reached on the subject? I can only draw parallels, which I feel is sufficient. Just as writers and painters use objects to represent things that they do not, in reality, represent, so do filmmakers. This is an artistic device used within the context of trying to convey meaning or truth through the world of fiction.

In summary, film is art because it uses devices similar to those employed in other forms of art and because it appeals to the audience's experiences.

Steven J. Burdette
Steven_burdette@eku.edu
Eastern Kentucky University
Anthony Fernandez (Eckerd College) - Being Depressed: A Phenomenological Investigation In Light of Heidegger’s Being and Time

I. Introduction

In Heidegger’s magnum opus, Being and Time, he claims the being of Dasein (human existence) to be ‘care’. In order to test Heidegger’s existential analytic, a phenomenon that may stretch or even surpass the bounds of his analytic should be investigated. What psychologists today term major depressive disorder is a promising point of departure for this investigation, offering the most likely place in which a loss of ‘care’ may be found.

The primary purpose of this paper is to perform a phenomenological investigation of depression in light of Heidegger’s Being and Time in order to show that depression challenges Heidegger’s analysis of Dasein; that is to say, the being of a depressed person is not ‘care’. This is achieved by formulating an argument from the top down; the ontological structures that allow for experience will be articulated, rather than the physiological basis of experience, or what is experienced. First, it is shown that depression is not a state-of-mind, or mood, with an emphasis on the differences between depression and what Heidegger terms, “anxiety.” Second, from the analysis of depression and mood the argument advances to the structure of care; this argument shows depression cannot be founded in the structure of care as explicated by Heidegger. Third, it is shown that a depressed person’s loss of being as care is founded in a degeneration of the priority of the future in the structure of temporality.

A. Problem of Language

The major difficulty in the advancement of this argument is found in the limitations of our everyday language. This difficulty is separated into two parts. First, our language serves to describe a world that has already been
disclosed to us by a mood. That is to say, mood, as described by Heidegger, is more primordial than language; it serves as a groundwork for language. Thus, our everyday language speaks of a world that is colored, or disclosed, by a mood. Dasein’s language describes Dasein’s experience, and if depression is outside of what it is to be Dasein, everyday language simply cannot serve the purpose of describing it in a positive form.

This leads to the second point. If depression is described positively, it will always seem to manifest as a mood. This may best be explained through an analogy: Suppose a professor had to describe a Buddhist monastic community, but was only allowed to use Christian terminology. No matter how well he described the community and how completely he covered every detail, he would still seem to be describing a Christian monastic community. If you limit yourself to a certain language you will only be able to describe what that language is made for. For this same reason, what it is to be depressed cannot be described in a positive form; rather, depression can only be accurately described in the negative form. In each division stated above (mood, care and temporality), what is lacking from each structure in a state of major depression will be the central focus in performing the phenomenological investigation.

B. Investigation Through Breakdown

Dasein is, for the most part, absorbed in the world. In its everyday absorption, it is blind to the underlying structures that allow for, constrain and shape its experience. In order to show these structures explicitly, Heidegger examines situations in which some problem arises in regard to Dasein’s experience. Heidegger performs much of his analysis of Dasein by finding situations in which typical patterns break down, exposing the underlying experiential structure of the objects and situations, which only appears once Dasein has been pulled from its everyday absorption in the world. An example of this is found in how Heidegger makes the distinction between ready-to-hand and present-at-hand (an object that is ready-to-hand is one that shows itself as available for use while one that is present-at-hand is merely something we come across). In using the example of a hammer that suddenly breaks, or is found to be too heavy for the required task, the hammer is suddenly shown to the user as an obtrusive entity; at
this point it is made apparent that the object was ready-to-hand by seeing that this is no longer the case. When things are working in their typical manner, their ontological status is so close to us that we do not even notice it; a breakdown is often necessary to show the underlying structure of experience in an explicit manner.

This same method is used by Heidegger in his analysis of anxiety as the state-of-mind in which care is disclosed as the being of Dasein. As he shows, we are usually in a fallen state, fully absorbed in our world. In this state it is impossible to distinguish which phenomena come before and after (ontologically). In order to take a look at this structure of being-in-the-world, the relevance and significance of entities within the world must be stripped away and Dasein must be made to focus on its own being. Heidegger accomplishes this by using the phenomenon of anxiety which wrenches Dasein from its absorption, allowing it to take a step back from its worldly affairs. When the only thing that is relevant to Dasein is being-in-the-world itself, which is to say, Dasein itself, the structures that are still found are shown explicitly as being more primordial than those phenomena that were stripped from Dasein's experience.

The phenomenon that is still shown to be intact in a state of anxiety is the "ahead-of-itself-Being-already-in(the-world) as Being-alongside (entities encountered within-the-world)." This means two things. First, Dasein, even in the breakdown state of anxiety, is future oriented; Dasein's experience makes sense only with a priority in the future, rather than the past or present. Second, Dasein's future orientation always makes sense in regard to a here and now; Dasein always finds itself already in some particular situation. The situation Dasein finds itself in allows for a particular future orientation to make sense, but at the same time, the future orientation allows for the particular situation to make sense. The two parts, already being here while simultaneously being oriented towards a future, are part of one, indivisible structure. This structure, shown as the underlying core, the ontologically prior phenomenon which precedes and is the foundation for all other phenomena, is the being of Dasein.

---

Heidegger's method of investigating Dasein at points of breakdown in experience is used with this investigation of depression. Depression, like anxiety, is a point of major breakdown within a person's structure of experience; from this breakdown new insights may be gained.  

II. Depression and Mood

A. Description of Mood

Before delving into the differences between depression and mood, the phenomenon of mood must be adequately defined. A mood is the experience founded in the ontological structure Heidegger calls “state-of-mind.” Heidegger states, “A mood makes manifest ‘how one is, and how one is faring’.” But in making manifest how one is, a mood also makes manifest how one's world is. In other words, if I am frightened, the world shows itself as frightening; if I feel energetic and productive, entities around me show themselves as pertaining to tasks I may work towards and complete. A mood is, then, how one first comes to have a world that makes sense, and this world must make sense in a particular way.

Some Heidegger scholars may be able to shed further light on this phenomenon of state-of-mind, and the way moods come upon us. First, both Wrathall and Blattner choose to translate Befindlichkeit (state-of-mind) as “disposedness.” State-of-mind is, simply put, our way of being disposed to

---

2 As this investigation is phenomenological in nature, personal insights are used in describing the phenomenon of depression. In order to deduce the underlying experiential structure of a depressed person, a personal experience must be had from which to perform the deduction. Heidegger had to experience anxiety, fear and so on in order to deduce their foundations; in light of this fact I find using personal experience within the course of this investigation defensible.

3 Heidegger, Being and Time, 172.

4 Ibid., 173.
the world; and moods are specific instances of a particular disposition. These moods come upon us. They are not from inside nor from out; rather, “a mood assails us,” it comes over us without our complete control. Blattner describes this by stating, “phenomenologically, moods are atmospheres in which we are steeped, not interior conditions.” A mood opens up certain possibilities to us while closing off others. We are not necessarily aware of what is opened up and closed off because we are fully enveloped in a particular mood; if we could see what was closed off, it would no longer be closed off.

John Russon describes mood in the following lines: “Our moods are our ways into meaning, into developing a meaningful situation,” and, “Different moods are different interpretations of what we face...” As Russon explains, only through having a mood are we able to make sense of our world in any meaningful way. Each mood is in a sense a kind of interpretation or, rather, a pre-interpretation of our world; all interpretations are had within the context of the disclosure of the world through a mood.

Heidegger states, through a state-of-mind “Dasein constantly surrenders itself to the 'world' and lets the 'world' 'matter' to it...” This “surrendering” is an important aspect of mood. Mood is not a subjective view of one’s world; it is not a free choice. Rather, moods are an aspect of Dasein’s unfreedom, one of the ways in which it has to be.

---

5 Mark Wrathall, How to Read Heidegger (W. W. Norton & Company, 2006), 32.

6 Heidegger, Being and Time, 176.

7 William Blattner, Heidegger's Being and Time (Continuum International Publishing Group, 2006), 77.


9 Heidegger, Being and Time, 178.
A state-of-mind can also be described as a mode of affectivity. While a mood does govern how Dasein finds itself in its world, it also governs how this world may affect Dasein in its progression into other moods or in maintaining its current mood. Heidegger himself describes this phenomenon of affectivity as a part of mood in the following lines:

...only because the 'senses' belong ontologically to an entity whose kind of Being is Being-in-the-world with a state-of-mind, can they be 'touched' by anything or 'have a sense for' something in such a way that what touches them shows itself in an affect. Under the strongest pressure and resistance, nothing like an affect would come about, and the resistance itself would remain essentially undiscovered, if Being-in-the-world, with its state-of-mind, had not already submitted itself to having entities within-the-world “matter” to it in a way which its moods have outlined in advance.10

A mood is, then, a particular disposition in the face of Dasein's world, governing how Dasein may be affected, and how things can matter to Dasein in reference to its possibilities. Also, as expressed in the above quotation, if a person is in fact without a mood, then this person could not be affected and, thus, could not have anything matter to him in any meaningful or significant way.

B. Depression as Moodlessness

As shown above, to be without a mood is to be without affectivity. Does depression seem to be the phenomenon of the loss of affectivity, the loss of the ability to have things matter? If depression is in fact a mood, there are two names under which it may have been discussed within the context of Being and Time. These names are “hopelessness” and “anxiety.” In the subsequent analysis of hopelessness and anxiety it is shown that depression is only confused with these two moods as a result of attempts at positive descriptions of depression.

10 Ibid., 177.
Heidegger states, “Hopelessness... does not tear Dasein away from its possibilities, but is only one of its own modes of Being towards these possibilities.” A person who is hopeless sees possibilities before him and in these possibilities he sees negative outcomes; nothing good can possibly come from his current state. This is the phenomenon of hopelessness.

Suppose a person is overcome by hopelessness after finding out that he is failing one of his courses. His mood is affected by his knowledge of his failing grade as a result of this grade mattering to him. His previous mood allowed for this grade to matter to him, and in his current hopeless mood this grade continues to matter.

What about a person suffering from major depression, though? A depressed individual in the same situation as the hopeless individual would not be affected by a good or bad grade. Depressed individuals often cannot be helped in any way. No matter what is done, no matter what is offered, the depressed person cannot change, cannot rid himself of his depressed state. This shows a loss of affectivity on the part of the depressed person. In the case of the hopeless student who received a bad grade, this mood of hopelessness would fade as quickly as it had come if the student were to find out the grade was a mistake and he is in fact passing the course. In the case of a depressed person, a change in the grade would be of no consequence; the grade cannot affect the depressed person because the grade does not matter to the depressed person.

In sum, hopelessness is founded in the world mattering to a person who is in turn affected negatively by this mattering. Depression, on the other hand, while perhaps manifesting bodily to the outside viewer as a kind of hopelessness or sadness, is not built of the same structure. Depression shows a loss of affectivity due to a loss of mattering.

What about anxiety? Heidegger defines anxiety as the feeling of “not-being-at-home.” Dasein, when anxious, is pulled from its everyday absorption in the world. Entities within the world are seen as no longer relevant. With

---

11 Ibid., 279.
12 Ibid., 233.
entities stripped of their relevance, “…the world in its worldhood is all that still obtrudes itself.” For Heidegger, Dasein is synonymous with its world. Therefore, if the world obtrudes, Dasein obtrudes. The significance of removing the relevance of entities within the world is that Dasein is forced to become acutely aware of itself. In doing so, Heidegger is able to find what is still present in the structure of Dasein’s world, thus showing what lies ontologically prior to Dasein’s absorption with entities in the world. What Heidegger finds is that the structure of ‘care’ lies ontologically prior to, and is the foundation for, Dasein’s worldhood.

It seems that depression and anxiety do share certain qualities. The most striking similarity is the loss of relevance or significance of entities within the world. In depression it is in fact the case that entities lose their relevance, just as Heidegger says the relevance is lost in a state of anxiety. What is left, though, once the relevance of entities has been stripped? In anxiety, as stated above, Dasein is made to focus on itself. As Heidegger states, “the world as such is that in the face of which one has anxiety.” In other words, anxiety is about oneself. This is used to show that the center of care is for oneself, and only as a result is it for entities or others within the world. Heidegger states himself that “care for oneself is a tautology.”

In depression, though, the significance of entities within the world is not lost due to a focus on oneself. Rather, the loss of the significance of entities is derivative of the loss of significance of oneself. This will be shown further when depression is explained in reference to care.

To get a better view of just what this obtrusion of Dasein and its world is in a state of anxiety, an example of social anxiety may be helpful. While social anxiety is derived from Heidegger’s conception of anxiety, it still follows the same format, but in a more specific frame of reference. We have all had some experience of social anxiety, whether it be feeling uncomfortable in an

---

13 Ibid., 231.
14 Ibid.
15 Ibid., 237.
interview, or amongst a group of people we have not been previously acquainted with. When we become anxious in a social setting, what changes does our mood undergo, and where does our focus lie? We may believe that our focus is on the overwhelming significance of others, but this is not the case. Rather, in not being able to understand these others, in not being able to reference myself in terms of these persons I find in my world, my web of meaning breaks down. I no longer know how to act in reference to them. In this situation I become anxious, my focus is turned on myself and my not understanding myself within this particular social context. By saying that I do not see others as "relevant," I am describing the phenomenon of not understanding others in the everyday manner that I do. This is why anxiety has the ability to wrench us from the 'they', from our everyday absorption in the world. This is a moment of breakdown in experience, and one that Heidegger finds of the utmost importance in his investigation.

The major difference in these breakdowns is in a state of anxiety, entities and others do not make sense, but in this not making sense the inability to understand bothers the anxious individual. In a state of depression, entities and others do not make sense either, but the depressed individual does not care; the inability to understand is not bothersome.

What if we put a depressed person in the same social setting, though? The depressed person will probably sit in silence, not acting like the others who surround him. To these others he will seem much like the person who has social anxiety. But for him the situation does not cause him anxiety. He cannot be affected by this situation, or any other for that matter. The situation does not make sense to him, not because he tried and failed to understand it, but because he does not try to understand it in the first place. In having no care for himself, he cannot have care for others or the relations between them.

While Heidegger's conception of anxiety is surely not confined to a form of social anxiety as described above, the example of social anxiety does offer an easily understandable version of Heidegger's conception of anxiety. For the full, foundational form of anxiety which Heidegger speaks of, we need only extend the breakdown in significance of relation to others to relation to objects as well. In anxiety, Dasein's concern for entities and solicitude
with others falls through, leaving only the base structure of care, the tautological 'care for oneself'.

It may also be helpful to take a glance at a state of mild depression. The individual who suffers from long term, mild depression still has a full range of moods, but the intensity and duration of moods is limited, or muted. From this it is seen that depression is not itself one of these moods; rather, being depressed has an effect on moods. As a state of depression becomes more severe, the intensity of moods decreases as well, until the depressive patient eventually shows no ability to have a change in mood.

William Blattner also poses an argument which is in opposition to the above claim that anxiety is not depression. Blattner comes to the conclusion that what Heidegger is referring to with the term anxiety is actually a mix of anxiety and depression. From the above points given on the relation between anxiety and depression it should be seen that this is not the case.

There are a few points to be made in defense of this claim in reference to Blattner's work. First, Blattner makes the argument that the loss of meaning in entities within the world is a state of anhedonia, an inability to take pleasure in life. He seems to be arguing that the loss of interest in entities and others is depression. What is left, though, is care for oneself, the care shown explicitly through anxiety. Anxious Dasein still has the utmost care for itself, perhaps even more care for itself than when it was absorbed in the world. Depressed people have little to no care for themselves and their own well being. They do not care about life or death.

Blattner himself makes a reference in his book that can shed some light on just how depression is a deeper and more profound loss of worldhood than anxiety. Blattner states, "In some existentialist portrayals of anxiety the paraphernalia of human life loses its context: this thing before me no longer presents itself as a coffee mug and degenerates to a mere thing, a hunk of greenish stuff. This does not seem to be the sort of anxiety that Heidegger

---

16 Blattner, *Heidegger's Being and Time*, 141-142

17 Ibid., 141.
has in mind, however. I agree fully with Blattner in his claim that this phenomenon, which is described by Sartre in his novel, Nausea, is not what Heidegger is describing with anxiety. But Blattner is wrong in assuming that the Nausea described by Sartre is a form of anxiety. Sartre’s original title for the book was Melancholy (Melancholia). The phenomenon of melancholy is akin to something like depression, and is not at all a form of anxiety. Sartre’s imagery of the inability to interpret objects as anything more than a mass or shape is actually a visual analogy that describes the breakdown of one’s world in a state of depression, not anxiety. And, as can be seen, this phenomenon is more intense and more detrimental to one’s worldhood than anxiety.

III. Depression and Care

A. Description of Care

Heidegger’s investigation of mood, and specifically the distinctive mood of anxiety, was performed in order to show care as the being of Dasein. Some mention of care has been made in the preceding investigation of mood; this will be expanded upon in this section. Heidegger defines care as, “...ahead-of-itself-Being-already-in(the-world) as Being-alongside (entities encountered within-the-world).” The simple formulation of this definition is called thrown-projection. This means (1) Dasein always finds itself already situated within a web of significance and (2) this web of significance is founded on Dasein’s projecting possibilities. In other words, Dasein sees possibilities before it, and the world it already finds itself in makes sense in reference to these possibilities. Heidegger believes that these two parts, thrownness and projection, must always be found together. While we are able to speak of them as two separate parts of one structure, the structure must exist as a whole in order for it to make sense. Thrownness only makes sense in reference to Dasein’s projected

---

18 Ibid., 140.

19 Heidegger, Being and Time, 237.
possibilities, and projection only makes sense in reference to Dasein's finding itself already-in-the-world in a particular mood.

There is another aspect of the structure of care, though. Reiner Schürman states, “To speak in terms of 'care' is Heidegger's way of rephrasing the observation that Dasein is that being in whose being Being itself is always an issue, or always at stake. 'Care' means 'Being-at-stake', being an issue.”

Dasein is only able to be at stake because of its thrown-projection, which is its ability to have care. This is related to the “care for oneself” mentioned above. Care is always care for oneself, which is Dasein's being-at-stake.

B. Ontological Care and Ontic Care

It must be kept in mind that Heidegger's use of the term 'care' is not the care of our everyday language. In fact, when we speak of a feeling of caring, or concern, we are making reference to the ontic, or psychological feeling that is founded in our ontological state of being as 'care'. As Dreyfus states in Being-in-the-World, “...all ontic senses of caring are to be included as modes of ontological caring.” In the way that moods are the psychological manifestation of state-of-mind, feelings of concern are psychological manifestations, or modes, of ontological 'care'. Simply put, ontic feelings of caring are and must be founded upon Dasein's being as 'care'.

C. Depression is not Grounded in Care

Two issues show themselves in the dichotomy between depression and care. First, depressed persons have little if any care for their own well being, as well as little if any care for others and entities in their world. Second, if a depressed person is without a mood, then he is not capable of finding himself thrown into a world.

---

20 Simon Critchley and Reiner Schürman, On Heidegger’s Being and Time (Routledge, 2008), 92.

In regard to the first issue, it may be stated that the depressed person who does not care about himself does manifest the qualities of care, but through this structure of care he finds his own life worthless. This is an argument that arises from the issue of our everyday language mentioned at the beginning of this investigation. It will always be possible to describe a person as being in a mood, and thus having care. This is, though, an illegitimate way in which to describe depression. Some light may be shed upon the loss of the depressed person's being-at-stake once the issue of the loss of thrown-projection has been explained more fully.

If a depressed person is in fact moodless, he cannot find himself in a world. Not only will entities have no meaning, but the world itself will have no meaning either. It may be said that one's thrownness recedes; one does not find oneself already situated within a web of significance. The other part of care, projection, also recedes. The person does not see possibilities before him and feel sad or hopeless in reference to them. Rather, he sees no possibilities; he does not look ahead of himself; he cannot look ahead of himself.

In losing one's reference not only for what is in the world, but for the world itself, one does not have care. In depression, the structure of care has been annihilated. As a result of the loss of care, one cannot be-at-stake. In not being-at-stake, one cannot reach out with one's relations to others and objects. In not-being-at-stake, nothing is at stake, and nothing can be at stake. The depressed person does not have care, and thus does not have concern nor solicitude.

If it is in fact the case that in depression one loses the structure of care, the investigation must delve deeper into Heidegger's analytic to find how this loss of care can be established. This leads us into the next section of the investigation, the investigation of temporality.

IV. Depression and Temporality
   A. Description of Temporality
Heidegger claims in division II of Being and Time that temporality is the meaning of care.\textsuperscript{22} That is to say, temporality is the ontological foundation of the structure of care. More specifically, temporality with a priority in the future is the foundation of the structure of care. Much reference has been made to projection, or Dasein’s ahead-of-itself. This ahead-of-itself always implied some futural aspect to Dasein’s structure of experience, but it was never explicitly defined or formulated. In division II of Being and Time, Heidegger finally brings this all together, ending with temporality as the most primordial ontological basis for Dasein.

Heidegger states, “Projecting discloses possibilities – that is to say, it discloses the sort of thing that makes possible.”\textsuperscript{23} He then states at the end of the following paragraph, “When we inquire about the meaning of care, we are asking what makes possible the totality of the articulated structural whole of care, in the unity of its articulation as we have unfolded it.”\textsuperscript{24} In other words, Heidegger’s investigation comes to the point at which he must defend his claim that care is the being of Dasein by showing what the foundation for care is in the first place.

Heidegger states, “If we say that entities 'have meaning', this signifies that they have become accessible in their Being; and this Being, as projected upon its 'upon-which', is what 'really' 'has meaning' first of all.”\textsuperscript{25} In other words, what really has meaning, what the source of Being really is for Dasein, is this projection, which is itself founded upon temporality with a futural priority. Heidegger continues,

Entities 'have' meaning only because, as Being which has been disclosed beforehand, they become intelligible in the projection of that Being – that is to say, in terms of the 'upon-which' of that projection. The primary

\textsuperscript{22} Heidegger, \textit{Being and Time}, 371.

\textsuperscript{23} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{24} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{25} Ibid., 371-372.
projection of the understanding of Being 'gives' the meaning. The question about the meaning of the Being of an entity takes as its theme the 'upon-which' of that understanding of Being which underlies all Being of entities. As stated in the above quotation, the Being of any and all entities is founded in this futural projection. Things only make sense in regard to a future.

B. Depression as the Loss of Futural Projection

If having the being of care is having temporality with a futural priority, and depression is not grounded in care, then where is depression grounded? To say that depression is the complete loss of the temporal structure would be to go beyond what can be deduced from the information at hand. But what about an alteration in the temporal structure?

Dasein's temporality is made up of past, present and future, with a priority in the future. What if the priority of the future is taken away? This would result in a degeneration of the structure of care as based in the structure of temporality, causing a subsequent degeneration in every structure that finds its foundation in care.

Some insight into the loss of futural priority in the structure of temporality may be gleaned from J. H. van den Berg in his book, A Different Existence: Principles of Phenomenological Psychopathology. Van den Berg states, “For the patient suffering from morbid melancholy, particularly for the endogenous depressive patient, life moves very slowly. He sees everything jogging along laboriously; therefore, his body, too, moves slowly and laboriously. The world looks lifeless and withering; therefore, he feels tired, dull and inactive.”

Or, for an example of the most intense form of depression, van den Berg states,

---

26 Ibid., 372.

27 J. H. van den Berg, A Different Existence: Principles of Phenomenological Psychopathology (Duquesne University Press, 1972), 60
things are different for the catatonic patient. His time is different. He lives in another time. If he is asked what year it is, he might mention the year in which his psychoses began. He has not grown older since then; time stopped flowing. To him, no buds grow into flowers, nor is there a streetcar going from-to. Just so little is he aware of utility and purpose. It is useless to ask him the purpose of the flowers in the living room. Every change or shifting of objects is meaningless, obscure, unnecessary, not really possible. Nothing really changes, no one really moves. All things are frozen in a sort of timeless space. That is what his world is like. The body responds to this world by not moving. The catatonic patient stands like a statue in a museum of oddities.  

From these quotations we can see two stages in the onset of depression. First, we see someone in a deep depression, but not yet in a catatonic state. At this level of depression, time is becoming difficult to understand, and from this difficulty, it becomes difficult to make sense of anything at all. Second, we see a full on catatonic patient. The patient is still able to respond to questions, to some degree, but the patient has no sense of changing time. The priority of the future has, in this case, been completely lost. As a result, the world is not something that makes sense at all; it can be said that there is no world there to make sense of. All significance has been lost.  

---

28 Ibid., 59.

29 The example of two states of depression brings up an interesting point. If one can proceed through stages of depression, with one’s world losing meaning to a greater and greater degree as one descends deeper and deeper into depression, then perhaps the degradation of the priority of the future is a gradual one. In other words, there should exist some gradient along which the priority of the future can progress, increasing or decreasing through various stages of depression.

If the catatonic state of a depressed individual is the complete loss of care, the complete loss of what it is to be Dasein, while a complete lack of depression is what it is to be Dasein, the mild and severe states of
We can see how depression is a loss of relevance for our world, ourselves and what is in our world, and all as a result of the loss of the futural priority in temporality. Where, then, must we say the phenomenon of depression is grounded? It is, perhaps, grounded in temporality, just as care is, but temporality without a futural priority. The depressed person has essentially lost his guide, that is, the future that brings forth his possibilities. He has no possibilities. He literally has nowhere to go and nothing to do. There is nothing.

V. Conclusion

What has finally been shown in this investigation? The structure of depression was picked apart from the top down, in parallel with the structure of Dasein as developed by Heidegger in his existential analytic. From this investigation it has been shown that depression does not fit within Heidegger’s conception of Dasein, but may still finds some basis in the temporal structure. Where do we go from here?

Depression, as defined negatively in the above sections, can now be expressed in its totality from the ground up. First, the loss of the priority of the future in the structure of temporality is, essentially, what we call depression. Second, this change in priority of the future does not allow for the structure of care to manifest; as a result, human existence can no longer be categorized as “Dasein.” Third, with the loss of the structure of care, no state-of-mind may manifest. Fourth, without the ability to have moods, a person cannot have things matter to him. Fifth, without a world in which things matter, a person cannot be affected experientially.  

Depression are examples of a middle ground, a place between Dasein and not Dasein. In showing that a single entity may be Dasein and not Dasein as well as varying degrees of Dasein, one must conclude that there is a more primordial foundation for human existence upon which both these extremes, and the varying degrees between them, are grounded.

In saying that a person cannot be affected experientially, I am not implying that objects and entities disappear, that nothing at all is seen
This still does not tell us what depression is. Only saying what it is not leaves open a wide range of what depression can be. The difficulty in defining depression in the same manner that Heidegger defined Dasein is this: Part of what it is to be Dasein is to understand itself, to gain insights as to its being. But depression does not allow for such insights. Where care allows for the world to show itself as a web of significance, each part making sense in reference to another, depression does the opposite. Depression does not allow a person to reach into any web of significance. It is not that the world makes sense differently in the deepest state of depression; rather, there is no world to make sense of in this state. There is literally nothing to describe, nothing to define.

With this the primary purpose of the investigation has been achieved. It has been shown that a person can have a being different from that of Dasein, at least in the state of depression.

or heard. Rather, the depressed individual will see people moving around, talking, going about their lives. The difference is that none of this experience will be filled with meaning. Events occur, but these events do not inform or alter the depressed person's sense of reality. If the depressed person is taken from one place to another and subsequently asked if there has been a change, he can reply, "yes." But the change for him is arbitrary at best. He will not act differently in either setting; he will not act at all.
Of all the topics related to cognitive science, research into the philosophical bases of emotions has received as much attention as any in the last twenty years. The amount of attention this topic has recently received from both philosophers and psychologists is nothing short of daunting. The analyses available to date seem so disparate as to make any hope of a coherent theory nearly impossible.

Perhaps taking a look backward will shed a new perspective on our whole understanding of the emotions. While many have looked at Aristotle's writings concerning emotions, few have given much effort to understanding them in terms of the modern debate. Thus, in this paper, I will frame Aristotle's thoughts in terms of one side of the current debate, in an effort to understand how ancient wisdom can contribute to the most recent philosophic research. With those preliminary concerns in mind, it will be the purpose of this paper to briefly describe the idea that emotions are embodied, and then examine Aristotle's theory of emotions. Finally, I will compare the two, in an effort to further our understanding of what Aristotle's emotion theory can offer to the modern debate.

1. Aristotle's theory of the emotions

While Aristotle seldom specifically discusses emotions other than in the Rhetoric, and there they are considered not so much in themselves as how they are engendered by the artful orator, he does use emotions as an example of various mental and physical phenomena in numerous places. From these, we can glean a fairly full picture of the status of emotions in Aristotle's view.

Some have expressed doubt that Aristotle can be understood in light of modern emotion research, or as having little relevance to modern cognitive science. They would point out that Aristotle's hylomorphic account of the

48
relationship of body and soul is quite different from the modern understanding, which tends more toward some sort of dualism, as defined in various ways. Many commentators are quick to point this out, including, perhaps most notably, Richard Sorabji. He makes two points that bear directly on our considerations. First, the Aristotelian conception of the soul is not analogous to the Cartesian conception of the mind, as some mistakenly have thought. Instead, Sorabji explains, “The resulting [Aristotelian] conception of the soul makes it coextensive with life, that is, with all of life. The conception of soul is a biological one, and it encourages Aristotle to stress the continuity, rather than the differences, between processes in plants and processes in humans.”

Secondly, Aristotle conceives of the body and the soul as the matter and form, respectively, of a living substance, each mutually dependent on the other. The only distinction between the soul and the body seems to be one of function, the body supplying the matter, and the soul the form. This distinction has little meaning for many modern emotion theorists, but it is crucial in understanding Aristotle. Hence, in comparing the two, the


2 Hilary Putnam, one of the founders of functionalism, notes an "important similarity" between functionalism and Aristotle’s psychology ("Philosophy and Our Mental Life," in Readings in Philosophy of Psychology, Vol. 1, ed. Ned Bloch (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980) 134-43, 142]. Other modern philosophers of mind have drawn similar conclusions, in part based on De Anima 403a25-403b2, to be considered later. Aristotle’s illustration of hylomorphism in terms of a bronze statue also points to such interpretation—the combination of matter and form that accounts for what-it-is. ‘Statue’ is a form that can be made of various materials, so this can be applied to living beings mutatis mutandis. The soul must be in matter (DA 403a), but this too is consistent with functionalism. Ancient philosophers tend to be less enthusiastic about such an interpretation, including Myles Burnyeat ("Is An Aristotelian Philosophy of Mind Still Credible?") and, somewhat inconsistently,
difference between the modern somatic and cognitive accounts of the emotions, and the Aristotelian theory of matter and form must be pointed out, but it does not preclude comparison. The questions are the same—are emotions primarily perceptions of bodily responses, or are they judgments, such that the relationship to those bodily responses is only of secondary interest? The difference is significant, but not fatal to our inquiry. With that in mind, let us look at the Aristotle’s distinct take on the emotions.

One of the definitions Aristotle offers concerning the emotions is in De Anima 1. In the midst of a discussion of the relationship of the soul and the body, Aristotle writes

The passions of the soul are also another problem, whether all of them are a combination of both the body and soul, or whether some of them are peculiar to the soul itself. To understand this is necessary, but not easy. But it is obvious that for the most part, the soul cannot be affected or act without a body, for example, anger (οργίζεσθαι) boldness, (θαρρεῖν) appetite, (επιθυμια) and generally to have perceptions (αισθανεσθαι). Thought seems most of all to be uniquely of the soul, but if this is also a kind of appearance (φαντασια) or impossible without an appearance, it would not be possible without a body. Therefore, if there is some function or affection that is unique to the soul, it would not be possible to be separated from the body. DA 403a3-20

Among the most interesting points that Aristotle makes in this passage is how the emotions are an illustration of his understanding of the relation of the soul and body. The dualism which formed the foundation of much of modern philosophy is nowhere to be found; in fact, it seems quite the opposite. There seems to be no action of the soul that can happen without a body, or in Aristotelian terms, “no case in which the soul can act or be acted

Martha Nussbaum (she embraces a functionalist interpretation of Aristotle in a paper written with Hilary Putnam, “Changing Aristotle's Mind,” but less so in her excellent commentary on De Motu Animalium.)

The translations from the Greek are those of the author, with help from various other translations.
upon without involving the body”, with the sole qualified exception of thinking.

Aristotle goes on to illustrate this point in a couple of interesting ways. One is that the body in some sense provides the ‘raw material’, so to speak, for the emotion; when the body is in different conditions, one’s emotions are experienced differently. He gives two contrasting cases, both of which have to do with the bodily state of the perceiver. At times, there is “μηδὲν παροξύνεσθαι ἢ φοβεῖ σθαι”, (no experience of excitement or fear) even though there has been the perception of a frightening event. The body is so disposed as to have the appearance, which otherwise might be frightful, but in this case there is no fear. Perhaps one sees the huge black bear, but because one is very fatigued, or perhaps inebriated, the body is not physically disposed so as to be frightened; the fearful event occurred, i.e., “ἰσχυρῶν καὶ ἐναργῶν παθημάτων συμβαίνοντων” (with a violent and striking occurrence happening), but there are no feelings of fright. On the other hand, there are times when small or faint stimuli (ὑπὸ μικρῶν καὶ ἄμαυρῶν κινεῖ σθαι), can produce the strong emotion, as, in the case that Aristotle mentions, one is already disposed to be angry, and the smallest trigger can produce that same feeling of anger.

One important insight is gained from this analysis; viz. there is an exciting fact that causes the emotion, a sort of a “trigger” that is necessary to produce the emotion, that occurs when a body is in a certain condition. This trigger is very important in Aristotle’s ideas of emotions, but it is also crucial in understanding emotions in modern analyses.

Another very notable discussion of a similar phenomena is in De Insomniis. In this instance, Aristotle is specifically explaining how it is possible to have dreams—that the perceptions persist (εμμενεῖ). Similarly, when a cowardly person even senses that a foe is nearing, he is filled with fear. The disposition toward a particular virtue that one is in certainly does affect the intensity, and perhaps even the onset of an emotion.

To understand this point, some consideration must be given to the pathway that Aristotle feels will “trigger” an emotion. The best candidate seems to be φαντασια. This is not without problems, however, for there are many questions about what constitutes an “appearance.” Perhaps the best understanding has been given by Martha Nussbaum; i.e. “a very general way
to indicate Aristotle’s interest in the way that a scene looks to a living creature, what his awareness of it is, and what he perceives it as.” Of course, her intent is to look at φαντασία in a much broader sense, viz. the relationship of appearances to action, but her initial conclusion is on point, at least for our purposes. An appearance is simply the way a certain state of affairs is present for a perceiver. Aristotle does not require any veridicality; in fact, it seems in many situations that he contrasts mere appearance with being.

But belief (δοξα) follows conviction (πιστις), for it does not appear to be possible that those are able to believe who have not been convinced, but being convinced belongs to no animals, whereas appearance (φαντασία) belongs to many of them. Furthermore, every belief follows conviction, conviction follows being persuaded (πεπεισθαι), persuasion follows reason (λόγος). Yet, whereas appearance belongs to some non-human animals (θηριών), reason belongs to none. DA 428a19-24

This passage contrasts belief (δοξα) and φαντασία. Earlier in this passage, Aristotle claims δοξα requires the ability to assess truth or falsehood, φαντασία does not. But if non-human animals have φαντασία, a point we will consider in greater detail a bit later, they do have a way in which to distinguish states of affairs, which is not belief. Hence, Ronald Polansky considers that φαντασμα may be “undetermined” or an “illusory perception.” “Had Aristotle simply wished to be more specific in meaning, he might have selected another term.” It would seem from this that Aristotle uses the term only as we would say in English, it “looks like”, without any additional judgment.

So, there seems to be very strong evidence that Aristotle considered emotions as being in a body, and, if we consider only the passages from the De Anima, no commitment to cognition is necessary. The emotions are

---


merely responses to appearances, which can be perceived with no commitment to belief. An apt example could be the following. I am driving down the highway, when all at once, in the distance, the road ahead appears wet. This appearance, a φαντασία, causes a change in my internal state to one of fear. I feel the knot in my abdomen, the hair rising on the back of my neck, and a sense of heightened awareness. No judgments have been made, however, and no actions have been taken. But I have had the experience of fear, with no thought coming before my mind. My body has been put on alert of an impending dangerous state of affairs by the appearance of the wet road.

This would put Aristotle squarely in line with William James; that emotions are merely the bodily response to the “perception of an exciting fact,” which could be in Aristotelian terms, a bodily response to a φαντασία which makes no cognitive claims, and the perception of those feelings that it produces, which again are physical, bodily changes. Of significance at this point is to consider precisely what Aristotle meant in DA 403b25, when he calls the passions, λογοὶ ενυλοι. This is significant, for in a summary passage, it is clear that Aristotle believes emotions can only exist in matter. If λογοὶ is translated “reason,” or in a similar fashion, it could include some cognitive activity. Contextually, however, other translations seem to be more accurate. Aristotle is considering in the immediately preceding passage if the passions can be separated from the body, giving no consideration as to whether they are cognitive or not. Hence, Hamlyn renders the phrase, “principles involving matter”, Ross, “enmattered account”, and very applicable to subsequent discussions, Jule Sihvola’s translation, “formulae in matter.” Such translations emphasize the fact that emotions are in some sense material, or physical events.

3. Aristotle and modern somatic accounts

Considering more contemporary emotional theories, this translation is in line with the idea expressed by Jesse Prinz that emotions are somatic, including an appraisal that seems much in line with φαντασία. Emotions represent “core relational themes,” or “states of affairs that in some manner
impinge on one’s well-being. By perception, a state of affairs is recognized as being a core relational theme. This representation produces a “detector” which informs the body of that state of affairs. Prinz says that experience adds these detectors to an “elicitation file,” which are those perceptions that reliably produce certain emotions. New elicitors are added as new experiences add new “triggers”. Prinz realizes that there must be a way in which the perception triggers a certain emotion, but he also feels that this is a problem that all emotion theories must address. In his view, the perception of an event triggers a series of bodily changes. The perception of those changes “carries information about [the world] by responding to changes in the body.”

If this proposal is right, it shows that emotions can represent core relational themes without explicitly describing them. Emotions track bodily states that reliably co-occur with important organism-environment relations, so emotions reliably co-occur with organism-environment relations. Each emotion is both an internal body monitor and a detector of dangers, threats, losses, or other matter of concern. Emotions are gut reactions: they use our bodies to tell us how we are faring in the world.

Prinz compares the perception of an emotion to the perception of a shape. The perceived shape is a percept, and then that percept is matched against the mental image to produce a concept. His definition of concept, i.e., an object of cognition, is that it is “under the control of an organism rather than under the control of the environment.” In the same way, the perception of a dangerous state of affairs is a percept. They are under “exogenous control.” Furthermore, Prinz continues with the following.

---


7 Gut Reactions 69.

8 Gut Reactions 45.
The fact that we have stored copies of our emotions in memory does not render exogenously controlled emotions cognitive. By comparison, the fact that we have a concept of redness does not make ordinary red experiences conceptual. Recognizing red involves concepts, but merely experiencing it does not. Moreover, we may have emotions that we never store copies of in memory. We have no concept, no capacity to recognize, some of our emotions. Infants and animals may have no emotion concepts at all. Their affective lives may always be under exogenous control.  

Prinz gives a very general etiology of an emotion as beginning with something dangerous occurring. The perception is perceived by the sensory organs and the appropriate centers in the brain. This perception causes a variety of physiological changes. “The bodily perception is directly caused by bodily changes, but it is indirectly caused by the danger that started the whole chain of events. It carries information about danger by responding to changes in the body. That further state is fear.”  

This would be very similar to the way many conceive of Aristotle’s φαντασία. φαντασία provide simple mental percepts—the red, the rough, the sweet, and so on. However, those percepts can be combined, and, in most cases, this occurs by association with previous percepts.

Of course for an emotion to be related to a percept for Aristotle, there must either be some explanation for how a percept is “unconceptualized,” the word used by Thomas Tuozzo in his essay, “Conceptualized and Unconceptualized Desire in Aristotle.” He makes the point that a propositional attitude is considerably different for Aristotle than in modern 


10 Gut Reactions 69.

usage of the term, for the latter, neither the subject nor the predicate need be a concept. “This feature of Aristotle’s theory enables it to encompass a vast range of mental states, from complex sense-perceptions where one unconceptualized percept is mentally predicated of another, through beliefs and desires in which only one term is conceptualized, to fully conceptualized beliefs and desires.” 12 While Tuozzo is concerned with desires, his discussion has a bearing on the topic at hand. Aristotle describes many of the emotions in terms of pleasure and pain. 13 Tuozzo goes on to point out that according to Aristotle, quoting DA 414b1-6, “if any living thing has the faculty of sense, it also has that of desire….Now all animals have one sense at all events, namely touch, and whatever has a sense has pleasure and pain, and the pleasant and the painful; and whatever has these, has bodily desire: for this is desire of the pleasant.” By linking desire for the pleasant and avoidance of the painful, it thus seems that Aristotle is able to make a case for desire that is independent of concepts, and thus operates on a purely perceptual level.

Prinz further describes how we acquire those “triggers”, or percepts, if indeed we gain those over time. He tells an evolutionary story for some emotions; they may have developed in “creatures that were incapable of cognition. An organism merely requires the ability to associate a perceptual state (e.g. seeing food) with an effective response that has occurred in conjunction with that perceptual state…” 14 In addition, “associative learning” and “repeated or protracted exposures” could account for the development of these elicitation files.

12 Tuozzo 533.

13 Rhetoric II”, Anger is “desire accompanied by pain (λυπη)…” (1378a34); “fear is a sort of pain or agitation (φοβος τις η ταραχη)…” (1382a21); “a friend shares pleasure (τον συνηδομενον) in good things and distress (συναλγουνα) in grievous things…” (1381a3-4)

14 Gut Reactions 75.
One further word must be said concerning Jamesian somaticism. With no room for equivocation, William James calls an emotion “the PERCEPTION of a bodily change.” The same requirement is seen in Prinz’s writing. We have spent some time dealing with the bodily change, and seen how that figures into Aristotelian emotion theory, but we have said nothing about the perception of that change. It is easy to see that emotions must in some sense be perceived, if they are, as Aristotle describes vividly of anger, “the boiling (ζεσιν) of the blood or warm substance about the heart” (403a31), a discomfort it would seem hard not to notice. Further, in Rhetoric II, they are “accompanied by pain and pleasure” (επεται λυπη και ηδονη) 1378a20, both of which would require some recognition of a certain bodily condition. So, it would seem for Aristotle, the perception of a bodily change is a necessary condition for an emotion, as is the bodily change itself.

A very interesting element of Aristotle’s ideas on emotion is the number of emotions that he also attributes to animals. Because the range of cognition within the capabilities of animals, this would seem to suggest that perhaps there is a strong way that Aristotle can be read to agree with Prinz.

5. Aristotle and animal emotions

In The History of Animals, Aristotle writes,

<The bison> defends itself against an assailant by kicking and projecting its excrement to a distance of eight yards; this device it can easily adopt over and over again, and the excrement is so pungent that the hair of hunting-dogs is burnt off by it. It is only when the animal is distressed and frightened (τεταραγμενου ...και φοβουμενου) that its dung does this, but when it is free from distress (αταρακτου) it does not have this blistering effect. 630b9-14

It is obvious here that Aristotle attributes at least the emotion of fear to animals. But there are other emotions also.

There has been seen before now a crowd of dolphin, big and small together, of which two were seen to have fallen back a little way, swimming beneath a little dead baby dolphin whenever it was sinking to the depths, and bring
it up on their backs, as if out of pity (οιον κατελεουντες), with the result that it was not devoured by some other wild creature. HA 631a15-20.

Lastly, and perhaps most notably, Aristotle attributes anger to animals. In a very interesting passage from the NE III.8, Aristotle, while discussing courage, looks at the traits that are and are not courage. Animals act much like humans when they “rush at the people who have wounded them...” and “while courageous people act because of the fine...the wild animals in question act because they are distressed (λυπην)—after all, it is because they have been hit by a weapon, or they are frightened, since they do not approach if they have the cover of a wood.” (NE 1116b25-1117a1)

Throughout the passage, Aristotle uses both οργη and θυμος. Jule Sihvola points to this interesting usage, which he calls “a backward-looking component of being pained at an apparent insult or slight (θυμος) and a forward-looking component of being pleased at the prospect of a future revenge (οργη).” The implication is that οργη is a uniquely human trait, because it requires the ability to make specific plans for retaliation, but that animals can and do experience θυμος.

This goes well with the claim of Aristotle in NE III.3 where he observes, ...

...decision (προαιρεσις) is not something shared by non-rational creatures, whereas appetite (επιθυμια) and temper (θυμος) are. Decision, then, is clearly something voluntary, but is not the same thing as the voluntary, for the voluntary is shared in by both children and other animals, whereas decision is not, and things done on the spur of the moment we say are voluntary, but not done from decision. 1111b13-16

So, it seems that there is a range of emotions that animals are capable of, and among those is this sort of anger. Sihvola, commenting on this passage says that Aristotle is "not present<ing> the weak thesis that there is an analogy between human and animal spirited desires, just as there is supposed to be an analogy between human and animal intellectual...

---

capacities, but a strong thesis that there is a similarity or at most a difference of degree between them."

It might be easy to see how fear and anger could be emotions that a non-rational being could experience, as they are emotions that directly bear on self-preservation. A bigger problem is raised by the reference to dolphin’s ability to experience pity in the HA. As described in Rhetoric, it is obvious pity (ελεος) involves many more complex judgments which would be impossible for animals to do, at least on the account that Aristotle presents. It is not clear, however, that Aristotle is making a strong case for this. His account suggests that the actions only imitate human actions, not that they are an example of that action, with its accompanying judgments. This idea is made explicit in HA VII.1.

In a great majority of animals there are traces of the characteristics concerning the soul (μυριαστικα των περι την ψυχην τροπων) which are more obvious (φανερωτερας) in the case of human beings. For just as we pointed out resemblances in the physical organs, so in a number of animals we observe gentleness or fierceness, mildness or daring, courage or timidity, fear (φοβοι) or confidence, anger (θυμοι) or trickery (πανουγριαι), and with a comprehension concerning intention (και της περι την διανοιαν συνεσις), like the resemblances in the bodily parts, as we said. Some of these qualities in man, as compared with the corresponding qualities in animals, differ only quantitatively; that is to say, a man has more of this quality, and an animal has more of some other; other qualities in man are represented by analogous qualities: for instance, just as in man we find knowledge, wisdom, and discernment (τεχνη και σοφια και συνεσις), so in certain animals there exists some other natural capacity akin to these. 588α16-26

Martha Nussbaum, although a strong cognitivist in relation to emotions, would agree with this sort of assessment. She writes, “…it seems reasonable that, to the extent that animals are capable of general and temporally extended thinking, background emotions of fear, love, and anger

---

56 Sihvola 129.
will play at least some role in explaining what they do.”

Further, “What we need, in short, is a multifaceted notion of cognitive interpretation or seeing-as, accompanied by a flexible notion of intentionality that allows us to ascribe to a creature more or less precise, vaguer or more demarcated, ways of intending an object and marking it as salient.”

So, it is obvious that animals have a sort of emotion, by simple observation. It is also clear that Aristotle attributes at least some emotions to animals, and, given that he does not want to attribute reason to them, we must assume emotions exist on the perceptual level. If we understand φαντασία on the level of percepts, then it is perfectly possible that animals are capable of a range of emotions. The range, however, is open to debate, especially for Aristotle, who would not attribute to animals any sort of judgment.

The above discussion leads one to believe that it is possible to have something similar to an emotion without making cognitive judgments. No doubt, Prinz’s work is very interesting, and merits serious consideration. There is also a sense in which we can see Aristotle supporting the same sorts of viewpoints. This is, however, merely a part of the picture, and a fuller account of Aristotle’s emotions will undoubtedly lead us to a richer notion of our philosophic understanding them.

---


18 Nussbaum *Upheavals* 129. It does seem, however that Tuozzo has given an account that would explain this particular phenomena.
Abstract: Leo Tolstoy's expression theory is one of the most influential theories of art. In Noël Carroll's formulation, the theory stipulates eight conditions which are individually necessary and jointly sufficient for an artifact to be a work of art. More precisely, “x is a work of art if and only if x is (1) an intended (2) transmission to an audience (3) of the self-same (4) individualized (5) feeling state (6) that the artist experienced (7) and clarified (8) by means of lines, shapes, colors, sounds, actions and/or words” (Carroll 65). The expression theory is false because Dante Alighieri’s Inferno, a universally accepted work of art, fails to meet two of the stipulated conditions, namely, (4) and (6). First, Dante’s Inferno aims to transmit not individualized but generic emotions such as reverence for God and revulsion towards sins, something that Tolstoy argues could not happen in a genuine artwork. Second, Dante does not experience the emotions expressed in the work such as terror and rage while somberly writing The Inferno, something that Tolstoy requires of the artist. One must accept Tolstoy’s expression theory or Dante’s Inferno as a work of art, but not both.

Throughout the ages, many theories have shaped our perception of what art is, from the idea that art must represent something to the notion that art must have a form. Still, of all these one of the most influential is the theory that art must be expressive. Many people believe that most artworks express emotions. Some go so far as to say that artists feel more deeply than others in order to create art. Expressing feelings, however, is not enough to make something art. For instance, a toddler can throw a temper tantrum, but that is far from art. That is why Leo Tolstoy refines this theory and imposes more stringent conditions. In Noël Carroll’s formulation, the theory stipulates eight conditions which are individually necessary and jointly sufficient for an artifact to be a work of art:
x is a work of art if and only if x is (1) an intended (2) transmission to an audience (3) of the self-same (type-identical) (4) individualized (5) feeling state (emotion) (6) that the artist experienced (himself/herself) (7) and clarified (8) by means of lines, shapes, colors, sounds, actions and/or words (Carroll 65).

If even one of these conditions is not met, then the object under consideration is not a work of art.

At first glance, this seems to be an attractive theory. But some of the conditions are unsatisfactory. If one accepts the expressive theory of art, one must reject Dante Alighieri's Inferno as an artwork because it does not meet two of the eight conditions for being art, namely, (4) and (6). Since Dante's Inferno is a work of art, the expressive theory is wrong.

According to the expressive theory, an artwork must be an intended transmission of an individualized, not generic, emotion. Two overarching themes of the Inferno are horror at others' sins and reverence towards God. The horror is evident in the passage where Dante is in Antenora, the second round of the ninth circle of hell. There he meets a general named Buoso de Duera, who allowed the French to pass unopposed into Italy (Dante 254). As eternal punishment, his head is frozen in a lake of ice for eternity. Virgil, Dante's guide, does not reprimand Dante when he kicks the general's head, for Virgil understands how serious treachery against one's own country is.

Feeling horror at others' sins is an emotion expressed throughout history. Revulsion towards sins, together with fear of hell, was especially prevalent during the Middle Ages. Mystery plays, or plays popular in Dante's time which had a Biblical theme, typically depict these emotions.

Another emotion expressed was a reverence for God. At the end of Canto I, Virgil states that "[God] rules the waters and the land and air/ and there holds court, his city and his throne/ Oh blessed are they he chooses!" (Dante 20). Reverence for and praise of God were prevalent in Dante's time through paintings such as Ugolino Lorenzetti's The Crucifixion and works of architecture such as the Notre Dame Cathedral. After Dante's time, other artists expressed a deep reverence for God, such as John Milton, who authored Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained, and Michelangelo, who sculpted the Pieta. Thus the feeling of reverence in the Inferno is neither individualized nor unique to Dante.
In addition to the artist expressing an individualized emotion, the expressive theory of art requires that the artist feel the emotion that she describes in her artwork. Many times Dante expresses terror in the Inferno such as when he is in the Central Pit of Malebolge, in the eighth circle. There, he encounters giants. Dante writes, “Then I dreaded death as never before/ and I think I could have died for that very fear/ had I not seen what manacles he wore” (Dante 244). If he had been truly this terrified, he would have abandoned his work altogether at this point, assuming that he had even made it this far. Dante would not have finished this work if he had had to experience this kind of fear. But he did finish this work, so he could not have felt this fear.

One may argue that while Dante might not have felt the terror mentioned above, he might have felt other emotions, such as lust and rage, expressed in the work. These other emotions, however, do not seem to be good candidates for the emotions that Dante was feeling when he wrote the piece either. In a famous scene, he meets two souls, a man and a woman, fused together for all of eternity because they committed adultery. They feel remorse for their actions, but nonetheless wait for vengeance on their murderer, the woman’s husband. There is no evidence though that Dante had ever had an affair. He definitely was not murdered and stuck to his lover for all of eternity when he began writing the Inferno. Thus he could not know what this emotion is like.

Another problem is the case of the souls in the ninth circle, Count Ugolino and Archbishop Ruggieri. Both are frozen, but the count is eating the archbishop’s brain. This is a form of divine justice because Count Ugolino and Archbishop Ruggieri killed a third party, but then the archbishop locked the count in a tower, leaving him to starve to death (Dante 262). In divine punishment, Count Ugolino is allowed to eat Archbishop Ruggieri’s brain. Dante describes thus, “Tydeus in his final raging hour/ gnawed Menalippus’ head with no more fury/ than this one gnawed at skull and dripping gore” (Dante 253). Dante did not starve to death, had probably not ever been frozen before, and was no cannibal. Hence, he could not understand the hatred the count felt toward the archbishop, or the pain the archbishop endured, nor could he understand the sensations they experienced. Yet he vividly described these emotions.
The preceding consideration is perhaps the biggest problem for the expressive theory of art: it does not allow room for imagination. In an epic poem such as Dante’s or in any novel, the writer must put herself in every character’s place and see things from that character’s point of view. This creative process is part of writing. If an author must feel the same thing that the characters feel when they feel it, the range of emotions the characters could express would be severely diminished, because they could feel only what the author was feeling. If the author is happy, all the characters must be happy according to this theory, regardless of any circumstances such as a tragedy that has befallen the characters. To have a character not feel what the writer feels would be disingenuous, and disingenuous art isn’t art at all according to Tolstoy. Since many writers and even musicians must fake emotions for their art, their work would be disingenuous and thus not art.

Yet people expect this imaginative quality from writing. Many times an author meditates on how a certain character may feel in a certain situation. Stephen King is reputed to have written Carrie after a trip to the girls’ restroom while he was a janitor and imagined what it would feel like to have a period for the first time. If this ability to imagine emotions had been restricted, he could not have written this book. The expressive theory of art restricts this ability though, which makes it a flawed theory.

Some may concede that Dante’s Inferno is not a work of art. Yet the value of this poem is undeniable. Dante, even in his lifetime, was hailed as a bard and revered as an exceptional poet. His work continues to be read today and has inspired generations and generations of poets, including Milton. If the Inferno were not art, it would not have the influence it has had or been cherished for so long. The conclusion that the Inferno is not art is simply ludicrous. This leads us to only one conclusion: the expressive theory of art is false.

Dante’s Inferno is a work of art, hence proving Leo Tolstoy’s expressive theory of art wrong. Not only does the expressive theory exclude works such as Dante’s Inferno, but it restricts the imagination because the theory insists on the author’s transmission of her contemporaneous and individualized emotions. If an author does not feel a particular emotion, a character cannot, which restriction would stifle writing. For these reasons,
the expressive theory of art is false and a defensible alternative must be found.
Abstract Robust Virtue Epistemology (RVE) is the thesis that knowledge is true belief attained through the cognitive virtues of the agent. The concept of knowledge can be understood entirely through the concepts of truth, belief, (cognitive) virtues, and the relationships between them. No separate anti-luck condition (ALC) is necessary for knowledge.

In this paper I introduce two refinements of orthodox RVE. I propose that we understand the relationship between the agent’s believing truly and her cognitive character as a causal relationship. Reading this causal relationship according to Mackie’s INUS construal allows RVE to accommodate putative counterexamples such as Lackey’s Simple Testimonial Case. Secondly I propose an environment-relative understanding of epistemic virtue. Whether an agent believes virtuously depends in part on their epistemic environment. Thus RVE avoids misattributions of knowledge in Barn Façade County cases, and does so without appeal to a separate anti-luck or anti-Gettier condition.

Defending Robust Virtue Epistemology

In this paper I defend Robust Virtue Epistemology (RVE). This is the view that knowledge is true belief acquired through epistemic virtue. This position maintains that the nature of knowledge can be entirely understood through the concepts of truth, belief, cognitive character and the relationships between them. In particular no separate Anti-Luck Condition is required to deal with Gettier cases.

Firstly I shall explain the advantages of orthodox RVE. Next I introduce my version of RVE, which has two key modifications. First, that we should understand epistemic virtues as being relative to environments and second that the relationship between the cognitive virtues and true belief is one of
I then show how, with these two independently motivated alterations, RVE avoids the two counterexamples ranged against orthodox RVE in the literature whilst retaining its advantages.

The Case for RVE

In the debate between RVE and its rivals, there are two salient guiding intuitions about knowledge.

Anti-Luck Platitude – Knowledge is incompatible with certain kinds of luck. If S’s belief is merely luckily true - in some sense she could easily have been wrong - she does not know. In other words, there is a kind of veritic stability associated with knowledge.

To see the Anti-Luck Platitude in play, take a standard Gettier case: In an unfamiliar landscape Roddy sees a sheep-shaped object and forms the belief “there is a sheep in that field”. Unbeknownst to him he is looking at a rock behind which, coincidentally, a sheep is grazing, making his belief true. We judge that Roddy doesn’t know. Why? His belief is imbued with knowledge-undermining luck.

Ability Platitude – Saying someone knows p says something about her cognitive character. This is usually construed as something positive, for example that when somebody knows it is of credit to her, or that the true belief was gained via her abilities. This platitude pulls the theorist towards Virtue Epistemology.

To see this platitude in play: Imagine Rene starts gambling. He randomly guesses roulette results, thus believes via an unreliable method. Fortunately, but unbeknownst to him, there’s a guardian angel making whatever Rene believes true. His beliefs couldn’t easily be false, so the anti-luck intuition is fulfilled, but we still don’t attribute knowledge. Why? He

---

isn’t getting to the truth the right way - his cognitive character doesn’t play the right role. Rene’s epistemic abilities don’t cause his true beliefs - he believes any old thing, and the world conforms.

An analysis of knowledge ought to satisfy these constraints, or else explain why the platitudes are misguided. Here I accept these two platitudes, however I diagnose some anti-luck epistemologists as reading the Anti-Luck Platitude too strongly.

These two platitudes led to three rival schools of thought in analysing knowledge:

Robust Anti-Luck Epistemology (RALE) - the nature of knowledge can be entirely understood in terms of true belief and anti-luck conditions (safety, sensitivity etc). When a true belief has the right modal traits, it is knowledge. There is no appeal to cognitive character. (RALE is defended by Nozick 1981; Pritchard 2005.)

Robust Virtue Epistemology (RVE) - The thesis that knowledge is true belief attained through cognitive virtues of the agent. The distinctive feature of RVE is that a true belief is known if cognitive virtues have the right relationship with the truth of the belief. Knowledge can be fully understood in terms of true belief, cognitive virtues, and this relationship. In orthodox RVE this relationship is understood as salience, or some other explanatory notion (such as that the agent’s cognitive character is primarily creditable for the true belief, or features saliently in an explanation of why she has a true belief in the target proposition). No separate anti-luck condition (such as Safety) is needed to understand the nature of knowledge. (RVE is defended by Sosa 2007; Greco 2010.)

Anti-Luck Virtue Epistemology (ALVE) - Knowledge has both a virtue theoretic condition and a separate anti-luck condition. (ALVE is defended by Pritchard 2010.)

RALE misattributes knowledge – there are counterexamples to it, for example in the Rene case described above the modal conditions obtain, but the agent doesn’t know because he doesn’t stand in the right relationship to the truth – so RALE is no longer in the running for a definition of knowledge. ALVE and RVE, on the other hand, are still live options. Despite the popularity of ALVE I shall defend RVE for two reasons. Firstly, most
Epistemologists abandoned RVE in the light of two counterexamples. I shall show why these examples are unconvincing. Secondly, it has many advantages, some of which aren’t available to ALVE.

**Advantages of RVE**

Solves the Meno Problem (however demanding)

Immune from Gettier cases

Explains why we credit knowers (in the causal and praise senses of ‘credit’)  

Accounts for knowledge attributions

Is an elegant theory

Answers the sceptical challenge

It’s a meta-epistemological point whether 5 and 6 are theoretical virtues, or merely neutral. I’ll shortly explain advantages 1 and 2. Regarding advantage 4: if the theory doesn’t track knowledge attributions then that refutes the theory. I can’t deal here with all possible counterexamples, but I’ll explain why the two principle counterexamples are unconvincing, and I await a knowledge attribution that it can’t account for. Later advantage 3 will emerge.

Again, RVE: Knowledge is true belief through epistemic virtue. My account doubly diverges from orthodox RVE. i.) Most epistemologists understand this “through” relation as salience or IBE, i.e. explanatory notions. I defend a causal understanding (INUS). ii.) I understand virtues as environment-relative.²

**Knowledge as Achievement and the First Advantage**

The Meno Assumption demands that we account for the intuition that knowledge is valuable. The strongest readings hold that the value of knowledge exceeds that of any proper subset of its parts, or even the sum of

² Some others do too, but it’s not essential to RVE.
its parts. In weaker readings, knowledge is more valuable than true belief, or any epistemic standing short of knowledge. The strongest formulations seem to indicate that the value of knowledge is different in kind from that of other epistemic standings.

The challenge is to either account for the value of knowledge, or justify rejecting the Meno Assumption. The analysis of knowledge I advocate accommodates even its strongest formulations. This is because when we have knowledge, a distinctive value emerges - the value of epistemic achievement.

Duncan Pritchard and Martijn Blauuw explored the following argument (Joint Session 2008):

P1. Having/forming true beliefs is a success
P2. (In an appropriate environment) cognitive virtues are abilities
P3. Success through ability is an achievement
P4. Knowledge is true belief through cognitive virtue (RVE)

Conclusion. Having/forming knowledge is an achievement (Achievement Thesis)

P5. Achievements have a special kind of value (Final Value Thesis)

---


5 Motivated via thought experiment, e.g. winning a race through ability, or only in conjunction with ability. Pritchard, D. “Radical Skepticism, Epistemic Luck and Epistemic Value,” in Proceedings and Addresses of the Aristotelian Society (suppl. vol.) 82, (2008): 19-41
P6. Having/forming knowledge has a special kind of value (Meno Assumption)

**Conclusion. That value is the distinctive value of achievements**

This is a solution to the Meno problem available to proponents of RVE. I have elsewhere argued that proponents of ALVE will not be able to account for the strongest formulations of the Meno Assumption (that knowledge is more valuable than any proper subset of its parts. This because fulfilling a modal condition doesn't add any value to the true belief). Thus the Meno Problem is a problem for ALVE (and RALE), but not for RVE.⁶

**Second Advantage – Immunity from Gettier**

An external condition is one whose obtaining is not reflexively accessible to the agent. Gettier showed that an analysis of knowledge requires at least one external condition, as without an external condition fixing the relationship between the agent and the truth, the world might not be how the agent believes it is, and the belief can be ‘Gettierized’ (knowledge undermining luck can be added to the case, such that the internalist conditions are satisfied, but the belief is not known, because it is only right through luck). In the account presented here this external-condition requirement is met in the “through” relation’s being analysed externally. Hence RVE is not susceptible to standard Gettier cases. Which abilities are appropriate to an environment is also understood externally, hence immunity from Barn Façade County style Gettier cases.

**Epistemic virtues**

I assume the standard construal of epistemic virtues, though this is an area that invites more analysis. Epistemic virtues are usually construed as abilities and traits that are reliable and constitutive of the agent’s stable

---

⁶ However, it should be noted that it is consistent with this view that there are other distinctively valuable epistemic achievements, such as understanding.
cognitive character. They are stable and well integrated. In analogy with ethical virtues, the virtuous agent must be motivated towards believing truths and avoiding believing untruths. In the virtue epistemology developed here epistemic abilities are “fixed” regardless of environment (they do not vary with conditions). Virtues, however, are relativised to obtaining conditions.

To illustrate, suppose you can distinguish between male and female clowns: you have clown-sexing ability. If, by accident, you walk into a transvestite clown convention, you can’t do at the convention what you can in normal epistemic environments (viz. reliably sex clowns), but your cognitive character hasn’t changed. I call what remain constant epistemic abilities. What change are epistemic virtues (the abilities which can reliably form true beliefs – they are environment relative). In the transvestite clown convention you can no longer virtuously form clown-sex beliefs.

Only the actual conditions that obtain, but not related counterfactual possibilities, affect the appropriateness of ability manifestations (and so knowledge status). If you almost go to a transvestite clown convention, but don’t, this modally nearby environment doesn’t affect whether you manifest epistemic virtues when you’re actually in a friendly epistemic environment. This is analogous to ethical virtue: The environment doesn’t change the character traits that the agent has, only whether they are virtues, a status held irrespective of modally nearby environments.

Counterexamples to Orthodox RVE
1.) Simple Testimonial Knowledge

---

Jenny, lost in an unfamiliar village, asks for directions to a landmark. An informant, knowing its location firsthand, gives instructions. Thus Jenny comes to hold a true belief. Intuitively, she knows. We would lose much putative knowledge if we don’t acquire knowledge from testimony.

The problem for orthodox RVE is that Jenny doesn’t fulfil the conditions lays down for knowledge. Thus orthodox RVE deems that Jenny doesn’t know: the truth of the belief is not primarily creditable to the agent’s epistemic virtues - it is primarily creditable to the informant’s. However, in resolution, on the causal reading of the through relation that I propose below, RVE concludes she knows.

Greco, and others, understand the through relation as an explanatory relation (such as asking what is the salient, or important enough, feature of an explanation of the true belief). Thus only one factor is creditable for the true belief. However, I submit that when we form beliefs there may be many different causal factors working together: memory, rational faculties, sound judgement, textbooks, instruments, etc. Jenny approached a reliable-looking person, she asked rather than guessed; she was not credulous. For example if she asked for directions to the harbour and they direct her up a hill she would not believe them.

---


10 Also, an explanatory understanding of through can lead to knowledge attribution being attributer contextual, or at least contrastive. It is moot whether this is problematic. I won’t go into these problems here as we avoid them with a causal understanding of through. Attributer
In short: The through in RVE is not explanatory, it is causal. INUS conditions provide an account of our understanding of causation.\textsuperscript{11}

**Interlude - Explaining INUS**

Take the set of conditions that caused a window to break: John kicked the ball with a window-breaking speed and direction; Billy didn’t catch it; Billy was the only object between John and the window. The conditions are jointly sufficient for the outcome and minimally so - none is redundant in the particular causal nexus: if Maradona signed the ball, it isn’t a necessary condition, so isn’t listed. The particular set of conditions isn’t necessary for the outcome, as a different set of antecedent conditions could have caused the result.

An INUS condition is an Insufficient, but Necessary condition in an Unnecessary but jointly Sufficient set of conditions that bring about an effect. $F$ caused $G$ if $F$ was at least an INUS condition of $G$.

**Back to RVE**

It is clear multiple things caused Jenny’s true belief; we cannot attribute it to just one factor. Jenny’s cognitive virtues were a necessary condition for her knowing - if she believes indiscriminately it is not a case of knowledge, even were a true belief formed. Gullibility isn’t knowledge-conducive. Thus, third advantage, RVE explains why we credit knowers for their beliefs (in the causal and congratulatory senses – they played a necessary role in the process of forming a true belief).

Unlike an IBE/salience analysis, using INUS Conditions may also account for how we scale praise across cases. If a solitary mathematician discovers a new theorem, we praise her lots for knowing it. If a student memorises it

---

\textsuperscript{11} To be distinguished from *causation in the object* and explanation.
we praise less. This is best understood by looking at which other INUS conditions are present (and which abilities are required).

Thus with a causal understanding of the through relation RVE allows testimonial knowledge.

2.) Barn Façade County (BFC)\textsuperscript{12}

Barney drives through the countryside. Unbeknownst to him the fields are dotted with fake barns. By chance he looks at the one real barn, forming the belief “that’s a barn”. As it is a true belief formed through cognitive abilities, orthodox RVE attributes knowledge. However, intuitively, Barney doesn’t know. The belief is only luckily true - he might easily have been wrong. Thus RVE appears to misattribute knowledge.

However, this case does not fulfil the conditions of RVE defended here. Barney does not have the abilities required by BFC’s epistemically unfriendly environment, no cognitive achievement occurs, and no knowledge. Virtues are not manifested.

Recall that the same cognitive abilities needn’t guarantee knowledge across different environments. It must be abilities appropriate to the epistemic environment, as the transvestite clowns illustrate. Whilst the ability set doesn’t change, whether an ability manifests as a virtue depends on the environment.

Barney exhibits cognitive abilities (eyesight, barn/house discrimination, etc), normally enough to reliably cause a true barn-based belief (and therefore barn-knowledge). However, such abilities are not sufficient in the obtaining epistemic environment (which requires Barney to discriminate between barns and barn façades, something which he cannot do), so he does not believe virtuously and thus doesn’t have knowledge.

Only obtaining epistemic environments undermine knowledge. If Barney isn’t actually in BFC he believes virtuously and knows, even if he is in BFC in

nearby worlds. This, I believe, accords with intuition, although is at odds with most modal analyses (e.g. Pritchardian Safety), where nearby possibilities can undermine knowledge claims. In effect I am accusing such theories of reading the anti-luck platitude too strongly. The anti-luck intuition demands only that the agent could not easily be wrong given the obtaining conditions. Pritchard confuses this with: The anti-luck intuition demands that the agent could not easily be in a different environment, such that he would form a false belief in that environment.

Conclusion

I introduced two platitudes about knowledge and explained how three positions arise from them. I explained some advantages of RVE (of which some aren’t available to ALVE, RVE’s main competitor).

I introduced my RVE, the key features of which are that knowledge is an epistemic achievement (and thus has the prima facie value born of achievements), the relation between true belief and epistemic virtues is causal, not explanatory (and INUS is the preferred understanding of the concept of causation), and epistemic virtues are relative to obtaining epistemic environments (but not nearby counterfactual environments).

I explained how my RVE avoids the two prominent counterexamples in the literature (simple testimonial knowledge and BFC). I also motivated the view that some recent modal epistemologists advocate an overly strong anti-luck constraint. The analysis of knowledge presented here requires no separate anti-luck condition. Knowledge is virtuously formed true belief.
**Abstract** When I am aware of my diachronic existence, do I then necessarily refer to myself as being an objective particular that is in principle traceable by others in an intersubjectively shared space and time? This is the question that I here wish to pose. I probe it through an evaluation of Edmund Husserl’s claim that there could be a consciousness that individuates and unifies itself even if there were no nature or idea of nature. I contest this claim by raising questions that bring out how the constitution of our self-consciousness depends on our capacity to situate ourselves in an objective space and time.

**The question and an answer**

When I am aware of being an I with a diachronic existence, do I then necessarily refer to myself as being an objective particular that is in principle traceable by others in an intersubjectively shared space and time? In search of an answer to this question I will examine what Edmund Husserl

---

1 My research is made possible by the funding of the Flanders Research Foundation and the Belgian American Educational Foundation. I would like to thank Ullrich Melle for the invitation to write this paper and Arnold Burms, Roland Breeur, Cheryl Chen, Nicolas De Warren, Sean Kelly, Andreas Staiti, Evan Clark, Mark Sentesy, Burke Thompson and the audience at the Husserlarbeitstage, as well as at the South East Philosophy Congress for discussing the set-up and issues of this paper with me.
saying about the self-individuation and -unification of the stream of consciousness in the last paragraph of his Ideas II.¹

Not every analysis of consciousness presents itself as an analysis of self-consciousness. Hume did not think to deliver such an account and Husserl himself has claimed that consciousness could be described in an impersonal way.² But, in Ideas II Husserl recognizes that every conscious act necessarily refers to an I that is the subject of this act and is at least pre-reflectively aware of its diachronic existence. Let me give two illustrations of this pre-reflective self-awareness. (1) When a tone is retained, one does not only retain this tone but also that one was conscious of this tone when it resounded earlier. This is why, when I suddenly become vividly aware of a bell ringing, I can realize that I have been hearing this bell for a while. (2) When I am not surprised that it rains after it was cloudy, this implies my acquaintance with this phenomenon or with some knowledge that makes it comprehensible. Thus, this implies my diachronic existence, without me having to explicitly narratively construct this diachronic existence.

Now, Husserl defends that we can give a phenomenological account of this self-consciousness without having to make any reference to a material world or other minds. Such an account would consist in a description of the transcendental constitution of a unified and individuated consciousness and its subject; i.e. of how they essentially appear in our experience. If this is true then my question will be answered negatively: I could be aware of having an individuated and unified existence, even if I did not refer to myself as an embodied being with a spatio-temporal place in a world with


material objects, and if there were no possibility for others to track or understand me.

Husserl formulates it thus:

...if we eliminate nature, ‘true,’ Objective-intersubjective existence, there always still remains something: the spirit as individual spirit. 
... we still have, notwithstanding the enormous impoverishment of ‘personal’ life, precisely an I with its conscious life, and it even has therein its individuality, its way of judging of valuing, of letting itself be motivated in its position-takings. (Ideas II, §64 311 [297])

He also claims:

...no real being, no being which is presented and legitimated in consciousness by appearances, is necessary to the being of consciousness itself (in the broadest sense, the stream of mental processes). (Ideas I, 110 [92])

I will first clarify what makes Husserl say this, and secondly evaluate his answer to my question. 4

II. Husserl’s idea of a self-individuating and -unifying consciousness

If we want to understand why the mere reference to consciousness is enough to understand the spirit as individuated and its consciousness as unified, and why this understanding does not imply a reference to an intersubjectively constituted objective world or to a really existing material world, we should first see what Husserl means by ‘spirit’.

4 Husserl may only have meant that an empirically real existence of a spatial world is not necessary to the being of consciousness itself. But I take it that he here also concerns himself with the idea about this space, since he generally analyses what should always be given in our experience.
Husserl describes the spiritual I\(^5\) as the subject of intentionality (Ideas II, 227 §55) and adds that this subject does not appear as an empty pole but as the carrier of a particular history. The idea of the I as an empty pole is what Kant has in mind when he claims that while I should in principle be able to introduce all my thoughts by 'I think', I never envision this I like I envision an object. How is this I – of which Kant says that it does not appear to us and thus functions as an empty pole – in fact a carrier of a particular history? Well, says Husserl, it is the subject of distinct Erlebnisse\(^6\) which can either be experienced at the same moment (say I hear and see a dog barking) or at different times (say I heard a dog barking and remember that I heard that now).

This intentional subject is always conscious of something, and thus relates to something other than itself. Yet, this does not mean that with the occurrence of this subject, an empirical world is given. An intentional relation can remain even if its object does not empirically exist (227 §55): I can have a thought of a unicorn, even if the unicorn does not exist.

When Husserl uses the term 'spiritual' to typify a subject, he also emphasizes that this subject grasps meaning and lets itself be motivated by it. He distinguishes the term 'motivation' from the term 'causation':\(^7\) the

\(^{5}\) Husserl actually never uses the term 'spiritual I'. He either talks about a spirit or about a personal I that finds itself in a spiritual world. I restrain from using the term spirit, because it is too general: Husserl also uses this term to refer to the spirit of a building. I prefer to use the term 'spiritual I' over the term 'personal I' because Husserl wants to emphasize that this former I both grasps meaning and is comprehensible even when its manifestation as a personal I is impoverished.

\(^{6}\) I use this Husserlian term to refer to experiences as they are lived through.

\(^{7}\) This resembles the distinction that philosophers sometimes make between reasons and causes.
raising of my arm will be caused by muscle contractions, yet may be motivated by my wish to ask a question.

Husserl says the following about things that motivate us:

...these things are not the things of nature, existing in themselves – i.e., the things of exact natural science with the determinations claimed there to be the only Objectival true ones – but are the experienced, thought, or in some other way intended and posited things as such, intentional objects of personal consciousness....

points of departure for more or less 'strong' tendencies. (§50 199)

We can for example immediately perceive something as valuable and therefore treat it with the appropriate care.

Husserl denies that an account of motivations needs to refer to an intersubjective realm of understanding.

I can disregard the stratum of apprehension that arises from the fact that I represent myself at the same time as the same one who is apprehended by others externally through empathy. ... In self-intuition in the proper sense (self-perception, self-memory) there enters at the outset nothing of the representation of the way in which I would appear from a there, from an other’s point of view. (§57 261)

Thus, the intentional and motivated character of this subject indicates why the spiritual subject should be situated in a world of which it is conscious but which is not at first instance or necessarily physical or intersubjectively constituted.

Husserl admits that the spirit is in fact localized in a Body and appears as one with this Body. Yet, he is also convinced that the constitution of the

---

8 Conform to the standard Husserl translation I will write 'Body' with a capital to refer to what Husserl calls ‘Leib’ and 'body' without capital to what Husserl calls ‘Körper’.
unity and individuality of this spirit can be apprehended in abstraction from a traceable body:

the Bodily-spiritual unity we call man...harbors two-fold unities, namely: Bodily unities as material-corporeal unities... and spiritual unities. Consequently a distinction has to be drawn and we have to maintain that the individual man is: 1) unitary Body, i.e., a body which is animated and which bears sense, and 2) unitary spirit. (§56 255)

Let’s turn to some of the phenomena that make Husserl claim that the spirit individuates and unifies itself in its course of consciousness.

(1) Husserl mentions how every cogitatio and its intending subject are absolutely individuated: in the process of having a thought, no material boundaries need to appear for this thought process to appear as individuated (say, for the hearing of the bird to distinguish itself from the smell of the garbage), nor is the appearance of these boundaries required for the occurrence of the experience that I am thinking this thought.

(2) Further, this pure I is the bearer of its habitualities, which implies that it has a particular history. Habitualities should not be equated with what we usually call habits. A habit – say the habit of napping after lunch – pertains to an empirical subject. Habitualities are convictions, memories and feelings that present themselves to their subject as his. The subject may for example feel the same grudge again. The sameness of a conviction is here neither determined by its uninterrupted active presence in consciousness, nor by its content, but by the fact that the subject has not in the meantime at some point abandoned or revised it.

(3) Then, there are the subject’s motivations. Let me illustrate how they can individuate and unify a spirit. Suppose that I imagine how a professor would call me out in his seminar and I would not know the answer. This could make my stomach turn and motivate me to prepare intensively for this seminar. Both this imagination and its effects on me are only possible because I am already acquainted with people and classrooms, as well as
with my sensitivity for public humiliation. This event thus refers to a
diachronically existing spirit.  

(4) Lastly, Husserl points to the formal individuation of Erlebnisse. The
Erlebnis I am living through here and now is unique; it cannot be had by
anyone else and never be repeated by me. Husserl calls this individuation of
the Erlebnis formal, because an Erlebnis is not individuated on the basis of
a particular content or quality, but only on the basis of its place in
consciousness. No Erlebnis will belong to the same total state of
consciousness.

III. Evaluation

If one wants to evaluate this demonstration of Husserl's, one must attempt
to respect what he is trying to describe. This is a transcendental experience
of the spirit as one and unified and not some kind of logical requirement for,
or factual origination of this idea.

I will criticize Husserl's phenomenological analysis of this experience by
giving support to a hypothesis which, if it were confirmed, would jeopardize
three claims of Husserl's.

The hypothesis I wish to launch is that a referral to a body that can be
followed by others in an intersubjectively shared space and time is as
essential to the awareness of being a diachronic I, as the experience of a
surface is to the experience of a color. I say ‘referral to a body’ and not
‘awareness of a body’ because I want to examine whether our awareness of
being a diachronic I presupposes that we have the idea of having such a
body, even if we do not consciously think about it. If we work with this idea,

\[9\] Note that Husserl would be happy to admit that a track of
neuron firing could be followed from the moment upon which I started
daydreaming to the moment upon which my stomach turned and through
my intensively preparing for class, without needing to take back that a
reason for the turning of my stomach and my preparing for class is the
meaning that this imagination has for me.
even if we do so unconsciously, then this idea is still given in experience and not just some logical condition outside of it.

A preliminary argument for my hypothesis and against a claim of Husserl's appeals to a reading of Wittgenstein's arguments against the logical possibility of a private language.\(^\text{10}\) Husserl thinks of the spiritual I as a subject that grasps meaning and claims that this subject in its self-grasp should not necessarily represent itself as others would represent it, or, more precisely, that how it appears to others should not necessarily enter its experience of itself or of what it goes through. One strand in Wittgenstein's reasoning that I endorse, and take to refute this claim, is this.

We can only be said to grasp the meaning of something if we are able to (later on) recognize that this or something has the same meaning. If there are criteria on the basis of which I recognize this meaning, then others, who are like me and know of these criteria, should be able to recognize this meaning as well. Yet, even when I don't need to infer that something has a specific meaning through seeing that certain phenomena fulfill certain criteria, and some meaning seems to immediately come to me, like the meaning of pain in my toe, then I use concepts (as, say, 'sensation' or 'having') in my understanding of this pain of which others like me know the meaning as well. When I grasp the meaning of something, I single it out as something, and for this I need a language and grammar that others can in principle follow as well as they can follow an index finger.

If this is true and me grasping the meaning of something requires that I am able to recognize this meaning and, thus, am able to follow again a selection that others can follow as well, then we should admit that the representation of others of me and what I go through appears at the horizon of every experience that I have of myself or of what I go through.

Secondly, I wish to provide support for the idea that our consciousness of being a unified and individuated spirit is tied up with our consciousness of having a body that takes up some space in an intersubjectively shared

physical world. My support is not conclusive\textsuperscript{11} but meant to render this idea intuitive.

The first phenomenon I wish to hint at is that our conscious acts may not only present themselves as occurring now, as Husserl observes, but also as occurring here. Not only do we locate our sensations at the surface of or inside our bodies, we also seem to situate our thought processes and acts of self-awareness within the boundaries of our bodies. I neither locate my thought processes in the corner on the opposite of the room, nor do I experience these as stretching out over the entire universe. Rather it seems as if they are taking place, right here, inside, or close to my body, and I’m tempted to say, oftentimes inside our head – the latter perhaps most clearly when I spend some time trying to formulate a thought, or also when I deliberately keep my thoughts to myself, and with exceptions such as when I reflexively succumb to a physical movement, or perform it automatically, or when I become aware of a certain desire, or feel an emotion stir me. The origination of the experience that my thought processes are in my head may be quite contingent. It may in great part depend on the fact that my eyes, ears and mouth are where my head is; and an opposite phenomenon seems to occur in the famous, although exceptional, event of an out-of-body-experience. Yet, this does not make the phenomenon I hinted at less real or considerably less general.

However, a further step is needed to support the idea that situating our thought processes in our body is as essential to our experience of being a (diachronic) I, as is the experience of a surface to the experience of a color. If I don’t develop an argument to defend this as a logical necessity, but limit myself to hinting at certain phenomena, as I here wish to do, then one way to do this is to make intuitive the idea that my experience of being a (diachronic) I is jeopardized when I no longer locate my thought processes and awareness of being a self inside my body, as well as that this experience of being an I is restored when we reestablish this latter awareness. Cases

\textsuperscript{11} For more conclusive arguments confer chapter 7 in Gareth Evans. \textit{Varieties of Reference}. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), as well as Quassim Cassam. \textit{Self and World}. (Oxford: University Press, 1997). It is my intent to evaluate and develop these arguments in further work.
illustrating the former suggestion are the phenomenon of psychosis, as well as the fact that when one pretends that one sees right through someone this will initially cause panic (this is especially visible when a child is ignored in this way) and ultimately have a numbing and deadening effect. A phenomenon in support of the latter hypothesis is that when someone completely loses herself, say because of a traumatic event or in psychosis, we will not typically try to restore her identity by asking her who she thinks she essentially is, but rather by grabbing her by the shoulders or letting her have a seat. She herself will oftentimes try to gather herself again by dabbing her face with water (and also looking in the mirror); a cure found useful by psychiatrists who have wrapped patients like these in bandages or put them in bath. Knowing where I am and what my boundaries are seems in all these cases to help restore my idea that I am.

If all of this is true and my consciousness of being an I always requires that I have an experience of my bodily boundaries, then Husserl’s claim that we can describe the transcendental experience of our spiritual unity without reference to our experience of our bodily unity is refuted.

Thirdly, and lastly, I would like to make a case for the hypothesis that our experience of being a diachronic self does not merely depend on us situating our conscious acts in an internal time, as Husserl suggests, but also requires that we locate our conscious thoughts in a time that can be shared by others. I will defend this hypothesis by asking Husserl two critical questions in this regard, and conclude by suggesting, how this hypothesis, if confirmed, can shed some new light on the philosophical discussion of what allows for what in the constitution of personal identity.

About the pure I that plays a major role in our pre-reflective as well as in our reflective self-awareness Husserl says that it can never vanish. It will even be there in the dreamless sleep, be it only in reference to its becoming more awake and active again.\textsuperscript{12} We then realize in retrospect that it has been there all the time. If this is so and our awareness of a pure I is an awareness of an I that has always been there, even when we were at some point

neither pre-reflectively nor reflectively aware of it, do we then not refer to it as being carried by a Leib or some other kind of body that has continuity in an objective space and time? Where else would we situate it at moments of dull consciousness? The question is here not how the I before the sleep appears to be the same I as the one after the sleep; that can become obvious through its memories, habitualities, motivations and general comprehension of the world. The question is how the I after the sleep can assume that there was an I during the sleep and that it is the same as this I. I already suggested that a reference to a body may be needed for this. I now wish to suggest that we will for this need to situate ourselves as abiding in an objective time, this is an intersubjectively constituted time with something like hours and days.

A question related to this is this: If we want to understand habitualities as habitualities, is it then not so that this presupposes, rather than it constitutes, the concept of a contiguous stream of consciousness or of one person? It seems that if you say that convictions appear as ones that you already had, you refer to some abiding substance that holds different experiences. My question is where this idea comes from and from which images it makes use. Could it be that for this we need an embodied being that can be traced by others and to which all habitualities and motivations can be ascribed?

When Husserl says that all Erlebnisse will be tied in a different total state of consciousness, he also means that experienced contents will constantly reorganize themselves. What first belonged to the primal present can become further and further retained (but we can bring everything back to mind in principle), and similar memories of the same event will never be the same because they will be informed by a new context. My question is whether these experienced contents would reorganize themselves in this way if we did not already have the idea of being one person with one particular history that stretches itself out through a time of days and years. At first sight we seem to need the idea of a person and a linearly unfolding time to conceive of the idea that we can trace back some of our experiences. And even when we understand that the time in which our memory-contents are presented to us does not match the objective time, a question remains. When Marcel bites in a Madeleine and past experiences come to mind, could
this then be made possible by his awareness of the fact that he has one diachronically unfolding life? Could this be necessary to motivate him to turn to past experiences so as to make sense of current experiences?

A consequence for the question of personal identity would be that my one identity is not so much constituted by the memories I have, as my memories may be constituted by the one identity I have. Or stronger, that the one identity I have is not derived from some kind of unity of consciousness.

Other arguments in favor of this are the following. (1) When someone asks me whether I was as tired last week as I am now, then I will first have to reconstruct where and when I was last week, as well as what I did, to then recall what I thought and felt. I don’t seem to have an immediate access to this previous feeling of tiredness. (2) Also, we don’t remember nearly as much as we might at first sight think we do. When someone asks me ‘do you remember the time that you were in tenth grade?’, I will say ‘of course I do’. Yet, I may not find very much when I start thinking about specific things I did or thought back then. Still we spontaneously think that our past forms some kind of unity. My suggestion is that this has to do with the one body (and name) we have, by means of which third persons can trace us and tell stories about us.
Abstract: In this paper, I aim to give a partial account intellectual or epistemic trust. We use epistemic trust when we obtain some belief by trusting some person via that person’s cognitive faculties, practices, or traits. I argue that any comprehensive account of epistemological concepts must give an analysis of epistemic trust. A good theory of epistemic desiderata must account for trust because, as I argue, trust is necessary for a great portion of what we think we know. Here, I appeal to the role of trust in testimonial beliefs and the role of trust in taking our own cognitive faculties (or practices, in general) to be reliable. Then, I explore how virtue theory can account for epistemic trust—either on a reliabilist or responsibilist approach to intellectual virtue. I end by suggesting a few benefits for virtue epistemology if trust is an epistemic virtue.

Intellectual trust has been big philosophical business lately. A renewal in the epistemology of testimony has spurred an interest in the epistemic status of our trust in the words of others. However, I don’t want to limit the use of trust to how we take others’ words to be reliable. Epistemic trust (ET), as I use the phrase, occurs whenever we obtain some belief by trusting some person (via that person’s epistemic faculties, practices, or traits). So construed, testimony isn’t the only source of knowledge for which ET is pertinent. I shall argue that any robust theory of epistemic desiderata (e.g. knowledge, justification, warrant, etc.) must, if it is sufficiently complete, account for the role of such trust in our intellectual life. If I’m right about the pervasive use of ET as a doxastic practice, then it becomes a key point of investigation for the epistemologist. Next, I shall examine how the virtue epistemologist can non-trivially account for ET as an epistemic virtue and end by suggesting a few benefits of a virtue-theoretic approach to ET.

Why ET is Epistemically Vital
I’ll give two arguments in this section. They aim to show that any comprehensive epistemology, i.e. any epistemology that claims to analyze all of the vital aspects of knowledge, justification, warrant, etc., must account for ET. The arguments here will appeal to transmission of knowledge and epistemic circularity. They show, in general, the necessity of ET for knowledge and, in particular, that ET is necessary because our cognitive faculties and/or condition isn’t as strong as it could be.

**The Transmission Argument**

We typically assume that it is possible to transmit knowledge. That is, we take it for granted that is possible for some person, S, who knows some proposition, p, to transmit that p to another via communication. I use the term ‘communication’ to avoid implying that all transmission (testimony) occurs by explicit assertion. Here, I follow a broad approach to testimony, similar to Jennifer Lackey.¹ And, what’s more important, we assume that the listener knows p as well as S. Obviously, my aim here is testimony and the epistemic status of beliefs we obtain by testimony. The argument for the good epistemic standing of testimony (i.e. justifying the assumption about testimony) is simple and well-rehearsed. Unless we accept the possibility that knowledge can be transmitted via testimony, we’ll be doomed to suffer a deep and intractable global skepticism. If anyone considers what we think we know, then the amount of testimonial beliefs that form the core of this knowledge is quite substantial. We obtain knowledge of simple facts when we are young almost exclusively through the testimony of others. When older, we still must rely on others for a great deal of what we know—both mundane and significant. Whenever I ask someone, “what time is it,” I rely upon their testimony to give me some piece of knowledge. This knowledge can be either trivial or vital. If I am walking leisurely downtown, then the testimonial belief isn’t significant, but

---

if I must be at a particular building for a job interview, then the time is key to the health of my financial life. A fortiori, philosophers have been quick to recognize this rather common-sense recognition of the role of testimony in our knowledge. Hence, if we are to know much at all—perhaps even anything at all—we must account for the transmission of knowledge.

Now, aside from the epistemic standing of beliefs via transmission, we must consider how it works, cognitively speaking. Transmission isn’t as simple as someone communicating that p and someone else believing that p. The person who receives the communication must accept it. Now assuming that acceptance isn’t automatic, then what is it that can account for this acceptance? I suggest ET. If I place my trust in the person communicating that p, then I see that person as reliable and thus p as plausible. I accept p only if I (intellectually) trust the person communicating that p. So, combining this claim with the conclusion of the prior argument, if we are to accept most of what (we think) we know, then we must give ET a key role in our theory of knowledge, justification, warrant, or other epistemic concept. In short, if transmission is vital for most knowledge and ET is indispensable for transmission, then ET is essential in our epistemology.

The Epistemic Circularity Argument

As with the transmission argument, philosophers have given much thought about the circularity of certain cognitive processes and doxastic practices. My main appeal here is to the work of William Alston, but concerns similar

---

to his litter the philosophical landscape. Alston asks us to consider just what possible argument(s) we could give for the reliability of sense perception (SP). He examines several arguments that aim to demonstrate the (general) reliability of SP and he finds that all of them at some point among the premises rely upon the assumption that SP is reliable. Thus, in his terms, all arguments for the reliability of SP suffer from epistemic circularity. He means that, given our epistemic circumstances, faculties, and practices, we cannot argue for the reliability of SP without appealing to that for which we are arguing. Lucky for us, we need not show that we are justified in accepting SP to be justified in accepting SP. Without this answer, the epistemic circularity at issue could be vicious and defeat any knowledge from SP. So, instead of a global skepticism, he claims that “for any established doxastic practice it is rational to suppose that it is reliable, and hence rational to suppose that its doxastic outputs are prima facie justified.”

---


4 Alston, “Epistemic Circularity,” 5-8,

5 This claim, I take it, is consistent with saying that if we had different (better) epistemic faculties or if we were in a different epistemic condition, then it is possible to demonstrate the reliability of SP without begging the question. However, this possibility is moot for the question at hand.

6 Alston, Perceiving God, 183.
Now, for our purposes here, let’s see just what it means so suppose that some doxastic practice is reliable. I suggest a plausible interpretation is that we place our trust in the doxastic practice at hand. That is, I’m proposing that “S supposes that F as reliable” is a plausible interpretation of “S puts S’s ET in F.” When I epistemically trust my eyesight, then I’m simply taking the beliefs caused by my vision to be reliable. The same goes for any of the senses involved with SP. Alston’s argument implies that we are rational (or justified, warranted, etc.) in placing ET in SP. Yet, we need not stop with SP, for indeed Alston thinks that epistemic circularity infects any attempt to justify the reliability of “basic” sources of belief like induction, memory, deduction, to name a few. I suspect he has in mind here certain arguments like those of Hume against induction, Carroll against modus ponens, Aristotle’s in book Γ of the Metaphysics for the circularity of the principle of non-contradiction, and others. Hence, if we are to accept that we must place our ET in SP, then we should say the same about memory, deduction, and induction as well. So, even though a host of doxastic practices may be infected with epistemic circularity, they need not be viciously circular such that they undercut knowledge. As with the transmission argument, unless we accept ET as a plausible epistemic source of belief, then we cannot avoid a massive skepticism.

I take the upshot of the following to be the general claim that any robustly comprehensive epistemology (or theory of epistemic concepts) must account for ET, since ET is so essential to a large amount of knowledge. Thus, if we are to examine the adequacy of any epistemology, at least a part of this analysis should be how it concerns itself with ET. Let’s see how virtue theory can account for ET.

Epistemic Trust and Intellectual Virtue

This section explores what an approach from virtue epistemology towards ET must look like. I don’t have the space or the time to argue for virtue theory, so this will be an exploration from here on. I follow Code, Axtell, Baehr, and others in distinguishing two different approaches to virtue in

---

epistemology: virtue responsibilism and virtue reliabilism. Since they differ fundamentally on the nature of epistemic virtue, I shall divide this section into two parts; one applying virtue reliabilism to ET and the other doing the same for virtue responsibilism. Let’s turn to the former now.

**ET and Virtue Reliabilism**

Given a proper definition of virtue reliabilism, we don’t need to add much to show how it can account for ET. By the term, ‘virtue reliabilism,’ I understand any theory that analyzes intellectual or epistemic virtue as any cognitive process or faculty that reliably produces true belief. Ernest Sosa’s conception of a virtue allows any disposition that causes one to have reliable beliefs (indexed to fields, environments, and conditions) to count as a virtue. In a very similar sort of approach, Alvin Goldman takes a virtue to be any reliable cognitive faculty—his standard examples being vision, hearing, and memory. On either account, a host of cognitive features could possibly count as virtues.

So, let’s say that a theory of epistemic virtue is reliabilist just in case it counts any cognitive feature, process, practice, or faculty as a virtue if such a feature is reliable. It should be clear from this definition that there is a large amount and variety of different cognitive features that could be a virtue. Moving from this key point, it is important to note that ET is a cognitive practice or feature. I use ET to obtain beliefs and, therefore, it belongs in the laundry list of putative epistemic or cognitive practices that could possibility be an intellectual virtue.

Now, recall the arguments from the previous section regarding testimony and epistemic circularity. These arguments, if sound, show that ET is

---


necessary if we are to know most of what we think we know. Hence, if our
beliefs are reliable, then this reliability is due in large part to the ET by
which we obtain most of our knowledge. Hence, if ET is a cognitive process
or feature and if it is reliable, then it must be an epistemic virtue on any
robust virtue reliabilism. If we are to accept virtue reliabilism, then we
must accept that ET is an intellectual virtue.

**ET and Virtue Responsibilism**

Showing how ET fits into a virtue responsibilism framework is a bit tricky,
due to the variance among the accounts of epistemic virtue here. I’ll begin
with a rough idea of a responsibilist intellectual virtue and then give a few
examples of this approach. In examining virtue reliabilism, we noted
that theories of this sort count a wide array of cognitive processes and practices
as virtues. Responsibilism does just the opposite. For the responsibilist,
only an embedded trait of one’s intellectual character could possibly be a
virtue. The problem for us here is that many responsibilist theories differ
wildly on the specifics of intellectual virtue. So, instead of a necessary and
sufficient account of virtue like that for the reliabilist, I’ll propose only a
necessary condition: a theory of epistemic virtue is responsibilist only if it
counts traits of (intellectual) character as putative virtues, rather than any
doctrastic or cognitive practice whatever. It is important to note that I’m
distinguishing virtue reliabilism from responsibilism by the sorts of
practices that count as virtues rather than any claims about reliability or
success towards true beliefs.

Consider here, views like Lorraine Code and James Montmarquet. They
both argue that a virtue is something for which an agent is responsible\(^\text{10}\) or
else subject to one’s direct volitional control.\(^\text{11}\) Perceptual faculties are not


under our direct control and, I suggest, aren’t something for which we are responsible. Instead, what we can control are our cognitive traits. On this point we see this Code and Montmarquet’s approach to virtue looks like Linda Zagzebski, who explicitly defines virtues in terms of embedded traits of character.\textsuperscript{12}

Since the characterization at the beginning of this section provides only a necessary condition for virtue responsibilism, the argument(s) for ET as a responsibilist virtue will have to differ from the previous section. Instead, I’ll give two arguments that differ fundamentally from above: one that appeals to the epistemic eudaimonia and the other that appeals to the paradigmatic person of intellectual virtue.\textsuperscript{13}

In appealing to the epistemic eudaimonia, I’ll have to walk a fine line. On one hand, I need to say enough about it to avoid either triviality or vacuity. On the other, I’ll have to be broad enough so that a plurality of possible views will fit on my account. I assume that the epistemic good life requires that the agent obtain a virtuous character. I will not assume that such a character reliably leads to truth, since this runs afoul of any internalist approach to epistemic virtue. This means that one must be successful in obtaining the virtuous character traits that (jointly) constitute intellectual virtue rather than stipulating that the success in question must be regarding true beliefs. I think that ET can easily fulfill this requirement. Consider only the testimony argument above. If ET is necessary for testimonial knowledge, justification, et al., then any epistemic eudaimonia composed of testimony requires ET. Pick whatever criterion of the epistemic good life you want, and I suspect that testimonial beliefs will form


\textsuperscript{13} My two appeals here derive from Zagzebski’s (following Slote) distinction between “good-based” and “agent-based” theories of virtue.
part of it. So, a good-based approach to epistemic virtue requires ET. A
fortiori, if the epistemic eudaimonia does include reliability—then I’ve
shown how ET fulfills this criterion in my examination of virtue reliabilism.

Now, let’s move on to the argument from the epistemic exemplar. Again,
this argument is tricky. I must appeal to any good candidate for intellectual
virtue, so my claims must be broad. But, I mustn’t be so broad as to make
such an appeal meaningless. So, I’ll try to be minimal but informative as
well. Let’s think about what sort of traits the paradigmatic person of
(intellectual) virtue would possess, if actual. I suggest that a good way to
consider this question is to consider what sorts of motives that this alleged
person would possess.\footnote{My procedure here falls in line with Zagzebski’s motivation-based approach.} I take it that the guiding motive is to think well and
to obtain whatever epistemic goods there might be—putative examples
thereof could be true beliefs, knowledge, justified beliefs, understanding,
wisdom, and a host of other possible epistemic ends. So, if we consider the
virtuous paradigm in terms of motive, will such a proper epistemic motive
lead one to display and possess ET? I think so. If one is motivated to obtain
either true or justified belief, then one must be motivated to use doxastic
practices well. And since use of these practices requires ET, as I argued in
section I, then this exemplar must be motivated to trust. Hence, ET is part
of the motivational structure of the paradigmatic person of virtue and,
combined with its status as an epistemic practice, qualifies as a
responsibilist epistemic virtue. In short, the virtuous epistemic agent will
display ET. So, if we use an agent-based approach to (intellectual) virtue,
we still arrive at the same conclusion as the appeal to epistemic
eudaimonia—namely that ET is included in the responsibilist virtues.

Hence, on any account of virtue that one might adopt, we see that ET is an
epistemic virtue. If our theory of knowledge must account for testimony,
epistemic circularity and cognitive function, then we see that virtue theory
can give a non-trivial role for ET as a virtue to satisfy these (and probably
other) important requirements. I’ll briefly suggest some advantages that
the epistemic virtue of ET possesses.
Implications

First, a virtue approach to ET provides a ready-made, principled response to the reductionism/credulism debate regarding testimony. Reductionists see the good epistemic standing of a testimonial belief reduces to or supervenes upon non-testimonial grounds, usually independent evidence. Credulists argue for the negation of this—namely, that testimonial beliefs (can) have good epistemic standing without any testimonial-independent grounds. I won’t catalog the worries with each position, but it should suffice to note there’s no shortage of argumentative ammunition in this war of attrition. On my (virtue) account of ET, it can allow us to talk about well-formed (here, virtuous) belief without talking about the evidence for that belief. Hence, we can capture a core intuition from the credulist camp. However, we mustn’t forget that other virtues, some dealing with evidence, must be in operation—at least as a limiting condition or disposition. Hence, we must be concerned with evidence in some respect with regards to testimony (preserving some of the motive behind reductionism). When we are young and have not developed sophisticated virtues that govern how we process evidence, ET will function with a broader reign. Later, we can develop more sensitive ‘eyes’ to the testifier as well as the epistemically pertinent features that surround the testimony. Thus, the proper epistemic status of a belief is highly context sensitive, which we should expect on some accounts of testimony. In short, a virtue approach to ET shows us

---

15 Here, I follow the terminology of Duncan Pritchard.


that the epistemology of testimony requires a more nuanced approach than either reductionism or credulism.

Further, many critics of virtue theory do so on the basis of perceptual knowledge.\textsuperscript{18} If knowledge requires virtue, then simple cognitive acts like perceiving don’t seem to need such aretaic sophistication. However, If I’m right that ET extends beyond testimony to trust in our own faculties (as I argued dealing with epistemic circularity), then there is a major virtue operating for perceptual knowledge—ET. Such trust must be here even if it is only dispositionally. I see a tree outside and I trust my eyes, thereby obtaining the belief that there is a tree. Since there are virtues operating here, it is certainly a good candidate for knowledge on virtue theory. And, what’s more, if knowledge requires credit, then we have a virtue operating for both testimonial and perceptual beliefs. We can preserve attributions of credit that merely appear too easy—answering another criticism of virtue theory.\textsuperscript{19} So, if ET is a virtue, then we can answer this problem for virtue epistemology as well as give a principled answer to the reductionism/credulism debate above.


\textsuperscript{19} For a criticism of virtue epistemology that centers around credit-attribution, see Jennifer Lackey, “Why We Don’t Deserve Credit for Everything We Know,” \textit{Synthese}, vol.158 (2007).
“One cannot extract any diabolical or demonic profundity from Eichmann,” Arendt concluded in her 1963 piece on the war crimes of Nazi Adolf Eichmann.\(^1\) Arendt was adamant that this “banality” neither excused his crime nor belittled its extraordinary horror, yet her work generated considerable controversy among the Jewish community and others who argued her view was too sympathetic.

In 2009, director Quentin Tarantino released Inglourious Basterds, a film that details Nazi evil and Jewish revenge while attempting to draw on a collective, audience-shared revenge fantasy. It specifically follows nearly identical but unrelated revenge plots of both an American Jewish squad, called the Inglourious Basterds, and a Nazi-shooting survivor, Shoshana (Melanie Laurent). Colonel Landa (Christoph Waltz) is the spotlight Nazi villain, who performs a surprisingly instrumental role in ensuring the immediate decimation of the Nazi Party. Landa and Eichmann are often compared in critic reviews, and some feel that Inglourious Basterds invoked Arendtian themes, such as banality and self-interest. In spite of some intersections, I argue that Tarantino detrimentally diverts from Arendt. Both invoke the significance of history and storytelling as political tools to procure justice and understanding, but Tarantino erringly depends on violence to convey these themes.

Film critic Alan Stone writes that “[Colonel Landa] defects to the Allies . . . He is not the incarnation of the Jew-hunting Nazi we have been led to suppose. Instead, like many Tarantino characters (and Arendt's Eichmann), he is faithful only to his own banal self-interests.” Critic J. Hoberman, too,

describes Colonel Landa as “Eichmann as fun guy!” Connections between Colonel Landa and Adolf Eichmann are common, then. However, the question of whether or not Landa—and the movie as a whole—rightly invokes Arendt is worth investigating. Inglourious Basterds is Tarantino’s top grossing film to date, and may launch indie film studio Weinstein Co. out of bankruptcy (Stone 50). Such widespread popularity further underscores its role as a potent cultural narrative; therefore, an Arendtian analysis into how it assembles meaning of the past is of interest.

That this film is a gratifying cinematic fantasy for many is largely accepted. Eli Roth, who plays one of the Inglourious Basterds, describes it as “kosher porn.” He elaborates, “It’s almost a deep sexual satisfaction of wanting to beat Nazis to death, an orgasmic feeling.” The film’s producer, Lawrence Bender, describes it as a “Jewish wet dream.” Film critic Ryan Gilbey accurately assesses the film as a “wish fulfillment fantasy.” Tarantino defends his film’s gratuitous violence by rhetorically asking, “Why would [anyone] condemn me? . . . I was too brutal to the Nazis?” As such, the film’s


\[\text{Goldberg, 77.}\]
premise rests on an assumed collective Nazi revenge fantasy—one that entails scalping, torture, and relentless brutality.

Fantasies such as Inglourious Basterds are arguably built through the faculty of imagination—one that Arendt invests with significant political import. She wrote, “I am convinced that understanding is closely related to that faculty of imagination . . .” For Arendt, understanding is an essential facet of constructing and maintaining systems of judgment. Elizabeth K. Minnich writes that Arendt felt “[w]ith the use of memory that ‘makes present what is absent’ and imagination that can change what is really unchangeable, we leap above the stubborn here/now/thisness of the world.” Arendt’s views on storytelling offer additional insight as to why narrative constructions such as Inglourious Basterds have consequence. Specifically, the activity of storytelling allows humans to construct an identity—the “who,” as opposed to “what,” of themselves. We are, in this way, constitutive of the past, or of the narrative told.

---


11 Ibid. 184-186.
But is it justifiable to evaluate fantasies? According to critic Alan A. Stone, “in Tarantino’s world, one has no need for moral direction . . . Revenge of the Jews is the film’s simple premise, but it is not—as some critics bitterly protested—constructed on any moral or historical scaffolding, and represents nothing that anyone concerned about law and justice could imagine.”

Inglourious Basterds, by virtue of it being absurd, is not bulwarked from inquiries into its political consequence—especially when it proffers a version of justice. This film gives critics a valuable opportunity to analyze historical fiction as traversing the “here/now/thisness of the world.” Both political acts and artwork are not fettered to moral standards, according to Arendt, but are still not exempt from being judged. In fact, according to Leora Bilsky, Arendt believes that “a trial can remain a ‘theatre of justice,’” much like a play.

Arendt believes the storyteller “perceives and ‘makes’ the story.” Admittedly, she sees this candor as the privileged role of historians, as opposed to what the creator “fabricates.” Basterds does, however, attempt to utilize imagination and storytelling to assemble meaning of the past. Tarantino admittedly sought to find answers to exasperating questions concerning the helplessness and nonresistance surrounding the war. In an interview he elaborated, “When you watch all the different Nazi movies, all the TV movies, it’s sad, but isn’t it also frustrating? Did everybody walk into

12 Stone, 50.


14 Arendt The Human Condition, 192.

15 Ibid.
the boxcar? Didn’t somebody do something?”

This movie is historical fiction, but it offers a powerful and, for some, ideal version of justice. Tarantino and others see his film as amending the persistent depiction of the innocent as helpless in the face of evil. He paints a picture of justice that removes debilitation and replaces it with violent vengeance.

For Tarantino, the cinema is the site of power. The Third Reich leaders are gathered at Shoshana’s theatre to see the premiere of Goebbels’ propaganda film, Nation’s Pride. As such, the Nazi showdown takes place in a theatre; cans of film are set on fire and cause a mass explosion; and the proprietor of the theatre is a Gentile-passing Jew (Shoshana) who produces her own “movie” that gigantically projects her looming face and hysterical laughter before the flames. Other, more subtle points demonstrate the same: Inglourious Basterds leader Aldo Raine stands in awe of the swastika he carved into Landa’s head and delivers the movie’s last line, “I think this just might be my masterpiece.” The movie, too, gives a nod to propaganda and draws noticeable parallels between the actual Inglourious Basterds audience and the fictitious Nazi audience. For instance, the main actor in Nation’s Pride carves swastikas into the floorboards; the fictitious Nazi audience cheers at the deaths of Americans much like the actual American audience celebrates the inverse; and Goebbels’ describes his film as his “masterpiece.” Like Arendt, Tarantino underscores the power of storytelling—however, unlike Arendt, only as a vehicle for the projection of violence does it attain its power for him.

This violence requires examination. The Inglourious Basterds team is parachuted into Vichy France specifically to, in the words of leader Aldo Raine

...be cruel to the Germans, and through our cruelty they will know who we are. And they will find the evidence of our cruelty in the disemboweled, dismembered, and disfigured bodies of their

---

16 Goldberg, 76.

17 Walters, 21
brothers we leave behind us. And the German [sic] won't be able to help themselves but imagine the cruelty their brothers endured at our hands, and our boot heels and the edge of our knives. And the German will be sickened by us. And the German will talk about us. And the German will fear us. And when the German closes their [sic] eyes at night and they’re tortured by their [sic] subconscious by the evil they have done, it will be with thoughts of us that they are tortured with.

Aldo Raine is self-described “half-Apache” and sees this as a direct correlation between what war methods he finds most appealing—every soldier owes him “100 Nazi scalps.” The audience shortly discovers that scalping is but one constituent of this terror brigade. One soldier in particular, nicknamed The Bear Jew (Eli Roth), bludgeons Nazis with a baseball bat. And it is common practice to let one Nazi soldier live for every ambushed unit—albeit marked with a cavernous swastika carved into his forehead.

For Tarantino, this serves a definite purpose. As he reveals in an interview, “the pain inflicted . . . on the Nazis was inflicted only to terrorize.”\(^{18}\) Arendt, conversely, feels that “violence, as distinguished from power, is mute; violence begins where speech ends.”\(^{19}\) More, violence—whose consequence is indoctrination—actually promotes totalitarian objectives and constricts our ability to understand, leading to a loss of common sense and concomitant rise in stupidity.\(^{20}\)

Tellingly, Tarantino defends his movie’s “thoughtless” use of torture by claiming that “[e]xcessive thoughtfulness . . . is the reason his Jewish friends

\(^{18}\) Goldberg, 76.

\(^{19}\) Arendt “Understanding and Politics” 308.

\(^{20}\) Ibid., 314.
find most Holocaust movies so exasperating.”\textsuperscript{21} Arendt criticized Eichmann for “his inability to think, namely, from the standpoint of somebody else” which she saw as the cornerstone of his evildoings and termed “thoughtlessness.”\textsuperscript{22} Eichmann was also unable to comprehend his actions in another form of thoughtlessness. He even seemed unable to grasp the circumstances of his trial.\textsuperscript{23} He wasn’t expressly committed to the principles of anti-Semitism per se, and he wasn’t motivated by any inherent avarice or sadism. His determination to avoid abasement was boundless. The banality of it surfaces in his lack of consideration—a negligence that enables “limitless” evil, or evil that is not bound by the attainment of any goal or drive.\textsuperscript{24}

Comparisons between Eichmann and Tarantino’s Colonel Landa appear, at first glance, to be accurate. Although Landa obtains pleasure in both uncovering hidden Jews and his terror-inducing reputation as “The Jew Hunter,” he works with the Inglourious Basterds regiment to destroy the Nazi Party. In the end, two of the soldiers are able, largely because of Landa, to machine-gun top party officials, including Hitler, as they all burn to death, locked inside a fiery movie premiere event. In the opening scene, Landa and his men ominously drive up a country lane, set to equally portentous spaghetti Western music. After arriving, he introduces himself to the property owner with sincerity and comportment. The scruples he exercises and blandishments he flouts before sitting or asking for a glass of

\textsuperscript{21} Goldberg, 76.

\textsuperscript{22} Arendt \textit{The Portable Hannah Arendt} 324.


\textsuperscript{24} Ibid., 82-85.
milk form an eerie juxtaposition with his words. Landa insists the farmer
repeat what the common people call him. His face erupts in total glee when
the farmer unenthusiastically confesses they call him “The Jew Hunter.” His
face still shining, Landa responds

I understand your trepidation in repeating it. Heydrich apparently
hates the moniker the good people of Prague have bestowed upon
him. Actually, why he would hate the name “The Hangman” is
baffling to me. It would appear he has done everything in his power
to earn it. Now I, on the other hand, love my unofficial title
precisely because I’ve earned it.

As such, he takes certain pride in his contribution to Nazi genocide. This
proclamation even resembles Eichmann’s boast that “I will jump into my
grave laughing because the fact that I have the death of five million Jews on
my conscience gives me extraordinary satisfaction.” And, in an apparent
imitation of Eichmann’s desultory allegiance to the cliché, Landa professes

The feature that makes me such an effective hunter of the Jews is,
as opposed to most German soldiers, I can think like a Jew . . . Now, if one were to
determine what attribute the German people share with a beast, it would be cunning and the predatory instinct of a
hawk. But if one were to determine what attributes the Jews share with a beast, it would be that of the rat. The Furor and Goebbels’
propaganda have said pretty much the same thing. But where our
conclusions differ is I don’t consider the comparison an insult.
Consider for a moment the world a rat lives in. It’s a hostile world, indeed.

In fact, Landa’s abilities are so developed that he feels justified in utilizing
whatever venue allows him to exercise them, including the Holocaust. He
defends himself at the end of the movie by proclaiming, “I’m a detective. A
damn good detective. Finding people is my specialty, so naturally I work for
the Nazis finding people and, yes, some of them were Jews. But Jew Hunter?
Just a name that stuck.” It’s at that moment that Landa doesn’t boast about
his infamous moniker but snorts with disgust before repeating it. Landa so

---

evidently only craves clout and authority that he is able to successfully convince Raine that the Nazi Party annihilation (nicknamed Operation Kino) will go as planned as long as, in his words, “when the military history of this night is written, it will be recorded that I was part of Operation Kino from the very beginning as a double agent.” Landa of course is not interested in humanity but rather establishing his own security after the war. Yet the chimera of his authority is exposed when Raine—who revels in the lawlessness and self-made justice of the stereotyped Deep South—carves a swastika into Landa’s head as well.

Certain connections can, then, be made to both Landa and Eichmann. Both are authoritarians and have built their careers around emulating and being in the company of those in power as much as possible. They both, too, are aberrant examples of anti-Semitism. Landa did, after all, plant explosives underneath Goebbels’ and Hitler’s seats to ensure their demise and his participation in Operation Kino.

Unlike Eichmann, however, Landa somehow cultivates borderline Jew-hunting superpowers and can snuff out even the most clandestine—an absurdity the film repeatedly indulges. He truly does become an “expert,” as Eichmann was described, but his expertise is closer to cagey than hackneyed. Landa continually knows more than both the audience and the surreptitious plotters. Too, he completely grasps the consequences of his actions and admits he mostly wants to avoid “find[ing] [him]self standing before a Jewish tribunal.” And, perhaps most disturbingly, he passionately chokes a German woman working with the Inglourious Basterds and never encounters so much as a moral hiccup in the entire movie. Eichmann, conversely, lacked the imagination necessary to configure the success of such a grandiose—if deeply satisfying—revenge plot. Importantly, Landa would not be able to console himself that “he did only what was statistically expected, that it was mere accident that he did it and not somebody else,” as Eichmann had done.26

26 Arendt, The Portable Hannah Arendt 381.
Perhaps because Landa displays the evil instincts of a natural sadist and murderer he is allowed to live, while “no member of the human race can be expected to want to share the earth” with Eichmann, who, because of his boundless evil, “must hang.” Tarantino does not let Landa reap infinite rewards for his reluctant participation in Operation Kino; instead, the swastika becomes a literal social marker to forever bind and identify him as an agent of immorality.

However, Inglourious Basterds ultimately functions as a flat pack fantasy version of justice, without the dialogue, imagination, or understanding Arendt identified as necessary elements to securing justice. It grapples with the fact that “every generation, by virtue of being born into a historical continuum, is burdened by the sins of the fathers” and tries to be successful at “meting out justice to both the defendant and the victim.” Nevertheless, its reliance on violence renders its message superfluous and taciturn while simultaneously debasing the potential of storytelling.

\[27\] Ibid., 375.

\[28\] Ibid., 388

Isaac Payne (Emory University) - Heidegger’s Unveiling of Truth in Art and Pablo Picasso’s The Old Guitarist

When one looks at a painting, what exactly does one see? Clearly one observes objects or entities that the artist’s brush has painted; one sees various interactions on the canvas. If one desires, however, to clearly gaze into the essence of a painting, then one must look further than the “thingly” nature of the work (Heidegger 652-653). In Martin Heidegger’s The Origin of the Work of Art, he analyzes the being or essence of a work of art, which he cogently demonstrates to be a functioning or happening of truth (Heidegger 668). When one reflects on the work by Pablo Picasso entitled The Old Guitarist, one can better understand the profundity of this piece by viewing it in light of Heidegger’s exposition. Picasso’s work illustrates Heidegger’s elucidation because in it one can see an exhibition of earth and world, which puts the essence or being of the content, namely the guitarist, into the “Open,” clarifying and essentially allowing the guitarist’s nature to be and exist.

When one looks at a painting, how does one experience or perceive the nature or essence of that which is presented in the work? In Heidegger’s exposition, he states that one must reflect on the work of art in order to discover the essence of the art that exists in the piece (Heidegger 651). All paintings are, minimally, things that one can observe (Heidegger 652). To this extent Picasso’s work is nothing more than any other object or painting that one could hang on a wall or hold in one’s own hands. Most art (art here and throughout this essay referring to painting), it would seem, would reside within this domain of thingliness, but one must be aware that art does more than just present things, ideas or persons; art seems to be symbolic and meaningful on levels besides its thingly structure (Heidegger 652). One can easily see that works of art are things and that they represent objects, places, persons or ideas. One can also see, however, that art pieces are more than just their thingly qualities. Art that advocates or expicates
certain arguments or stories has a meaning that starts with and is perhaps created by the characters or things in the work, but this meaning or elucidation cannot be reduced to the mere things themselves. Sculpture is not just a heap of dried clay or stone. Music is more than just the steel strings of a guitar or the wooden body of the piano. Poetry is not just a collection of words. Can one honestly describe Michelangelo’s David as just a stone thing? Similarly, if one were to reduce Picasso’s work down to its basic “things,” i.e. an old man, his clothes, a guitar, and a dim setting, or as a simple object itself, then one does not focus on the meaning or essence of the painting. One misses Picasso’s explanation of grief, melancholy and depression; one also misses Picasso’s exposition of the world of the man and his guitar (Wertenbaker 44). On this note, one must comprehend the nature or essentiality of thingliness before one can fully understand the character of art (Heidegger 652).

Picasso’s work seems to fall under all of the initial Heideggerian considerations of what the “thingliness” of things consists of: things are “...substances...[with] an aggregate of traits...” a unity of aistheton, or “that which is perceptible,” and “formed matter” (Heidegger 655-661). When one observes the painting, one sees an old man and his attributes. One sees his lifeless expressions; one notices his ragged and torn clothes; the spectator’s eyes gravitate towards the guitar in his hands and the ground on which he sits. One perceives a unity of all the different perceptions in the enclosed figure of the man. Picasso has formed the man to be seated in an almost meditative position. One hand begins to or has just finished strumming the guitar, while the other hand forms a chord. Picasso has certainly worked with the matter to form a purposeful posture and character within the painting. Do any of these definitions, however, reach the core of the work, the potential meanings that one could understand in the art? Heidegger discusses in his writing how none of these descriptions truly reach the thing as it exists “...in its very own being...[its] self-contained independence...” (Heidegger 662). Heidegger exposes the function of art to be the revealing or “setting up” of the truth of being (Heidegger 668). How and to what extent does this setting up happen then? This function of art sets up truth by describing the essence of things as they are, not as a descriptively accurate representation of how the thing looks in reality, but rather as it is in truth (Heidegger 665). Aletheia, or the “unconcealedness of beings”
functions in the work of art because the essence of the thing is exposed in the work (Heidegger 665-666).

In Heidegger’s examples of the peasant’s shoes and the temple, he poignantly demonstrates this purpose of art (Heidegger 666, 670). Van Gogh’s Peasant Shoes does not unconceal the truth of the shoes by depicting them realistically, but rather in his illustration one sees the use and meaning of the shoes as they are in the world or context of the peasant, who might wear them (Heidegger 666). Similarly, the temple is not merely a building; it allows the god or gods to actually be present in the structure (Heidegger 670). The temple stands firm in its ground on the earth, but rises up out of this earth to create a world wherein the presence of gods can dwell (Heidegger 671). These notions of earth and world are pivotal in the ability of the artwork to function as aletheia. The earth is the foundation of the world (Heidegger 674). It is the grounding out of which the context or the world of a person might come forth (Heidegger 674). It “shelters” and conceals the world of the painting (Heidegger 674). Heidegger seems to be saying that earth is not to be simply related as the matter in the painting or the actual planet earth, but rather it is the “sheltering agent,” out of which things arise but into which these things are brought back and sheltered (Heidegger 671). Here Heidegger analyzes what matter is and that of which it is capable. It grounds the painting, yes, but it seems to allow the world to return back into the earth. The world, on the other hand, is nonobjective in that one is never able to see an object that one can name or label as the world of the painting (Heidegger 673). For example, in Van Gogh’s work one sees only the shoes. One does not physically see the world of the peasant and how these shoes function in this world. The matter in the painting allows one to imagine and conceive this world, but it is not an absolute object in itself; the world is that in which the things in the painting dwell or exist (Heidegger 673).

What allows aletheia to operate in painting is the opposition between earth and world (Heidegger 676). In the struggle between the sheltering of the earth and the openness of the world, the beings or essences of the things in the painting are put out into “the Open” wherein they are illustrated lucidly (Heidegger 673, 676). Picasso’s painting, The Old Guitarist, quite expressively demonstrates all of these qualities of art. The earth of this
painting grounds the man’s being. The old man tiredly sits in an
ambiguously meditative position, legs crossed over one another. His neck
limply hangs over his body. The tiredness of the man is palpable as one
views his closed eyes and open mouth. His thin, white hair and his
emaciated and skeletal body create an atmosphere of oldness and perhaps
even death. His clothes are ripped and colored blue, emphasizing his poor
and pitiable nature, whether it is physical, spiritual or a combination of the
two. The man sits on a bluish, gray setting, perhaps cold stone or concrete.
This setting is combined with the permeating, melancholic sky that
surrounds the man, which further contributes to an earth that is bleak,
despondent and literally and figuratively blue. The man leans against a solid
gray wall, which firmly grounds him in this setting, supporting his
exhausted figure. The man, however, holds up a guitar, which is painted in
quite a different color tone than the rest of the painting, brown. It is a warm
and faded brown, but nonetheless it provides some sort of outlet or vitality
for the man. One of his hands fingers a chord on the neck of the guitar, while
the other hand either begins to strum or is just finishing strumming. Out of
this earth, one is able to envision a multiplicity of worlds in which this man
might exist. The old man might live in a world that is dark and weary. What
is the world of this old man? Perhaps he is a beggar, or perhaps he works in
the lowliest sector of the economy, struggling to survive; one perceives this
world from his torn clothes and his withered body, which are highlighted by
his thin, white hair and pale skin coloration. His cool, pallid skin
accentuates his age and dismal disposition. One recognizes him as poor and
ragged, maybe even on the verge of collapse. The bleak and grim ambience
of the hard, black stone setting and the cool, grey tones of the clouds in the
background, perhaps signifying impending night, drearily underscore this
world of the old man. The man does, however, firmly grip the neck of the
guitar, and perhaps he has just finished strumming the strings.

In this depiction, one can best understand the nature of der Riss, or the
strife and opposition of earth and world, matter and content (Heidegger
648, 676). Has the old man strummed the guitar? Is he sitting and languidly
contemplating and pondering the resonations from his, perhaps, distraught
chord? If so, what does the chord sound like, what expression does it
convey? These are the questions, which race through the viewer’s mind.
The diversity of interpretations seems inexhaustible. The content gives way
to different possible worlds, while simultaneously limiting those possibilities. One could see the old man as in motion to begin his chord. He could be preparing to strum upwards and begin his song or even his serenade. Maybe this chord will bring the old man back to life; he could be saved and revitalized by his music. Or on the contrary this chord or song might drearily echo the man's own tired and bleak soul. Since the world of the man here is clearly nonobjective, it is open to interpretation. How one sees the man interacting with his earth allows one to envision a different situation or world for the man. Picasso depicts an old musician in this painting; this is significant as the old guitarist might be presenting his own world through his medium of music. One must continuously return to the earth or the content of the painting and observe how the world is opened up within this earth; the world of the old man retreats back into its sanctuary of perceptions once more, however, and one must look again in order to reevaluate the man's world. When one sees this man sitting in this earth and the world that is opened up by this content, one sees his being “...brought into unconcealedness and held therein” (Heidegger 682). This, says Heidegger, is the beautiful in the work of art. Beauty occurs when truth “shines” forth in the painting by unconcealing the essence of the old man and his world (Heidegger 682). Picasso’s painting is a clear example of art’s ability to act as a phusis, which is an “...emerging and rising in itself and in all things” (Heidegger 671). As the guitarist sits in his condition, one is able to see his being as it is. One recognizes his world and his context. Even though this world is ambiguous, one continuously contemplates the content and sees how the world arises from within the earth. When one talks or writes of this world, then one makes the connection between matter and content even more evident. As one discusses the man’s posture, his attributes, his naked, raw disposition, one labels and unveils his world. The man’s being, the combination of his earth and world, is openly and illustratively displayed in a field of clarity.

An interesting meditation on this painting can be seen in Wallace Stevens’ The Man with the Blue Guitar. In this poem, one sees the artistic role of the old man in Picasso’s painting as a musician. The man is some type of artist in that he is making or creating a work, namely his music; one sees this when Stevens declares the old man to be a "shearsman" (Stevens 133). The guitarist is analogous to a shearsman because as the shearsman cuts and
trims vegetation to create a figure, so the old man picks and plays his guitar to create a song. In the poem, people listening to the musician complain that he does not “...play things as they are...” (Stevens 133-136). To this complaint the artist responds that his guitar, which he calls his blue guitar, changes “things as they are” (Stevens 133-136). Stevens’ poem declares that things as they are, are actually not so simple or clear-cut; objects or concepts in life are complex and have many layers of meaning and interpretation. Perhaps “things as they are” for the people listening are different from how they are for the old guitarist. The poet demonstrates this when he questions, “A million people on one string?” (Stevens 133-136). Surely a million people require more than just one string to hear things as they are. As diverse as humanity is, one string could not possibly create the amount of different notes and sounds that would be needed to organize the symphony of chords that are representative of different persons’ dispositions and interpretations. The guitarist’s instrument changes things, but to what extent? Perhaps it creates a world that is as it is from his interpretation? The guitarist limits his own ability to create a world of things when he states that “I cannot bring a world quite round, Although I patch it as I can” (Stevens 133-136). The old man is attempting to create a world through his music. However, he cannot bring the world “around,” indicating that maybe he cannot portray a complete, holistic world as it might appear for everyone. Here one sees a Heideggerian expression of how art works. The skill of the man and the notes that resound from his instrument, the earth and content of his work, emit and create a world. What kind of world does he create? Perhaps, since the guitar is blue, it is a world of depression and sadness. Regardless, in this poem one sees how the earth of the old guitarist, his music, sets forth a world of meaning for the man. Stevens states, “... The guitar and I are one” in section twelve of his poem; this claim further exemplifies how the guitarist’s world comes forth out of his instrument (Stevens 133-136). The poet declares, “As I strum the thing, do I pick up That which momentously declares Itself not to be I and yet Must be. It could be nothing else” (Stevens 133-136). The strumming and the resulting music is an expression of the artist himself; it is, in fact, equivalent to him to some degree. The old man has already interpreted and given a world of meaning to his music as he plays it. In section fifteen, the poet reflects on whether this painting might be a
“…picture of ourselves…” (Stevens 133-136). Are we to see the old man and his melancholic expression as a mirror reflecting into our own worlds? The world of the artist might become so real and transparent for the viewer, that he or she begins to more clearly recognize “things as they are” in his or her own world. This notion is advocated when the poet declares, “Is the spot on the floor, there, wine or blood And whichever it may be, is it mine?” (Stevens 133-136). There is an obvious ambiguity here, wine or blood, but regardless of this uncertainty, the spot could possibly be mine. Although the interpretations vary, the meaning, significance or relevancy to the spectator does not. Ultimately, it is important to see that in this poem Stevens is reflecting on the earth of Picasso’s painting. In his contemplation, Stevens interprets and is able to “paint” a world via his words, which allows another world to emerge and rise out of his work, namely the world of the old man as an artist.

Picasso’s painting is an exemplary paradigm of the truth-revealing ability of art. One vividly sees a struggle between earth and world as the old man and his sad character dwells in a content that powerfully allows his own world to come forth in the painting. Since this work is so inexhaustive in its interpretations, one sees how even after the world has come forth one must return to the content and reevaluate it for other possible meanings. The experience of the beautiful is clear and poignant in this painting. This is not only due to Picasso’s skill as an artist, but also to the exposition of the world and being of the old guitarist, which are made manifest in the matter of the work.
Simone Cherie Perry (Savannah State University) - On Bertrand Russell: Where he falters in Christian Analysis

Abstract

Atheist Bertrand Russell’s essay: “Why I am not a Christian” is a classic example of how a non-believer uses his beliefs about God, Christianity, and Creationism to find fallacies. However, in actuality, Russell only explains how these approaches don’t sit well with his individual conscience, rather than truly disproving them. I will pinpoint what I take to be the miscalculations and false assumptions in his arguments. Further, I will present an alternative view that accepts his points, but does not disregard Christianity altogether. This alternative, while taking Russell’s claims seriously, does not shatter the foundations of Christianity, but only a factor that not all Christians adhere to, namely, the Trinity.

Bertrand Russell, who lived from 1872 until 1970, was a world renowned British logician and philosopher. In one of his most popular lectures, “Why I am not a Christian,” Russell is arguing against the traditional claims of the Catholic Privy Council of Old England, and how they justified the existence of a Christian God. The council was most active during the reign of the Tudors when the Kingdom converted from Roman Catholicism to Protestantism. Russell attests that the reasons the Council used are still commonplace among today’s Christians. He begins with defining a Christian as: (1) a person one who believes in God and immortality, and (2) a belief that that Christ was divine, or at the very least, the wisest and greatest of men.

“Why I am not a Christian” is a classic example of how a non-believer attempts to use beliefs they hold about God, Christianity and Creationism to find fallacies in faith-based theories, but in actuality, Russell only explains how these theories do not sit well with his individual conscience, rather than disproving them at all. I will pinpoint the miscalculations and false assumptions in Russell’s arguments. That is, I will identify when and how his objections start with implying that one theory about God is untrue, but progress into his personal disapproval of such theory if it is true. Further, I
will present an alternative belief that accepts his points, but does not disregard Christianity altogether. An alternative which may even fit Russell himself; because many of Russell’s arguments do not shatter the foundations of Christianity altogether, but only a factor that not all Christians adhere to, namely the Trinity.

Russell addresses several arguments in this essay but I would like to identify three in which I find his logic to be the most problematic and would like to analyze further.

The first argument I will address is called “The Moral Argument,” and it encompasses the reasons the Privy Council found to account for the existence of God. This Moral Argument suggests that there is an absolute right and wrong, and that those were designed by God. The Moral Argument also implies that God is the ultimate legislator for right and wrong, good and evil, justice and injustice. In Russell’s arguments, he attests that he does not believe that there is right and wrong in the way that most theists do, but grants that if there is right and wrong, and if God created both, then they are not independent of him, but one in the same as Him. He suggests that God creating wrong contradicts the “good” God is supposed to be. Russell writes: “If you are sure there is a difference between right and wrong you have to decide if it is due to God’s fiat, or not. If it is up to God’s fiat, then for God himself there is no difference between right and wrong, and it is no longer a statement to say, God is good.” (Russell, 4)

I understand the point Russell is trying to make. He is merely suggesting that if God created something wrong or evil than he can’t be the “good” he is attributed to be. The problem that I find with Russell’s logic is that it does not take into account purposeful and intelligent design. One would have to address what they think God’s purpose is, to conclude whether or not some of his inventions, in this example, wrongdoing, evil and injustice, may not have been necessary to fulfilling this purpose, and thereby somewhat good.

Identifying what God’s purpose and plan is for creating human life can allow us to decide what was needed and unneeded. It is possible for God’s purposes that evil was needed to balance good. That does not mean that because both were created by the same entity that there is no substantial difference between the two at all.
If you use the logic that most theists use, that God is an entity who wants to be sought wholly, faithfully, and without ulterior motive, it would seem logical that wrongdoing would be a necessary invention to allow humans an array of choices to make in how to live their lives and thereby to prevent a shallow choice of seeking a life of holiness.

My second discomfort with this Moral Argument is the depiction Russell has of the deity, God as being "good." I wonder if Russell misunderstands the term "God is good" to mean God is only the sweet, cherries, butterflies, and rainbows kind of good. It seems more likely to me, that this good God is better understood as, good for you. It is much simpler to think of it this way: If your parents spank you, discipline you, make you unhappy for some weeks, they are still good people, they are trying to do what is good for you. That means giving you not just love and attention and gifts, but also a harsh word on occasion, and firm hand when you need it. However without the option there to do wrong, you would never know how much respect you really had for your parents because you would be obeying them arbitrarily.

Therefore I agree with Russell, that if God was the flowery image he seems to hold, that creating wrong would seem wrong in itself; however one need only adjust and redefine their perceptions of God to more accurately reflect on the state of the world to make better sense of absolute right and wrong.

The next argument of Russell’s I would like to address concerns an argument entitled “Defects in Christ’s Teachings.” Russell does not argue whether or not Christ existed, so we need not argue this. Russell only suggests that certain actions taken by Christ in the original gospels were not conducive to a great and wise man. He says "there are a lot of passages that make it clear Christ believed his second coming would happen during the lifetime of those living in Israel then...Christ says, "Take no thought for the morrow" and, "... Some here will not taste death before I come" and things of that sort. (Russell, 6) So, Russell believes that Jesus was unaware of his second coming and therefore is not superlatively wise, and for that matter, Russell does make an excellent point. Why tell people not to engage in mundane affairs if his second coming was so far away?

Unfortunately, for Russell, there are a couple of answers to this problem that accept Russell’s argument but do not disregard Christianity altogether. The first being that Christ, could still be divine and tell the people of the day
these things to influence them to live rightly, to live as if judgment was tomorrow. You will witness in nearly every religious sect that we are to conduct ourselves as if we were being judged immanently, and for that reason no date for Christ’s second coming was ever given in the gospels. A second point here is that Russell does not take into account that when one speaks of death in a biblical sense, they could be referring to one of two deaths. Either the first death that is of the physical body or the second death which is, the punishing or rewarding of the soul, as most Christians believe. So, it is fair to say Jesus may have been telling his people that many of them would not die (permanently, never to be resurrected) until Judgment day, and others, may enter heaven and never face a second death at all.

However, even if we grant Russell this point and decide that Christ was misguided in believing he would return soon, there is a third solution to this issue. It addresses the relationship one believes Christ to have with the Creator, namely the Trinity. There are several Christians who believe in God and in Christ being divine but not that God and Jesus are the same person or entity, only that Jesus was God’s special and eternally faithful creation. That being said, another possibility is that Jesus, being a metaphysical son of God, and not God himself was unaware, as we all are, of his own fate, or God’s plans for him. After all, Christ did think he had been forsaken while being tortured, so it is possible he does not have the omniscience that the creator God possesses, and may have indeed thought he would be around longer and return sooner.

And finally on this point one must remember, before saying that Jesus was misinformed, that it is widely accepted that God’s time works much slower than our own. That the seven days we interpret it took to create the world, were potentially seven days in God’s scope of time, and not ours. So, what is soon, for an immortal, who lives forever, could easily be several millennia, however, since we have but three score and ten” to see the light, one single year is a long time to wait for anything. It is my belief if Jesus professed to his imminent return it was likely to encourage the people of the time to live in a manner one would as if his second coming is right around the corner, in our time. In that way, we do not procrastinate living a righteous life.

Another argument I would like to pose, is in response to a critique Russell gives called the “Remedying of Injustice.” Remedying of Injustice is an
argument used by theists to rectify the problem of evil, which is, the belief that God cannot be all good, all knowing, and all powerful if there is evil in the world; to debate this the Remedying of Injustice argues that God ultimately brings about justice, if only in the next life. Russell of course critiques that this cannot be known, and furthermore, that if there is another life, it is likely as rotten as this one. He uses an illustration to explain this: “Take what we know about a crate of fruit, if the top layer is sour, what can be inferred about those beneath it?” (Russell, 5) The flaw in this analogy is obvious to me, a crate of universes and human lives, should they exist in such a quantity, would be (at least) to a theist, of a far more intelligent design than to be soured by rubbing up against each other. Unlike fruit, one world, or one life is not equal or even remotely comparable to another. Of course, one would have to believe in intelligent design to grant these statements true, but they do not have to be a Christian to grant intelligent design.

In this fourth and final point Russell exhibits what I believe to be a core belief in many atheists, a true dislike of the idea and/or work of an all-powerful God. In Russell’s final prose, titled the, “Moral Problem,” (not to be confused with the introductory Moral Argument I mentioned) Russell finds fault in Christ’s character because Christ believed in hell. Russell insists that due to this, Christ cannot be the greatest and wisest of men. Furthermore Russell states Christ was immoral because the Christian doctrine indicated eternal punishment for wrongdoing on Earth, which Russell finds deplorable. He references Socrates, another influential person who had unpopular beliefs but never suggested anyone suffer for not accepting them, and exalts Socrates above Christ for that reason.

I positively understand Russell’s frustration. Russell states “any person who believes in everlasting punishment cannot be profoundly humane.” (Russell, 7) Russell believes the people of the day Christ threatened with the Hell doctrine were people who merely did not listen to, or like his preaching. Russell is upset about the conflict that religion and Christ’s teachings have brought upon mankind.

My opinion on that is this: if anything is true it needs to be told, and that an ugly truth is more moral than any comforting lie. Socrates held his beliefs dear to his heart and died for them as well, however he had no message for
the well-being of man after this life that he felt pertinent enough about to evangelize. Socrates believed in moral obligation to tell those who were curious, but Christ, I would think, with a message that he believed would hold a person’s everlasting fate, would need to be slightly more aggressive in his delivery.

The reasons a doctrine of Hell causes conflict among humans is because it is complicated, uneasy to interpret and, quite honestly, frightening. That does not mean that it should have never been spoken. Should you blame the doctor for telling you your disease, and changing the life you have been so comfortable with? Russell is one of many who have an unrealistic, fantastical expectation of what a Deity is, or should be, when really we have no place to. There is no school for perfection of world and universe governance, and if there was, God would have created it!

There is a feeling of helplessness one may have when faced with Christian doctrine in this area, however this personal dissatisfaction we may have of it does not truly disprove it. Furthermore, to keep the potential fates of mankind secret from us but encourage us to live rightly to avoid them could be seen as evil as well. How horrible would we feel if we arrived at Judgment day and got that surprise? How many of us would’ve said, “Wait, if I would have known that, I would have changed!” I’m sure several of us, and for good reason. Because the point is, Jesus claimed to profess the truth, and one must wonder if truth is obligated to be nice. Does truth bear the responsibility of being sympathetic, understanding or convenient any more than it does to be fat or purple? Or is it simply required to be true?

In conclusion, throughout this essay we have been able to pinpoint flaws in four arguments in Russell’s “Why I am not a Christian” and present an alternative theological position. Firstly, in the “Moral Argument” Russell wrote he thought God creating good and bad, right and wrong meant that they must not be so independent to him, and that if they are, he cannot be all good for creating them; but through analysis we were able to understand that a Creator’s purpose must be known to infer what creations were necessary or unnecessary to that fulfill purpose, and further that if we alter our imperfect definition of God’s character as “good to me” versus “good for me,” we can better understand why these things exist.
Secondly, in the “Remedying of Injustice,” Russell stated that it is unwise to assume the an afterlife would bring about justice, because like a crate of fruit, things which run concurrently sour. But we identified this as a faulty analogy, by determining that one universe is not equivocal to a piece of fruit, intelligent design of a universe differs from the soil which springs the same tree; we remembered also that intelligent design does not have to be a Christian position.

Thirdly, we reviewed Russell’s “Defects in Christ’s Teachings” in which Russell identified areas in the gospel in which Christ seems misinformed. Christ told his followers to not dwell in earthly things and insinuated that his return would be imminent. These were compelling, but key points in theology were left out that shook the foundation of this argument because the relationship of Christ, who lived on Earth and God, the creator who made said Earth, do not necessarily have to be one in the same. Russell did not include the Trinity as the definition of what a Christian believes in, and there are indeed a great many Christians who believe otherwise. Finally, we took into account the common belief that immortal time, and mortal time, is different.

In the last section, the “Moral Problem,” we heard Russell decide Christ could not be great, at least not as great as Socrates, because he spread the doctrine of Hell which has causes much unrest in the world. We decided though, that Socrates had a far different message about the immortal soul, which should justify Christ’s reasons for evangelizing.

I hope with this essay, I was able to convince you that Russell’s analyses of Christian belief were perhaps too rigid to fit the ethical concerns he addressed in “Why I am not a Christian,” and furthermore that if slight modifications were made, an alternative theological position might have given Russell a bit more to think about in terms of disproving one of the world’s most prominent faiths.
Abstract Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a mental disorder that results from the experience of a traumatic, often life-threatening, event. PTSD is a controversial diagnosis. Natural kinds justify explanatory and inferential demands within scientific practices. In this essay, I place controversies that surround PTSD within a philosophical framework, defending the claim that PTSD is a natural kind.

Introduction
Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a mental disorder that develops in response to traumatic experience, such as a tragic, severe, life-threatening event, and is among the most controversial of mental disorders. Natural kinds are categories that justify scientific induction and explanation. In this essay, I place the controversies that surround PTSD within a philosophical framework, defending the claim that PTSD is a natural kind.


3 Among the literature that addresses the controversies: Robert L. Spitzer, Michael B. First and Jerome C Wakefield, "Saving PTSD from
In section one I introduce the notion of natural kinds, provide desiderata one should expect natural kind categories to meet, and introduce a distinction between two conceptions of natural kinds. Section two defends the claim that PTSD is a natural kind from an influential argument that denies this claim. Section three introduces neurobiological evidence that supports the claim that PTSD is a natural kind. Section four defends the claim that PTSD is a natural kind from neurobiological evidence that challenges my claims.

Natural Kinds

According to Richard Boyd, “...the philosophical theory of natural kinds is about how classificatory schemes come to contribute to the epistemic reliability of inductive and explanatory practices.” Classification within the sciences is a way of marking out categories that are inductively reliable (i.e., limited observations allow predictions about unobserved entities) and explanatorily potent (i.e., we can understand scientific observations by understanding what kinds of things are being observed). The first point to note is that natural kinds are domain relative. What is important for

4 Boyd 1999

explanatory and inductive purposes in chemistry may not be important to the neurosciences. Boyd’s quote suggests three desiderata of natural kinds:  

- **Natural Kinds Should Support Non-Accidental Inferences**
- **Natural Kinds Form Discrete Homogenous Categories**
- **Natural Kinds Are The Targets of Mechanistic Explanation**

Further details of each desideratum follow.  

Non-accidental inferences based upon limited observations of samples of a kind are “projectible.” An accidental inference occurs when there is nothing to substantiate inductive success beyond the co-occurrence of phenomena. For example, legend once suggested that the Super Bowl could predict stock market performance. The correlation between the Super Bowl and the

---

6 These desiderata are borrowed from Richard Samuels, forthcoming.

7 There are many interesting issues concerning natural kinds; limitations of space preclude me from addressing these issues here. For example, not everyone agrees that there are natural kinds (Hacking, A Tradition of Natural Kinds 1991; Hacking, Kinds of People: Moving Targets 2007; Hacking, Natural Kinds: Rosy Dawn, Scholastic Twilight 2007; for a reply to Hacking’s 1991, see Boyd 1991). Semantic issues are discussed in Scott Soames, “What are Natural Kinds?,” *Philosophical Topics*, Forthcoming. Here, I assume that some classification categories are natural kind categories.

8 Ibid., Goodman 1954


The stock market appeared to support the prediction that, if the AFC won, the stock market would fall. Whatever happy outcome may occur, it would not be due to the fact that the Super Bowl and the stock market form a natural kind. The correlation between the Super Bowl and the stock market performance is accidental. Natural kind categories do not support accidental inductive inferences of this kind.

Members of natural kind categories share common properties or features, forming homogeneous sets, justifying categorization. When members of a kind do not share common properties or features, they form a heterogeneous set. For example, jade is a kind of stone that is comprised of two distinct subcategories, jadeite and nephrite. Something is jade just in case it is either jadeite or nephrite; however, the chemical structures of jadeite and nephrite are different. Jadeite contains aluminum; nephrite does not. Thus, ‘jade’ is not a homogeneous category.

Clinical diagnosis is a way to categorize persons that share symptoms. Patients that are diagnosed as belonging to one category should form a homogeneous kind. A diagnosis that fails to identify persons with shared symptoms invites the risk of treating patients with different conditions as though they have the same condition, diminishing clinical success. The reason for this reduction in clinical success can be traced to the fact that these patients fail to be members of a natural kind, which is a point that bears upon a concept known as “clinical validity,” a concept commonly appealed to within the psychiatric literature and often mentioned in discussions of the controversies that surround PTSD. I pause here to discuss this relation.

10 The formula for jadeite is Na(Al,Fe$^{3+}$)[Si$_2$O$_6$]. Nephrite is a kind of actinolite; the formula for actinolite is Ca$_2$(Mg,Fe$^{2+}$)$_5$(Si$_8$O$_{22}$)(OH)$_2$. See http://www.mindat.org/index.php
The concept of clinical validity bears a striking resemblance to the concept of natural kinds. On one conception, a psychological diagnosis is clinically valid when:

1) The diagnosis is shown to be a discrete category.

2) The category’s natural boundaries separate the diagnosis from other disorders.

The first condition is a way of stating that patients form a homogeneous set; the second is a way of stating that diagnoses should be distinct from one another. I will have more to say on the notion of clinical validity and its relation to natural kinds as the essay proceeds. For now, I will maintain the claim that to deny that PTSD is a clinically valid diagnosis is roughly equivalent to denying PTSD is a natural kind. I return now to the final desideratum of natural kinds.

Natural kinds provide targets for mechanistic explanations. The mechanistic foundations help to justify the claim that certain individuals that are grouped together on the basis of observable phenomena are members of a natural kind. Thus, identifying the causal mechanisms responsible for PTSD symptoms justifies the claim that PTSD is a natural kind, although this claim rests upon a particular conception of natural kinds known as the “homeostatic property cluster” view of natural kinds (HPC). HPC can be contrasted with the “essentialist” view of natural kinds (essentialism).

According to essentialism, individuation of members of a natural kind is accounted for by the fact that members share essential features. The

---


12 Ibid.

features that individuate members of a natural kind can be called sortal essences.\textsuperscript{14} Sortal essences prescribe a set of necessary and sufficient conditions for membership into a natural kind category. Water is a paradigmatic example of a natural kind that meets the essentialist criterion: something is water if and only if it is H2O. While there are other examples that meet the essentialist criterion, many categories that are the objects of interest in the sciences (e.g., species) do not meet the essentialist criterion.\textsuperscript{15} As an example, there is nothing essential shared by all tigers, but one could nonetheless make reliable predictions and explanations about tigers. Thus, essentialism appears to be an overly restrictive view of natural kinds.

Richard Boyd’s HPC view of natural kinds has several advantages over essentialism. First, rather than sortal essences, HPC appeals to causal essences. Causal essences are a possibly mutable, causal foundation that accounts for the contingent properties manifested by natural kinds.\textsuperscript{16} The

\textsuperscript{14} Samuels cites Gelman and Hirschfield, 1999. Gelman and Hirschfield state, “The sortal essence is the set of defining characteristics that all and only members of a category share” (Susan A. Gelman and Lawrence A. Hirschfeld, "How Biological is Essentialism?,” in Folkbiology, 403-446 (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1999).


\textsuperscript{16} Gelman and Hirschfeld state, “The causal essence is the substance, power, quality, process, relationship, or entity that causes other category-typical properties to emerge and be sustained and confers identity” (Gelman and Hirschfeld 1999, p.406). Due to limitations of
advantage is that HPC holds that the observable properties of natural kinds result from causal mechanisms, allowing a looser notion of natural kinds that accommodates such things as species. Second, HPC allows for contingent property clustering, so the absence of properties does not entail that something is a not a member of a natural kind category because not every instance of a natural kind must possess the homeostatic properties of the kind in question. It is enough that the members possess the causal mechanisms that account for the clustering of commonly shared features. HPC allows for categories with vague boundaries to be considered natural kinds, provided that the members that lie on the periphery possess the relevant causal mechanisms required by the category. Although there is much more to be said of the HPC view of natural kinds, I have said enough here to introduce an objection to the claim that PTSD is a natural kind.

Allan Young's Argument

In Harmony of Illusions: Inventing Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Allen Young explicitly denies that PTSD is a natural kind. The details of Young's argument rest upon difficulties with the diagnostic criteria for PTSD. Thus, I begin by introducing the Fourth Edition of the American Psychological Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-IV) criteria for PTSD:

1. Criterion A: Experience of and emotional response to a traumatic event
2. Criterion B: Re-experiencing of the traumatic event such as intrusive recollections, distressing dreams, feeling distress to reminders of the event

3. Criterion C: Avoidance of thoughts, feelings, places, people, or activity; inability to recall aspects of the trauma; diminished interests; detachment; diminished affective response; sense of foreshortened future

4. Criterion D: Arousal manifested by sleep difficulty, irritability, anger outbursts, concentration difficulty, hypervigilance, exaggerated startle response

5. Criterion E: Disturbance must be present more than one month

6. Criterion F: Clinically significant distress or impairment in important areas of functioning

Criteria B-D form the “core criteria” of PTSD because B-D identify symptoms in the form of observable effects of the causal mechanisms of PTSD. Criteria A, E and F can be understood as “adjuncts” to the core criteria because of their role in qualifying when B-D are properly applied in a diagnosis of PTSD.¹⁹

Young introduces a distinction between monothetic and polythetic diagnostic categories, which I will explain through an example. Consider an imaginary diagnostic category, Z.²⁰ One can imagine that criteria A-F are the diagnostic criteria of Z. If Z is a monothetic diagnosis, to be diagnosed with Z requires that one meet each of criteria A-F. If Z is a polythetic diagnosis, one might meet only some subset of criteria A-F (e.g., A-C) and still be diagnosed as having Z.

---


The crucial difference between monothetic and polythetic diagnostic categories is closely connected to the notion of clinical validity. As I interpret Young’s argument, an intrinsically valid monothetic diagnosis does not rely upon external factors (e.g., theoretical practices) to group the criteria together. Polythetic diagnoses, on the other hand, fail to have intrinsic validity because patients can be diagnosed according to a disjunctive set of sub-criteria (e.g., A-C or D-F). Patients that meet a polythetic diagnosis are distinct in kind and form a heterogeneous category.

PTSD is a monothetic diagnostic category, but Young argues that we should understand PTSD as a quasi-monothetic diagnostic category. The introduction of external influences qua clinical interpretation of the diagnostic criteria means that PTSD lacks internal validity, leading Young to conclude that patients diagnosed with PTSD form a heterogeneous set. Because PTSD is a quasi-monothetic diagnosis, Young suggests that there is nothing essential shared by PTSD patients. Because natural kinds must share essential features, Young concludes PTSD is not a natural kind. Although Young raises important considerations, he fails to demonstrate that PTSD is not a natural kind.

First, Young assumes essentialism, an overly restrictive view of natural kinds. On the HPC conception of natural kinds, one can account for symptom variation by understanding symptoms as properties of causal mechanisms. Thus, diagnostic inconsistency might reflect symptom variation across patients, but this doesn’t necessarily threaten the claim that PTSD is a natural kind. Symptom variation shows that the mechanisms responsible for PTSD symptoms can have various causal outcomes.

Second, diagnostic inconsistency is not restricted to PTSD and says nothing of the disorder itself. Young’s claim simply shows that clinicians can make mistakes. Moreover, it is an empirical matter whether clinicians actually do diagnose heterogeneous kinds of people according to the DSM diagnostic criteria. Still, evidence of diagnostic heterogeneity would not necessarily show that PTSD does not denote a natural kind. Diagnostic heterogeneity shows that patient diagnosis is a difficult matter and that better diagnostic

---

Ibid.
tools are wanting. I will introduce a modified version of Young’s heterogeneity argument near the end of this essay. I turn now to neurobiological evidence that supports the claim that PTSD is a natural kind.22

Neurobiological Evidence Supports the Claim that PTSD is a Natural Kind

The hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis (hereafter, “HPA”) is a neural pathway involved in the stress response.23 Briefly, the hypothalamus releases corticotropin releasing hormone (CRH), triggering the release of glucocorticoids such as cortisol from the adrenal glands. Glucocorticoids bind to receptor sites on various neurons in the brain, and these neurons function to mediate immune, metabolic, and other defensive stressor reactions.

Numerous abnormalities have been found in HPA functioning of PTSD patients.24 Critical to the stress response is negative feedback. This negative feedback is mediated by the release of cortisol and catecholamines, which help return the neural pathway to a homeostatic baseline. Numerous studies suggest that PTSD patients have higher levels of catecholamines and

22 Due to spatial limits, I must present the evidence in broad strokes, excluding a significant amount of detail.


lower levels of cortisol, providing a biological marker that is traceable to the HPA.25

In addition to the HPA, the medial prefrontal cortex (MpFC) is involved in mediating the stress response by inhibiting the activity of HPA. PTSD patients appear to have decreased activity of MpFC activation when exposed to stimuli related to the traumatic stressor, resulting in increased HPA activity in PTSD patients.26 Additional evidence suggests a negative correlation between anxiety level and MpFC activity in patients with PTSD.27 Thus, the MpFC plays an important role in mediating PTSD symptoms.

PTSD is explicitly tied to memory, and the hippocampus plays an important role in memory formation. Decreased hippocampus volume has been associated with PTSD symptoms. One hypothesis is that the hippocampus is damaged by the release of neurochemicals involved in the stress response.28 Another brain area associated with stress is the amygdala, which is involved in mediating the fear response. PTSD patients show increased amygdala activation.29

The evidence is in favor of the claim that there is a discrete set of causal mechanisms responsible for PTSD symptoms. Thus, PTSD appears to meet...

---


26 See review in Bremner, 2008.

27 Ibid.


the requirements of the HPC view of natural kinds. In the next section I address objections to this claim.

**Heterogeneity Revisited**

Heterogeneity among the causal mechanisms of PTSD across patients could mean that PTSD is not a natural kind. Lanius et al. provide exactly this kind of evidence, which challenges the claim I am making here. Their argument rests upon a distinction between “hyperarousal” and “dissociative” PTSD patients. Hyperarousal patients accounted for about 70% of patients and exhibited symptoms in the form of flashbacks, intrusive memories, and increased heart rate when recalling traumatic memories. Dissociative patients accounted for the remaining 30% of patients and exhibited symptoms such as depersonalization (feeling as though one is observing one’s self) and derealization (difficulty distinguishing what is real from what is not), without increased heart rate when recalling traumatic memories. These differences correlate with differential neural activity.

Functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) of hyperarousal patients reveals increased activation in three brain areas: the left inferior parietal lobule, the left precentral gyrus, and bilateral prefrontal cortex. Dissociative patients showed increased activation in five brain areas: the thalamus, the right superior parietal lobule, the cingulated gyrus, the left angular gyrus, and the bilateral medial prefrontal cortex. Lanius et al. conclude: “PTSD patients can differ strikingly...representing unique pathways to [PTSD].”

Their evidence is not conclusive.

---


31 Ibid.
First, the exact relationship between blood oxygen level reflected in fMRI and neural activity is not clearly understood. Second, knowing what the brain is doing is not a matter of simply looking at the brain’s activity at a given point in time. The brain is dynamic and brain areas can have multiple functions. Thus, fMRI in one patient may reveal a distinct pattern of neural activity that can be distinguished from the neural activity of another patient, but this activity need not reflect a distinct set of causal mechanisms. Third, the brain areas that Lanius et al. point to as evidence of heterogeneous mechanisms in PTSD are not solely responsible for mediating the stress response. Finally, although the evidence they cite may reveal differences in information processing among patients, this does not necessarily entail that there are differences in mechanisms responsible for the PTSD symptoms of these patients. In addition to these quick objections, there are issues within their paper that challenge their claims.

Citing an unpublished report of Reinders et al. who find data that challenges the distinction between dissociative and hyperarousal patients, Lanius et al. state: “This phenomena may be evidence for the suggestion that some individuals can experience both depersonalization and arousal responses.” Thus, by their own admission, evidence in support of the distinction between hyperarousal and dissociative patients is not conclusive.

Temporal considerations of PTSD are also disregarded by Lanius et al. - which is an important exclusion, particularly because the brain is plastic – i.e., the brain changes as a result of environmental exposures, etc. Thus, fMRI evidence as provided by Lanius et al. does not speak to the possibility of neural changes that may be manifested throughout the time course of the disorder. For example, changes to areas such as the hippocampus that might be the result of stress exposure occur over time, providing evidence of the possibility of mechanistic variation across PTSD patients over time. Thus, it is completely plausible to expect that the mechanisms of PTSD change over the course of the disorder and that these changes are reflected in the evidence they provide.

32 For one account of the importance of neural plasticity in PTSD, see Bremner, 2008.
Recall that the central criterion of natural kinds is that they facilitate explanation and prediction. If Lanius et al. have found support for the heterogeneous nature of PTSD, a revision of the concept of PTSD may better help patients. Natural kinds are not timeless. Recall also that natural kinds are domain relative. PTSD as currently identified by the DSM may be a natural kind within psychiatric practice, but PTSD might not facilitate the explanatory and inferential demands of neuroscience. These different interests simply state the distinction between targets of explanation within psychiatry and targets of explanation within neuroscience. The relationship between these domains is an interesting question, but is beyond the scope of this paper.

Conclusion
The claim that PTSD is a natural kind is not indefensible. Extant arguments that deny that PTSD is a natural kind rest upon an outdated conception of natural kinds. Evidence of heterogeneous causal mechanisms of PTSD is far from conclusive. Neurobiological evidence supports the claim that PTSD is a natural kind, on the HPC view. Nonetheless, the claim that PTSD is a natural kind is one that should be made with caution. Theoretical progress demands conceptual change, and important empirical evidence that demands such change may be forthcoming.

---

33 Boyd, 1999
Corey Edwin Sawkins (University of Saskatchewan, CA) - Determining Underdetermination

Abstract: Arguments from underdetermination take two forms, global underdetermination and local underdetermination. The arguments from global underdetermination bring into question all knowledge, they develop skeptical scenarios where we cannot trust any knowledge that we obtain within the world. The arguments from local underdetermination bring into question the nature of our knowledge and are geared against scientific realism. This essay is an evaluation of the arguments that claim to do just that, it shows that these arguments are not arguments from local underdetermination but are from global underdetermination. Based on this evaluation a new argument from local underdetermination is developed that shows that local underdetermination is indeed a problem for scientific realism.

Determining Underdetermination

The anti-realist argument from underdetermination (here on referred to as the argument from underdetermination) states that there is no truth-indicating reasons to guide our choice between two theories which have the same supporting evidence and are thus empirically indistinguishable. The anti-realist argument from underdetermination is often applied to all scientific theories for it maintains that “given a theory supported by a body of evidence, one can always find a rival theory, logically incompatible with the first theory, that is equally supported by this evidence”. Thus the argument from underdetermination undermines the realist claim that acceptable scientific theories are approximately true, because if

two theories are underdetermined, meaning the theories are empirically equivalent, then there can be no empirical reason to believe in one theory rather than the other.

There are two brands of underdetermination, global underdetermination and local underdetermination. Arguments from global underdetermination are skeptical in nature and bring into question the possibility of all knowledge. An example of this form of underdetermination is the Cartesian demon, “where there might be an all powerful ‘Evil Demon’ who devotes all his energies to deceiving us about what the world is really like”. No amount of evidence will be able to distinguish between a world controlled by the Evil Demon and one that is not. Another global underdetermination argument concerns the timeframe of the world and is called the five minute hypothesis. This argument states that the world began five minutes ago, or more precisely five minutes before the reading of the sentence ‘the world began five minutes ago’. Anything that appears to be older than five minutes, say this very essay or the writer of the essay, was created five minutes ago with appearance of an age older than five minutes. Thus any evidence that suggests that the world is older than it really is simply a product of whatever is behind this trickery. Therefore, no amount of evidence will ever be able to distinguish between a universe that was created five minutes ago or one that has been around for billions of years. Arguments from global underdetermination then are skeptical in nature, they bring into question all knowledge and the existence of what we perceive to be the real world.

Even if one of the above arguments from global underdetermination is correct, we can still proceed with academic and scientific enquiry. For even if the world is a construct within a computer program, or a figment of a demonic imagination, it is the world within which we reside and as such we can make empirical observations about that world that allow us to function within it and better understand it. The

---

1 Stanford, Exceeding our Grasp, 2006: 12.
claim that we live in a computer or demon controlled world does not negate the scientific or technological advances that our race has made, we understand this world to a high enough degree that we can produce technologies that allow us to travel at speeds that our bodies were not intended for, to make observations of objects within this world that are either too small or too large or too far away for us to see with the unaided eye. We can also make predictions about what will come to pass based on our scientific theories describing the physical laws. Arguments from global underdetermination are arguments designed to bring into question all of our knowledge and yet we can still continue to maintain that we have knowledge at least from within the system posited by these arguments.

The argument from local underdetermination on the other hand is meant to bring into question the nature of the knowledge that we can obtain within the system, regardless of the nature of that system. It is meant to undermine the philosophical position of scientific realism, by showing that it is not possible to be a realist with respect to underdetermined theories since, as Earman states, “any observation that provides reason to believe one of the empirically equivalent theories will give equally good reasons to believe each of the other theories”. However, it will be shown that the argument from local underdetermination is underdeveloped and that any attempt to develop this argument within the current philosophical literature has produced an argument from global underdetermination. The goals of this essay are to evaluate the available arguments from local underdetermination and to construct a new general argument based on the lessons learnt from this analysis.

Within the contemporary philosophical literature that develops the argument from local underdetermination, there are three strategies for producing a general argument that, it is

---

maintained, can be applied to all scientific theories throughout the history of science. The three strategies are the algorithmic approach, the pessimistic induction approach and lastly an approach that utilizes case studies of underdetermined theories in science. These strategies will be considered in full and it will be shown that they are insufficient in producing a strong general argument from local underdetermination. It will also be shown that the approach that utilizes case studies of underdetermined theories in science to produce a general argument is the most promising approach; however the contemporary literature either utilizes cases that produce global underdetermination or uses historical cases which only serve to produce inductive arguments. The goal of this essay then is to evaluate each strategy of producing an argument from local underdetermination and then based on this evaluation a new general argument from local underdetermination will be constructed. It will then be shown that local underdetermination is indeed a problem for scientific realism.

The algorithmic approach has been developed to produce examples of underdetermination by producing alternatives to our most successful theories. These algorithms allegedly allow philosophers to generate an empirically equivalent theory to any theory at all. A good example of this approach is called the TN approach. The class of TN theses utilize Newtonian mechanics and gravitational theory, including the concept of absolute space. TN(o) states that the universe is at rest with relation to absolute space, while TN(v) states that the universe is in motion relative to absolute space, where v is the velocity of the universe. There are no empirical observations available or that will ever become available to distinguish between these two theories. Therefore, TN(v) is empirically equivalent to TN(o). This example of course utilizes a physical theory that is out of date; however the advocates of this algorithm maintain that similar algorithms can be generated to produce empirically equivalent theories.

In a recent paper André Kukla proposes “an algorithm for constructing indefinitely many empirical equivalents to any
theory". He constructs this general algorithm from considering a specific case of empirical equivalence. He begins by defining something that is grue as something that is green when observed and blue if it is not observed. Thus based on this definition of grue, the theory that states all emeralds are green is equivalent to the theory that states that all emeralds are grue. Furthermore, Kukla maintains that this "equivalence will survive any conceivable change in the range of observables and auxiliaries". He then goes on to show that a more general argument can be constructed from the above example. We can take any theory T with a specific observational consequence O and construct a theory T' where T is true only when the universe is being observed, but while no observation is taking place the universe follows the laws of T'. Kukla then concludes that "one can find such a T' for any T, and just as clearly, T' is empirically equivalent to T'" (1993, 5). Kukla admits that this construction might be a logico-semantic trick and that he does not claim that T' is a genuine competitor to T; however his main point is that its rejection has to be argued for. He believes that the algorithmic approach shows "that there [are] empirically equivalent propositional structures to any theory. The only question is whether these structures fail to satisfy some additional criteria for genuine theorecticity".

Stanford in Exceeding our Grasp provides the means of denying this type of empirical equivalent when he disagrees with the conclusion derived from the TN example. He states that TN(v) andTN(o) do not make identical empirical predictions.

---


6 Kukla, his italics Laudan and Leplin, Empirical Evidence..., 1993: 5.

very thesis of TN(o) implies that no empirical evidence can be found for the claim of absolute rest, while the argument from underdetermination applies to claims that can possibly be empirically verified. “The TN(v) variety pose no threat to the approximate truth of our theories: if the realist believes TN(o) when...TN(v) obtains, most of her theoretical beliefs about the relevant domain will be straightforwardly true”. All that TN(v) shows is that we would be unjustified to hold any belief concerning the velocity of the universe in relation to space, it does not call into question the approximate truth of Newtonian mechanics and therefore does not pose a real challenge to scientific realism. The algorithm used to produce the TN argument does not produce a case of local underdetermination, but a case of global underdetermination. No amount of empirical evidence will ever be able to distinguish between TN(o) and TN(v) and therefore this example of the algorithmic approach fails. This argument can also be applied to Kukla’s algorithm. The very thesis T implies that no empirical evidence can be found for the claim of x, x being the unobservable property, while the argument from local underdetermination applies to claims that can be empirically verified. All that the T’ variety of theories shows is that we can never be justified in asserting the true properties of the universe or objects within it. No amount of evidence will be able to distinguish between the world as described by T or T’. Thus, as Stanford concludes, Kukla’s algorithm and the any algorithmic approach produces a skeptical, global underdetermination argument which goes not bring into question the nature of our knowledge within the system as is required for a local underdetermination argument.

More generally, the algorithmic approach is simply ad hoc adjustments to bring about underdetermination and the theories that are produced need not be taken seriously. These ad hoc adjustments through the use of algorithms generated by philosophers cannot make short work of the task of producing

---

genuinely distinct empirically equivalent theories.\(^9\) It follows then that rather than producing empirically equivalent rivals to scientific theories using algorithms, philosophers ought to defer to the history of science for examples. Within the available philosophical literature, the pessimistic induction approach comes closest to utilizing an examination of the history of science in the above sense.

The pessimistic induction states that, since the history of science shows that past successful theories have often turned out to be false, it follows that our current theories must be as well. Furthermore, the past successful theories have only been proven wrong after a state of underdetermination has arisen. For example, before the Eddington eclipse experiment in 1919, Newtonian Physics and Einsteinian Physics were empirically equivalent. Both theories provided explanation for all the available evidence, until Eddington and his team during an eclipse observed that the light from a star behind our sun was bent around the sun in the manner only predicted by Einstein's general theory of relativity, thereby proving that Einstein's theory was true and Newton's theory was false. Thus, even though Newton's theory was once held to be a successful theory, it eventually fell into a case of underdetermination and in the end it was proven to be false. Several other examples can be found within the history of science, including the transition from the Ptolemaic earth centered universe theory to the Copernican theory and from Aristotelian Mechanics to Newtonian Mechanics.\(^10\) From these examples the pessimistic induction strategy of the argument from underdetermination states that since past successful theories have often turned out to be false after a short phase of underdetermination, it follows that our current successful theories will also eventually and inevitably fall into a state of underdetermination. Thus even


our current and most successful scientific theories cannot be true and scientific realism is incorrect.

The pessimistic induction does indeed construct an argument from local underdetermination, however do to its inductive structure it has an inherit weakness. To block the pessimistic induction all that is needed is to deny that our current theories are false. Even though our past most successful theories, such as Newtonian Mechanics, have been proven wrong, it does not follow that our current most successful theories will be as well.

The third and final strategy for constructing an argument from local underdetermination is the strategy that utilizes cases of underdetermination in science. Within the contemporary philosophical literature the majority of examples of underdetermination, even those utilizing this strategy, are skeptical in nature and are thus examples of global underdetermination. John Earman says that the lack of real world examples in discussions of the anti-realist argument from under-determination “is a shortcoming of the philosophical literature and not a failure of the underdetermination [argument]”.

In answer to this short coming, Earman proposes to find some real world examples of local underdetermination. Earman starts off on the wrong foot however, for his first example is the TN example as discussed above. His second example is concerned with the topological features of space-time. Given our restricted position in space, the observations that are available to us are restricted to events within our past light cone. Meaning that our position in the universe is such that any observations made on Earth are restricted to those stars that we can see and thus these observations are not representative of the whole universe. The observations that we can make from our position in the universe cannot allow us to determine the topological structure of the universe. Such topological structures include, but are not restricted to, an open or closed universe and the geometry of space. As a result we

---

cannot and will never be able to empirically distinguish hypotheses about the topological features of space-time. After giving these two examples, Earman states that

\[ \ldots \text{other examples could be given, but [he trusts]} \]

\[ \text{enough has been said to remove the worry that the}\]

\[ \text{underdetermination thesis...is vacuously true.} \]

Earman’s examples fail to establish that the local underdetermination thesis is vacuously true, for his examples establish global underdetermination only. As was discussed above the TN example is not an example of local underdetermination, but is instead an example of global underdetermination. The topological case also fails to show that local underdetermination is an issue for scientific realism. By Earman’s own admission, no amount of evidence will ever be able to distinguish between the different and distinct topological features of space-time, thus the problem of topological features is a problem of global underdetermination. This problem shows the limitations of our knowledge only, much in the same way the Cartesian demon argument does. Furthermore, the topological structures of space-time do not play a vital role within our most successful theories. Indeed, the general theory of relativity allows for many different topological features. The general theory of relativity encompasses an expanding, contracting and static universe, an open or closed universe, all the possible geometries of space and any other topological structure that is underdetermined by the available evidence. Therefore, the example of the underdetermination of topological structures is not a problem that concerns the truth of our most successful scientific theories. In conclusion, Earman’s example displays the limits of our knowledge rather than real world examples of local underdetermination.

Some lessons can be derived from our discussion of the above applications of the approaches utilized to construct an

\[ \footnotesize{\text{12 Earman, } \textit{Underdetermination, Realism, and Reason,} \text{ 1993: 31.}} \]
argument from underdetermination. Firstly, an argument from underdetermination ought to come from genuinely distinct empirically equivalent theories and an understanding of how these cases of empirically equivalent theories are produced in science. Secondly, following the discussion of Earman, the examples of underdetermination in science ought to be cases of local underdetermination, such that the competing theories are currently empirically equivalent with the possibility that further empirical data will be able to distinguish between them. The very definition of local underdetermination involves cases of empirical equivalent theories which can be resolved given the right amount of evidence. An obvious question emerges: if local underdetermination can by principle be resolved given further empirical evidence, what problems does it create for scientific realism?

Contrary to Earman, it is this author’s opinion that the lack of examples of empirically equivalent theories in science is not a short coming of the philosophical literature, but is rather a short coming in the research conducted by the authors of that literature. Two examples of local underdetermination will now be discussed and it will be shown exactly what problem for scientific realism, if any, these examples raise. The two examples that will be used to develop an argument from local underdetermination come from Cosmology.

The first example concerns the phenomenon called gravitational lensing. Gravitational lensing is an effect produced when light passes a large body of mass and is pulled by gravity to the outer edges of that body causing the light to be focused on the outer edge rather than simply passing around it. Observing this phenomenon Cosmologists calculated the mass of the stellar object in the middle of the lensing effect and concluded, based on the current theory of gravity, that the mass is not robust enough to cause the observed lensing of the light.  

Two theories have been developed to explain this phenomenon, dark matter theory and modified gravitational theory.

The dark matter theory posits an unobservable matter that surrounds the observable matter in the universe. This dark matter adds to the mass of stellar objects such as galaxies and nebulae, but is undetectable by the human eye or any technology that we have so far developed, because it does not directly interact with the electromagnetic spectrum. Since dark matter surrounds the observable matter in the universe it accounts for the missing mass needed to explain the observed gravitation lensing based on the theory of relativity. The second theory that has been posited to explain the observed phenomenon of gravitational lensing is a modification of the theory of relativity and is called the modified gravity theory.\(^{14}\) This theory states that the force of gravity increases in proportion to the distance from the center of mass of a stellar body. Thus under this theory, gravitational lensing is caused by the fact that the force of gravity is stronger on the outer rims of the galaxy or other stellar object causing this effect. The only empirical evidence in support of either theory is gravitational lensing and thus is insufficient to justify a choice between the two competing theories. The two theories explain this phenomenon equally well and so they are currently in a state of underdetermination.

The second example of underdetermination from Cosmology involves two theories that have been developed to explain the accelerated expansion of the universe. In 1998 astronomers attempting to determine the expansion rate of the universe unexpectedly discovered that the universe was not slowing down as was previously predicted but was in fact speeding up.\(^{15}\) Since this discovery several theories have been developed to


explain this phenomenon. The two most prominent theories are the theory of dark energy and the theory of radial inhomogeneity.

The theory of dark energy posits an exotic form of energy that permeates all of space. Dark energy is a repulsive anti-gravitational force that pushes against the galaxies and other large structures of the universe causing the expansion rate to increase in proportion to the distances between galaxies. The exact nature of dark energy is illusive; if it does exist dark energy could be an unknown energy that is a property of space itself, an anti-gravitational force which pushes the galaxies apart, or it could be something else entirely.¹⁶

The second theory that has been developed to explain accelerated expansion is the theory of radial inhomogeneity which explains the accelerated expansion by reducing it to an illusion created by our unique position in space. The theory of radial inhomogeneity suggests that the cosmological principle, which states that the universe is homogenous, is incorrect. In a homogenous universe all matter is evenly distributed throughout the universe and so space is smooth. In an inhomogeneous universe, matter is not evenly distributed and so light has to traverse lumps of space caused by areas of higher or lower mass density that are distributed sporadically throughout space. When light traverses these lumps in space, the wavelengths of light is increased in the same manner that it would be if the expansion rate were increasing. More specifically, the theory of radial inhomogeneity explains away the accelerated expansion of the universe by positing a lower than average mass density surrounding our own galaxy. This lower than average mass density creates the appearance of accelerated expansion.¹⁷

¹⁶ See Kirshner, 2002.

The two distinct theories of dark energy and radial inhomogeneity explain the empirical evidence of the accelerated expansion of the universe. The theory of dark energy explains accelerated expansion by positing a repulsive energy that permeates all of space, while radial inhomogeneity explains accelerated expansion by positing an area of lower mass density that affects light such that it appears that the expansion rate is accelerating when in fact it only appears to be so. Currently the only evidence for both theories is the observation of the accelerated expansion of the universe; therefore the two theories are empirically equivalent.

More examples of underdetermination in science could be given, but the above examples are sufficient to show that local underdetermination is indeed a problem for scientific realism, for a general anti-realist argument from underdetermination can be developed from the above considerations. The above cases of underdetermination have occurred due to the inability of our current successful theories to deal with the anomalies detected by experiments conducted from within the paradigm established by our theories; meaning that the various theories that are empirically underdetermined have been developed to deal with an anomaly that could not be explained by the theory that is being modified by the available candidates. The theories of dark energy and radial inhomogeneity have been posited in order to adapt our current cosmological theory to include accelerated expansion, while the theories of dark matter and modified gravity theory are adaptations of the theory of relativity to account for gravitational lensing. From these cases we see that underdetermination of theories by evidence arises from a theories inability to account for observed anomalies. It has been shown that when a theory fails to account for an unexpected observation, such as accelerated expansion or gravitational lensing, empirically equivalent theories will and do arise that account for these anomalies inside the paradigm established by the base theory. From the lessons learnt from these examples we can now generate a new general anti-realist argument from local underdetermination.
Our general argument proceeds as follows: if experimenters are conducting an experiment under a theory $t$, being our most successful theory, and come up to an observation $O$ such that $t$ cannot explain $O$, then $t$ will be adapted into a set of theories $T$ in order to account for $O$ inside the paradigm established by $t$. The set $T$ will contain any number of empirically plausible theories, $T_1$ to $T_n$, that utilize $O$ as empirical evidence and thus these theories will be underdetermined. The new general argument does not deny that further evidence may eventually be found that will allow scientists to empirically distinguish between them, effectively confirming one of the theories while falsifying the others.

However, the amount of time between the development of the set of underdetermined theories to the empirical confirmation of one theory over another is relative to each situation. For example, the first observations that established accelerated expansion came from two separate teams of astronomers over ten years ago, in 1998 and yet the theories that explain this observed phenomenon are still underdetermined. The theories of dark energy and radial inhomogeneity are mutually exclusive theories, dark energy is based on a model of the universe that is homogenous and isotropic, while the theory of radial inhomogeneity is based on a model of the universe that is inhomogeneous. Thus given the current situation of underdetermination, not only can we not be realists about dark energy or radial inhomogeneity, we cannot be realists about the models that these theories are built upon.

Going back to the general argument, then we see that when a set of theories $T$ is underdetermined, the realist position is unjustified not only for the theories within the set, but also the base theories or models. Furthermore, within the epistemic position that is created by underdetermined theories, we are unable to determine when the issue will be resolved, if it will be resolved at all. Thus, Earman states that after the issue of underdetermination has been resolved “it is cold comfort to tell

---

the scientists who were in the former epistemic [position] that if their situation had been different then they would have been able to gather evidence that would decide among the theories; \(^{19}\) similarly the general argument claims that it is of little consequence for the realist to claim that after the issue of underdetermination has been resolved we can then be realists about the theory and its base theory or model. In conclusion, the new general argument from underdetermination establishes that local underdetermination is indeed a problem for scientific realist.

\(^{19}\) Earman, *Underdetermination, Realism, and Reason*, 1993: 34.
Robert Scott (University of Georgia) - Heidegger’s Poet, Haraway’s Cyborg, and the Future of Technoculture

Abstract: In this paper, I set out to construct a proposal for a new paradigm for technoculture. To this end, I will consider two sharply contrasting candidates to fill the role of a new paradigm for technoculture: the figure of the poetic dweller, drawn from Heidegger, and the figure of the cyborg, understood as the basic inter-relatedness of humans and machines in the modern age, drawn from Donna Haraway. In comparing Haraway’s figure of the cyborg to Heidegger’s notion of poetic dwelling, I will evaluate advantages of both as paradigmatic figures for the future of technoculture and will show that one weakness of both candidates, taken as cultural paradigm, is their mutual distancing from humanistic ethical concerns. I conclude that a new paradigm for technoculture must be forward looking, positive in affirming the inter-relatedness of humans and machines, and must serve to cultivate both poetic and ethical awareness. I further suggest that science fiction stories and films may be the best genre in which to develop a focal paradigm for our time that integrates the criteria I set for it here.

In a 1966 interview, commenting on the problems presented by the influence of modern technology, Heidegger remarks, “only a god can save us now.” The tone of pessimism notwithstanding, Hubert Dreyfus interprets Heidegger’s comment as pointing to the need for “a new cultural paradigm.” A cultural paradigm, Dreyfus explains, is an object or event that

---


2 Hubert Dreyfus, “Heidegger On Gaining a Free Relation to Technology,” in David M. Kaplan, Ed. Readings in the Philosophy of
illuminates the significance of the activities and everyday practices of a community and functions to provide a unifying focus for the community.³ Examples of cultural paradigms from previous times, Dreyfus goes on to explain, are the Greek temple in ancient Greece and the medieval cathedral in Europe of the Middle Ages. Both objects carried religious and aesthetic significance and both served to illuminate and give meaning to the manifold of things and activities in their time.³ The problem for us, in the modern technological era, which I will refer to as modern technoculture, is that we lack an effective, unifying focal paradigm. The acuteness of the problem of the lack of a focal paradigm is accentuated by the accelerated pace of technological development in our time. This acute situation poses the question: what could serve as an effective cultural paradigm for us? What sort of object or event might illuminate the meaning of activities and things for our time in such a way that provides modern technoculture with a significant unifying focus?

In searching for a new paradigm for modern technoculture, I will consider two sharply contrasting candidates: the figure of the poetic dweller, drawn from Heidegger, and the figure of the cyborg, understood as the basic inter-relatedness of humans and machines, drawn from Donna Haraway. In juxtaposing Haraway’s figure of the cyborg to Heidegger’s notion of poetic dwelling, I will consider the advantages of both as paradigmatic figures for our time and will show that one weakness of both candidates, taken as cultural paradigm, is their mutual distancing from humanistic ethical concerns. I conclude that a new paradigm for modern technoculture must be forward looking, affirming of the given inter-relatedness of humans and machines, and must serve to cultivate both poetic and ethical awareness. Finally, I suggest the best genre(s) for developing such a paradigm may be science fiction literature and film.


⁴ Ibid., 59.
Donna Haraway’s Notion of the Cyborg

Haraway defines a cyborg as a combination of machine and organism, and she argues that in our modern technological era, in which pharmaceuticals and prostheses abound, we can no longer separate our being as organisms from our being as machines. Given our close inter-action with artifice and machine, Haraway embraces our inter-relatedness with machines because that is now who we are. Now more than ever before, we are cyborgs, and she goes on to develop this idea under the name of cyborg ontology. Haraway lauds the advent of cyborg ontology as contributing to the breakdown of hegemonic dichotomies. That is, Haraway argues, the adoption of cyborg ontology not only breaks down the boundary between organism and machine but also contributes to the breaking down of further false boundaries and false dichotomies that have duped us for decades such as the division between the physical and the non-physical and the human and the animal. Moreover, cyborg ontology leaves behind what may be considered the nostalgic notion of a unique, proper essence of man and embraces an optimistic outlook on the future as open to multiple unforeseeable ways of being cyborg.

While embracing the inter-relatedness of humans and machines, Haraway is aware of the potential dangers of modern technology, and she points to two primary threats: first, there is the danger that technology could lead to “star wars” or immense global war extending into outer space. Second, there is the danger of the mass media encoding us, through technological outlets, into an “informatics of domination,” wherein propaganda controls

---


6 Haraway, 152-153. Haraway lists a series of other traditional dualisms that are challenged by cyborg ontology on p. 177.

7 Ibid., 154.
our thinking. But Haraway stops short of employing normative terminology in her account of cyborg ontology, emphasizing instead optimism for the positive possibility of new orders of signification and new ways of positive engagement with technology.

There is, in my view, an ironic sense in which the notion of cyborg ontology and the figure of the cyborg could serve as an effective focal paradigm for our culture. While an initial response to cyborg ontology may be a humanistic aversion to identifying part of ourselves with machines, the breaking down of false dichotomies such as that between man and machine, human and animal, physical and non-physical resonates with a growing sector of contemporary philosophy and is welcome insofar as these dichotomies are false. Also, the embrace of the inter-relatedness of human and machine and the optimistic tone Haraway ascribes to cyborg ontology, in contrast to Heidegger’s pessimism, adds to the potential effectiveness of the cyborg as a paradigm for modern technoculture. Other the other hand, Haraway’s resistance to stipulating normative constraints on the development of cyborg ontology leaves the figure of the cyborg open to abuse insofar as respect for persons could be undermined, and this lack of ethical constraint weakens the potential effectiveness of the cyborg as a focal paradigm for our time.

**Heidegger and Poetic Dwelling as Candidate for a New Cultural Paradigm**

Through a wide-ranging analysis of Heidegger’s texts, Bruce Foltz demonstrates that Heidegger’s deconstruction of the concept of nature discloses the need for poetic dwelling as a way of revealing the full meaning of nature and being. The poetic, as Heidegger uses the term, may be

---

8 Ibid., 175.

9 Ibid., 26.

understood less as a literary form than as a transformed attitude towards nature, technology, and our own existence. Poetic dwelling involves a kind of attunement to nature, ourselves, and everything around us. In order to bring into better focus what is meant by the notion of poetic dwelling, a few key points in Heidegger’s interpretation of the history of metaphysics, highlighted by Foltz, should be noted.

Foltz provides a particularly helpful analysis of Heidegger’s discussion of three different senses of the term nature in Being and Time. The three different senses of nature are summarized by Foltz as “objective nature,” “productive nature,” and “primordial nature.” These three different senses of nature may be understood as three fundamental aspects of the meaning of nature, and Heidegger traces these three dimensions of nature back to the full meaning of the Greek notion of phusis. According to Heidegger, modern science typically understands nature in terms of objectivity, and the temporal mode of objectivity has been taken exclusively as the present. The result is that modern science tends to understand nature in a truncated manner, as present in a stationary sense like the table in front of me.

11 Bruce V. Foltz, 49.


13 Foltz, 31-32.

14 For example, see Foltz, 132-133.

15 In Being and Time the modern scientific understanding of nature is referred to as the understanding of nature as present-at-hand. Heidegger, Being and Time, 67.
Objective nature, Foltz explains, refers to the temporally static, modern scientific understanding of nature.

Two problems arise when nature is understood exclusively as objective nature: first, such an understanding of nature considers things only in the temporal mode of the present, and second, it conceals the two other fundamental aspects of nature, which Foltz identifies as productive nature and primordial nature. The concealment of these latter two aspects of nature significantly truncates a full understanding of nature because objective nature derives from productive nature which, in turn, is grounded in primordial nature. By neglecting productive nature and primordial nature, objective nature forgets its roots.

Productive nature or nature as “ready-to-hand”, in Heidegger’s terminology, refers to the aspect of nature experienced as a context of relations.\(^{16}\) An example of nature experienced in its productive aspect can be found in Heidegger’s description of the farmer’s experience of the south wind as a sign of coming rain.\(^{17}\) The essence of the south wind is not understood by the farmer as something objectively present; rather, its significance is understood only in a context of references, as the harbinger of rain. In a similar way, Heidegger argues, our understanding of things as objects derives from our original experience of them in a context of relations, i.e., the context of productive nature. In focusing solely on the objective sense of things, the modern scientific understanding of nature fails to account for the significance of productive nature as the source of objective nature.

\(^{16}\) In *Being and Time*, Heidegger refers to nature in the sense of a context of relations as “readiness-to-hand.” Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 98.

The third aspect of nature, which Foltz calls primordial nature,\textsuperscript{18} is the most mysterious aspect of nature, and this is because the basic sense of primordial nature involves the “self-withholding” character of nature. Primordial nature refers to the aspect of nature that always conceals itself at the same time that nature reveals itself. The basic significance of the self-withholding character of nature is that the nature of things can never be fully mastered or completely grasped.\textsuperscript{19} While the south wind is a harbinger of rain, why it arises or when it will return is unknown. It is this mysterious, unfixable aspect of nature as both self-disclosing and self-withholding that is indicated by primordial nature.\textsuperscript{20}

The problem with modern science, as noted above, is that it tends to disclose nature exclusively as objective nature, thereby neglecting the significance of productive nature and primordial nature. A modern scientific ontology, therefore, is a truncated ontology that tends to disclose things merely in terms of objective presence.\textsuperscript{21} In neglecting the other two basic aspects of nature, to which objective nature owes its origin and significance, modern science leads to what Heidegger calls the “oblivion of being.”\textsuperscript{22} The concern, shared by Heidegger and Foltz, is that the being of things in their productive and primordial aspects gets concealed by modern science, and the solution Heidegger suggests is the development of a poetic

---

\textsuperscript{18} What Foltz calls primordial nature is referred to in \textit{Being and Time} in passing as the romantic conception of nature. Heidegger, \textit{Being and Time}, 94.

\textsuperscript{19} Foltz, 50-51.

\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., 53.

\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., 59.

\textsuperscript{22} Ibid., 59.
disposition that approaches things in a way that is open to the disclosure of all three aspects of nature.

In Heidegger’s essay “The Question Concerning Technology,” he explains that the poverty of an exclusively modern scientific approach to nature is only accentuated by modern technology. In this essay, Heidegger refers to the essence of modern technology as “Enframing” which he defines as a way of disclosing being exclusively as “standing reserve” or as a resource to be used.\(^{23}\) The modern technological approach to nature leads to a domineering treatment of things as resources which thereby threatens to strip things even of their status as objects.\(^ {24}\) That is, in the modern technological way of revealing or disclosing being as standing reserve, objective nature is under threat of getting lost along with productive and primordial nature. In revealing things, persons, and society as resources or standing reserve, the modern technological way of revealing being conceals the character of nature as a whole. Being open to nature in its fullness involves cultivating attentiveness to its self-emerging character out of productive nature, as well as its self-withholding indeterminate primordial aspect, which demands respect.\(^ {25}\) In opposition to such openness to the fullness of nature, the modern technological way of revealing things discloses them merely as standing reserve, thereby distorting the objective character of things and neglecting the self-emerging and self-withholding aspects of nature.\(^ {26}\)


\(^{25}\) Foltz, 125.

\(^{26}\) The violence of the modern technological approach to the authentic, full sense of nature is most explicitly exemplified, in
Heidegger’s portrayal of the modern technoculture’s lack of relation to the basic significance of nature in all three senses is bleak, but he suggests there is a possibility for salvation for our time which begins with recognizing the threat technology poses to us as a danger. Such recognition, he argues, has the capacity to free us from the bonds of the modern technological mode of revealing being as standing reserve and thereby open our perspective to other possible ways of disclosing the being of things.\textsuperscript{27} Then, by adopting an attitude of poetic dwelling in place of the modern technological mode of disclosing things as standing reserve, we may be able to retrieve the full sense of the nature of things. The attitude of poetic dwelling enables us to become receptive to the fullness of nature in its objective, productive, and primordial or mysterious self-emerging, self-withholding character.\textsuperscript{28}

Poetic dwelling indicates an openness and attunement to the fullness of nature in all three of its basic aspects. The attunement cultivated in poetic dwelling involves letting things be so that their self-disclosive character shines through, rather than reducing them to mere resources, and it involves respecting the indeterminate, self-withholding, primordial nature of things. The attitude of poetic dwelling preserves the self-emergent, self-withholding character of all things by transforming our understanding of the nature of all things, and this includes our understanding of our own nature.\textsuperscript{29}

**Constructing a New Paradigm for Technoculture**

In evaluating these two possible paradigms for the future of technoculture, both have valuable contributions that should be integral to the formulation

\textsuperscript{27} Heidegger calls the modern technological mode of revealing being “Enframing.” Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, 20.

\textsuperscript{28} Foltz, 49.

\textsuperscript{29} Ibid., 161-162.
of a new paradigm for technoculture. Haraway’s cyborg ontology has the advantage over Heidegger of setting a positive tone in regard to our relation to modern technology. We are organisms inter-related with machines, Haraway convincingly argues, and that is why we should embrace, not decry, our cyborg nature. The positive role cyborg ontology plays in breaking down other oppressive dualisms points further to its broad ranging benefits. Haraway’s embrace of our close involvement with machines distinguishes her from Heidegger and should be integral to a new paradigm for technoculture, and we might also note that the cyborg has the advantage of being more visually representable than the poetic dweller. On the other hand, we might question how realistic optimism is about the possibility of future manifestations of cyborg ontology without posing humanistic ethical constraints on its development.

Despite expressing pessimism about breaking the bonds of modern technology, Heidegger’s notion of poetic dwelling, if adopted, has a unique capacity to retrieve the three significant aspects of nature—objective, productive, and primordial—which modern technology tends to conceal. In particular, cultivating an awareness of primordial nature, the self-disclosive, self-withholding aspect of things, serves to cultivate respect for the indeterminate aspect of things, insofar as we recognize that we are unable to grasp the nature of things in their full significance.

A criticism of the notion of poetic dwelling comes from Emmanuel Levinas who claims that in the notion of poetic dwelling Heidegger privileges enrootedness in a place as a condition for developing attentiveness to primordial nature. The problem with enrootedness, according to Levinas, is that it poses the danger of splitting humanity into natives and strangers and thereby undermining receptivity to the face of the stranger. Levinas

---


31 Ibid., 232.
goes on to claim that Heidegger’s emphasis on the “mystery of things” opens the way to cruelty towards men.\(^{32}\) The suggestion is that if we place too much value on the self-withholding character of things, then our respect for other persons is prone to be undermined. While Levinas is right to point out the primacy of the ethical value of respect for other persons, and Heidegger is not careful to point out the ethical primacy of respect for persons, what Levinas does not recognize is that our recognition of primordial nature, for Heidegger, extends to the self-withholding aspect of our own nature. Hence, we may argue, against Levinas, that Heidegger’s position is not in conflict with the notion that the face other persons demands respect, for all things carry a self-withholding aspect. Nevertheless, we can draw positively from Levinas’ critique of Heidegger that the inviolability of human others must be integral to a new paradigm for technoculture.

While we may not be able to establish a new paradigm for technoculture here, what we can draw from our analysis of Heidegger and Haraway and from Levinas’ critique of Heidegger are elements which a new cultural paradigm should include. From what has been argued, a new cultural paradigm 1) should embrace our involvement with machines and artifacts, because our close ties with them have become part of who we are, and affirm positive technological possibilities for the future, and 2) it should cultivate and teach attentiveness to the full significance of things, including the three basic aspects of nature, not just its objective aspect. Integral to the second point is the need to respect primordial nature in all things: the self-emerging, self-withholding character of things, and this includes the humanistic demand to respect other persons, indicated by Levinas. Respecting the self-emerging, self-withholding nature of things is not only a poetic but also an ethical task.

While a new paradigm for modern technoculture cannot be fully developed here, what I have proposed here is a criterion, sketched above, for what such a paradigm should include. Developing a focal paradigm for our time, admittedly, will not be easy, but I suggest a good place to begin developing it would be in science fiction literature and film. In many ways, this has

---

\(^{32}\) Ibid., 232.
already begun in the work of Isaac Asimov and others. These stories and films explore the inter-relatedness of humans and machines and some have effectively portrayed ethical concerns and positive aspects of that relationship. The best of these stories and films, I suggest, may be the most effective means of establishing a new paradigm for our time that meets the positive, ethical criteria we have proposed here.
1. Introduction

Law is different from other kinds of communication, since it prescribes what people must do [or avoid doing] in specific situations. The law maker has a greater responsibility than an average conversationalist; he or she must present the law with as little ambiguity as possible. Though many law makers do, in fact, present well-written laws, sometimes a given law will lend itself to several interpretations. Now the question becomes: what principles should be employed to interpret this law without overstepping boundaries? It might seem that the original (or historical) law maker's intention would suffice to arrive at the correct interpretation of the law in question. The writer of the law, presumably, knows best what he or she meant to convey through the words of the law. However, I will argue that the intentions of the law maker cannot be the guiding principle when interpreting law. Sometimes the law maker's intentions are no longer available to the current law interpreter [or the intentions might not be clear]; plus, unfortunately, we can imagine a law maker with bad intentions, which should not guide a current use of the law. I will argue that pragmatics is a necessary component of legal interpretation. There are two principles, in particular, that I think are necessary for legal interpretation: the principle of charity and the principle of rationality. These principles will enable a law interpreter to make reasonable decisions when interpreting and applying the law.

2. The problems with Intentions

For the purpose of simplicity, I will use two possible laws that have become well-known examples in the literature. Admittedly, most laws are more complicated than the ones I will suggest, but I think that simpler laws can provide help in understanding the more complex laws. So, these two laws will help provide some content for the ensuing discussion.
Law 1: No vehicles in the park.¹

Law 2: No sleeping in the train station.²

Intentions and Ambiguities in the Law. Law makers, since they are trying to prescribe behavior that has consequences, should try to be as clear as possible. But sometimes statements seem clear, until they are challenged. It is not uncommon that a speaker makes a statement S, and she thinks it was clear enough. Then, someone inquires, “What exactly do you mean by S?” In that moment, she realizes the ambiguities in her statement. In normal conversation, these ambiguities easily occur because people are speaking casually and not spending as much time formulating their thoughts as a law maker. When making laws, the law maker, presumably, spends time analyzing and carefully selecting the right words. Yet, despite the greatest efforts, sometimes ambiguities remain.

An interpretation of Law 1, at a glance, might seem very intuitive, until we begin to seriously consider what is meant by ‘vehicle.’ So, what counts as a vehicle? If we define vehicle as something that carries a human being, then we would have to prohibit baby carriages from this park. Thus, we would need to specify what counts as a vehicle more carefully than merely something that can transport a human being. Perhaps, we would assume that ‘vehicle’ refers to any transportation device that has a motor. Following this interpretation, Law 1 would prohibit the use of motorcycles, dirt bikes, cars, and mopeds. It seems reasonable to assume that while these vehicles are meant to be prohibited by Law 1, there are others that could fall under the heading of ‘motorized vehicle’ that likely were not necessarily


prohibited. For instance, there are battery powered cars for toddlers, which
have motors. Yet, ceteris paribus, a park seems like an appropriate place for
using these vehicles. Furthermore, motorized wheelchairs could also be
counted as a motorized vehicle, and I doubt that anyone would try to
prohibit wheelchairs from a park. Likewise, if we define vehicles as things
with wheels, then we would forbid skateboards. Even if there were good
reasons for prohibiting skateboards, what if one day hoverboards, which
are essentially skateboards without wheels, are invented [like in Back to the
Future: Part II]? Hoverboards could not be categorized as vehicles, if a
necessary feature of vehicles is having wheels. These examples illustrate
the kinds of possibilities that need to be explored when deciding if someone
is breaking the law or not. Some might believe that the intentions of the
original law maker will show which things count as vehicles and which do
not. If we knew the intentions of the original law maker, would this
ambiguity, surrounding what counts as a vehicle, really be resolved? I do
not believe so.

If there was a specific vehicle (or set of vehicles) that the law maker had in
mind, then it seems these vehicles would have been mentioned by name.
For example, the law maker could have inserted a clause that lists the exact
vehicles that are prohibited.\(^3\) Instead, we only have the general term
‘vehicle.’ If we assume that the law maker was not careless, then we should
assume that the term vehicle was left deliberately open. Hart calls this
openness the ‘open texture’ of law.\(^4\) The open texture refers to the
vagueness that general rules, like Law 1 and Law 2, possess toward
particular situations. The intentions of the law maker are not sufficient to

\(^3\) However, naming specifics vehicles will not clear up all the
difficulties. For example, if the law specifically said that no cars were
allowed, then we are still stuck interpreting the word ‘car.’ Does this
mean all cars? Or cars that are unauthorized? What about police cars?
Even if a comprehensive list of vehicles was presented, a new type of
vehicle could be invented next year, and our interpretive problems start
all over again.

\(^4\) Hart, 124ff.
overcome this open texture because the term ‘vehicle’ does not have a fixed referent. It has a range of referents, so an interpretation cannot ignore this fact. Yet there are many interpretations that would fit inside this range. Suppose that the law specifically said that bikes [of all sizes] count as vehicles; hence, bikes are not allowed in the park. Suppose further that tricycles had been invented after this law had been put in place. Would tricycles count as vehicles? It is not clear. The main point is that situations in society change, and the original intentions of the historical law maker might not be applicable in the same way. The ambiguities of the law have to be interpreted in light of the current context, which is not always what the historical law maker had in mind.

Law 2, likewise, might seem easy to understand, until confronted with a situation that causes some conflict. Lon Fuller’s thought experiment imagined a law that stated the following: “It shall be a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of five dollars, to sleep in any railway station.”\(^5\) The questions begin concerning this word ‘sleep.’ Suppose that there are two people in the train station; each may or may not have broken Law 2.

Person 1: This is a woman who needed to switch trains in the middle of the night [3 am], but the second train was delayed. So, she sits down to wait for it. While waiting she dozes off for 10 minutes.

Person 2: This is a man who decided to bring a blanket and pillow to the railway station. He had clearly settled in for the night; in fact, he was lying on a bench. But he never actually went to sleep, so 2 hours later he left.\(^6\) Which of these two people broke the law? Do the intentions of the original law maker help us decide upon an interpretation? If the law maker intended to prohibit actual sleeping, then Person 1 broke the law, while Person 2 did not. If the law maker intended to prohibit people from using a railway station as shelter for the night, without any plan to get on a train, \(^5\) This situation is quoted in Scott Soames, “Interpreting Legal Texts,” 16-17.

\(^6\) These are basically the same as Fuller’s example cited in Soames’ article.
then Person 2 is guilty. But then, one might wonder why the law used the word ‘sleep’. So, there is a conflict here with what the law maker may have intended and what the law says. There is no need to mention every possible problematic interpretation, since similar problems were mentioned in relation to Law 1. Again, the main point is that the intentions of the law maker are not sufficient to provide an interpretation of a law in every circumstance. The law interpreter must make this decision based on the current situation, not on what the law maker might have meant.

Interpreting Bad Intentions. I have raised some problems for the view that the intentions of the law maker will dissipate ambiguities in the law. Suppose that we still want to use the law maker’s intentions to guide our interpretation and application of a law. Perhaps, this method could provide good results sometimes, but it also seems plausible that it would produce undesirable conclusions as well. What if the law maker’s intentions are not what we would expect or like? Though it might be rare, it is possible that the law maker could have bad intentions motivating the law. So, for example, we could suppose that Law 1 was written by a curmudgeon, who did not want any vehicles in the park (including baby carriages). This example would probably never happen in real life, since it is quite extreme. However, if intentions are the only [or primary] way to interpret law, then we would have problems when a law is made with wrongful intentions. It is even plausible that a law could sound good (and even have some good results), yet the law maker had poor intentions (ulterior motives) for writing the law, which create some problems. We would not want to be forced to interpret a law in the worst way possible, just because the law maker’s intentions were malevolent. Therefore, another reason that the law maker’s intentions are insufficient to decide upon an interpretation of a law is the possibility of bad intentions informing the law’s application in the current context.

Intentions and Lack of Forethought. Some laws might have consequences that were not intended by the law maker; the law was not written with as much forethought as it could have been. To put it differently, the normal semantic and syntactical interpretation of the law can lead to ‘unintended’ consequences. It is not hard to imagine a law maker writing a law somewhat hastily because there is some crisis, and the law, if taken literally,
would lead to some unintended consequence(s). Suppose that a group of
guys on bicycles would ride through the park and rob people. They have
been able to get away with it because they are quite proficient on their
bikes. So, a law maker writes a law prohibiting all unauthorized vehicles
from entering the park. Perhaps, at first, it would be necessary to enforce
this law in a strict way to reestablish order to the park. But it seems
excessive to punish all park-goers because a particular group of bikers
cau sed some trouble. The lack of forethought in this law has prohibited all
vehicles from the park, including bikes, rollerblades, and skateboards.
Suppose 10 years has passed: are the law interpreters still obligated to
enforce the law in this strict sense, or can they allow bikes back into the
park? This lack of forethought should not be forced upon the current
situation; there should be a way to interpret laws that fall into this kind of
category besides the strict and literal interpretation.

In summary, some people might think that the intentions of the original law
maker are sufficient for legal interpretation, when a particular law is
ambiguous. I have suggested some problems with this view. First, we might
not have access to the intentions of the original law maker. Second, if the
law maker had malevolent intentions, then we would not want to be bound
by those intentions. Third, sometimes a law maker did not have enough
forethought when writing the law, which then created some problems after
the law was made. While none of these reasons completely destroy the view
that intentions should guide legal interpretation, I think, at minimum, they
show that the intentions of the law maker are not sufficient to guide legal
interpretation. Principles of pragmatics can overcome the problems in legal
interpretation surrounding the view that the intentions of the law maker
are the final arbiter.

3. The Importance of Pragmatics

It is reasonable to believe that the intentions of the law maker are revealed,
albeit not infallibly, by the semantic and syntactical construction of the law,
since the law maker put the law into those words. Yet, I think semantics and
syntax, while necessary, are not sufficient to decide upon an interpretation
of a law. They are necessary because they provide a range of meaning for
the law. For example, ‘no vehicle’ cannot be interpreted as ‘no dog’. However, they are not sufficient for the same reasons that intentions are
not sufficient. The ambiguities cannot be overcome by studying the grammar and looking up the words in the dictionary. “Pragmatic interpretation is, thus, always required, even in the case of transparency.” Transparency cases could involve something like Law 2, where 'sleeping' seems clear enough, until we are confronted with Person 1 and Person 2. Then, we are in need of pragmatics to help guide the legal interpretation.

We can see some similarity with Grice’s notion of conversational implicature. Grice maintains that the maxims of conversation should be upheld. However, when they are not upheld, the result, barring incoherence, is a conversational implicature. Hence, breaking the maxim is assumed to be intentional. Likewise, law makers should attempt to be clear. When an ambiguity presents itself, then we should interpret it assuming that the law maker is not being incoherent. There are two pragmatic principles that I will specifically focus on: the principle of charity and the principle of rationality. While similar, these principles offer different ways to restrict the domain of discourse that surrounds the interpretation of laws that contain ambiguities.

Principle of Charity: This principle assigns to the law maker beliefs that he or she ought to believe and desires he or she ought to desire.

---


Principle of Rationality: This principle says that we should assume that the law maker is a rational agent; he or she had good reasons for writing the law in the way that it was written.

Idealized Intentions. The intentions of the law maker are ruled out because they are insufficient to ground the interpretation of legal texts. However, there is one type of intention that could be appropriate when interpreting legal texts. When confronted with a law that lends itself to several interpretations, we could apply idealized intentions to the law maker, using the above principles. “The receiver here reconstructs the sender’s [law maker’s] meaning, by projecting onto the sender (or the text) a notion of rationality. S/he asks not what the sender would have meant, but what the sender should have meant.”¹⁰ I do not agree with the replacement of would with should because would should implies a subjective view of interpretation, which Dascal and Wroblewski oppose. For example, one might think that the law maker should not have even made the law, but then that is no longer interpreting the law. That is bypassing it altogether. So, I think it would be better to use the word could. The semantics and syntax provide the limitations for an interpretation of what the law maker could (rationally) have meant. In other words, pragmatic principles cannot be used to contradict [or bypass] the semantic and syntactical meaning of a law; pragmatics can only help in deciphering what ‘could’ be meant by a given law.

We can first see how these principles can be applied toward an understanding of Law 1. How could the principle of charity be applied to the law maker? The law interpreter should assume that the law maker is not some curmudgeon, who literally does not want any vehicles in the park. Presumably, the law maker believes that parks are supposed to be enjoyable places, which includes the safety of the patrons. Hence, we can posit idealized intentions and take for granted that the law maker created the law in order to provide a certain amount of safety to those in the park. Indeed, the law maker believes that the law will make the park better in some way. Not only should the interpreter believe that the law maker had proper beliefs about the function of a park, but the law maker is also a

rational agent, who has good reasons for the rule. This supposition is an application of the principle of rationality. If we thought the law maker was not rational, then we might think that she intended the rule ["no vehicles"] to be taken literally. However, a literal interpretation would mean that a riding lawnmower would not be allowed in the park, which would be incongruous. This interpretation is inconsistent because someone would hire a lawn company to mow the grass, yet it would be illegal for the company to bring their riding mowers. Even though nothing in the lexical semantics or syntax prevents this strict interpretation, pragmatics [principle of rationality] prevents this interpretation. Even if the law maker, by some accident, was irrational [or acted irrationally in this case] and intended some of these extreme consequences, the present interpreters are not bound by the law maker’s intentions. The interpreters can bypass the law maker’s intentions without bypassing the semantics and syntax. Pragmatics provides help that goes beyond the strict semantic and syntactical meaning, in order to apply the law in the current context. Yet pragmatics does not contradict the semantic and syntactical interpretation.

Idealized intentions can be applied to Law 2. Presumably, more people would believe that Person 1 did not break any law, while Person 2 was at least guilty of attempting to sleep in the railway station (or loitering). To put it differently, we would likely be more comfortable with Person 2 getting fined, rather than Person 1. We could examine Law 2 in light of the two principles. The principle of charity would attribute appropriate beliefs and desires to the law maker. For example, we should assume that the law maker believes that people are allowed to be comfortable in a railway station. And sometimes being comfortable could lead them to doze off for a few minutes. The law maker ought to desire that patrons be given priority over people that are taking up a seat without any intention of purchasing a train ticket. So, the law [no sleeping] would apply to those who are basically loitering, not to those who simply doze off for a few minutes while waiting for a train. The principle of rationality can also help us interpret this law. Suppose someone decided to enforce Law 2 in a very strict way. Everyone who enters the train station is hooked up to a sleep detector about the size of a cell phone, and then gives the machine back before getting on a train. This machine automatically gives the person a ticket each time the person sleeps (or dozes off). For example, the machine would have given Person 1
a ticket, but not Person 2. The use of this machine could not be what the law maker had in mind because it is highly impractical. The money from the fines would not cover the cost of the machines. Plus, it would prosecute people for accidentally dozing off, which, intuitively, is not the primary target of the law. Marmor explains, “The law says that it is an offense ‘to sleep’ in the train station, but in fact, the prescriptive content of this ordinance is somewhat different; it prohibits an attempt to use the railway station as a place to sleep in, or something along those lines.”\(^{11}\) The semantics and syntax alone would allow for any number of extreme applications of the law, like the sleep detecting machines, but the two principles hinder those extreme interpretations. Yet if sleep detecting machines were ever needed, which might now only seem plausible in science fiction, Law 2 does not preclude that interpretation either. The principles of pragmatics help us interpret the law for its use in the current context, which presently does not involve a need for sleep detecting machines. However, the value of this view is that were sleep detecting machines ever deemed necessary, the principles of pragmatics could accommodate this unforeseen development because they can adapt to changes in society over time.

4. Summary

Law makers try to write laws without ambiguities, but sometimes these ambiguities are present. I have claimed that the intentions of the original law maker are not sufficient to provide the correct interpretation of the law. Although intentions could provide some insight, enough problem cases exist to hinder this view from being the primary method of legal interpretation. Pragmatics can appropriately restrict the domain of discourse to fit the current context, without bypassing the semantic and syntactical meaning of the law. The principles of pragmatics help guide the law interpreter to find the relevant idea behind the law, and apply that idea to the current situation. To demonstrate this point, I applied two principles [the principle of charity and the principle of rationality] to the interpretation of Law 1 and Law 2. These principles help us relate idealized intentions to the law maker; we try to uncover what the law maker could

\(^{11}\) Marmor, 9.
have meant by a given law. Unlike the intentional view, which traps all interpretations in the original context of the law, the pragmatic view allows the law to adapt to the current context.
Kyle Walker (Georgia State University) - Marx and Nietzsche on Ideology: Is There a Future for Communism?

Abstract: G. A. Cohen argues that communism is the proper egalitarian society but, contrary to Marx, history does not have a teleological structure. Thus, in order for communism to become reality, communists should engage in moral and political theory to alter the dominate ideology which supports the capitalist mode of production. I argue, following Brian Leiter, that this is not a tenable method for bringing about communism according to the Marxist explanation of ideological beliefs. Further, I add that Nietzsche’s explanation of ideals serves as an alternative to the Marxist explanation which leaves open the possibility for communists to intentionally bring communism into existence.

In keeping with the trend toward eliminating appeal to supernatural entities in favor of a more scientific approach in philosophy, many historical figures have been reinterpreted through a naturalistic lens. Karl Marx and Friedrich Nietzsche are two of these philosophers. This may seem odd given the fact that these two figures explicitly take a naturalistic approach. However, Brian Leiter, one prominent naturalistic interpreter, draws attention to a competing trend in the recent literature away from the naturalistic reading of Marx and Nietzsche toward what he calls a "moralizing" interpretation. According to Leiter, the moralizing interpreters transform the reading of Marx and Nietzsche in different ways. In the case of Marx, Leiter writes:

The moralizing readers de-emphasize (or simply reject) the explanatory and causal claims in the work of Marx...and try to marry more-or-less

---

Marxian...ideas to various themes in normative ethics and political philosophy. Explanation of phenomena is abandoned in favor of the more traditional philosophical enterprise of justification.

In the case of Nietzsche, he writes:

The crucial development here has been the retreat from the natural reading of Nietzsche as a philosopher engaged in an attack on morality...in favor of a reading which presents Nietzsche as fundamentally concerned with questions of truth and knowledge: the moralistic scruples of interpreters are satisfied by treating Nietzsche as concerned with something else, something less morally alarming than a “revaluation of values”.

In the former case, Leiter calls attention in particular to “the most influential English-language Marx scholar in recent decades,” G. A. Cohen, who moralizes Marx by suggesting that Marxists turn to moral theory in order to advance society toward communism in the face of the scientifically untenable teleology inherent in historical materialism. In the latter case, Leiter writes of a multitude of philosophers in both the so-called Continental and Anglophone traditions who simply ignore Nietzsche’s naturalism in favor of a normative reading of him as commentator on truth, knowledge and meaning.

Leiter argues that these interpretations are both unnecessary and naïve when viewed against the backdrop of a properly naturalistic reading of each thinker. Furthermore, he argues that the naturalistic readings are philosophically relevant today for their critique of a certain set of contemporary beliefs. For Marx, this set is made up of ideological beliefs, which persist because they function to protect the interests of the ruling class. For Nietzsche, the beliefs in question are moral beliefs, particularly moral beliefs Nietzsche refers to as ascetic ideals. In both cases, these beliefs are questionable due to the suspicious character of the alleged

\[2\] Ibid., p. 75.

\[3\] Ibid.

\[4\] Ibid., p. 76.
mechanism by which they are maintained. This mechanism has nothing to do with justification or rational deliberation, despite any attempts at such rationalization after the fact. Leiter is careful to clarify that this line of argument prompts only inductive skepticism with regard to beliefs; it does not provide a sound deductive argument against them.

The main body of Leiter’s paper is concerned with refuting the moralistic readings of Marx and Nietzsche in favor of a naturalistic reading. This project appears sufficiently successful. After all, if Marx and Nietzsche aim to induce skepticism about normative justification, it would be odd to read them as normative thinkers; it is more plausible to provide naturalistic grounds for such skepticism. What Leiter does not fully provide in this paper – although he hints at it – is a positive account of the naturalistic mechanism which forms beliefs according to Marx and Nietzsche. For Marx, Cohen provided this account in his work Marx’s Theory of History: A Defense before apparently rejecting it in his later work If you’re an Egalitarian, How Come You’re So Rich?, which contains the moralistic reading Leiter criticizes. For Nietzsche, Leiter himself provides a full reconstruction of the mechanism in another of his works: Nietzsche on Morality.

The problem with settling for a naturalistic reading of Marx, according to Cohen, is that teleology is a scientifically untenable, anti-naturalistic, part of Marxism; but if there is any hope for the future coming of communism, teleology is a necessary part of the story. Cohen proposes the practice of normative theorizing as a way around this problem. Advocating communism as a moral theory is an unfortunate and unpromising result. However, it seems naturalism in Marx may be preserved nonetheless. The explanatory paradigm proposed by Nietzsche, as reconstructed by Leiter, offers a promising way to explain ideals without appeal to teleology. Although Nietzsche’s theory sacrifices the teleological view that communism must necessarily come about, so does Cohen’s; and Nietzsche’s paradigm equally offers the potential for the establishment of a communistic economic system without appealing to normative moral theory. This is not to say Nietzsche would hope for the coming of communism – he had nothing but ridicule for “socialists” – but only to say
Nietzsche provides a compelling way reconcile a communistic future with a naturalistic and non-teleological world view.

**Marx, Functional Explanation, and Ideology**

The basis of Marx’s explanation for ideological beliefs is his scientific theory of history – historical materialism. Historical materialism is never presented by Marx as a unified formal system. Thus, Cohen steps in with an attempt to reconstruct Marx’s various writings on the theory in a systematic way. Cohen’s starting point for reconstructing historical materialism is that it is foremost materialistic. This means that the basis for any economic, social or ideological structure in a given society is the material conditions of that society. These basic material conditions, which Marx calls the forces of production, include raw materials, the tools used to manipulate raw materials, and the labor force that manipulates the raw materials. The forces of production are basic because they are the materials that are necessary for any social organization; they are the matter that is organized by the social form.

In the first place, the forces of production are the basis by which the structure of material (or economic, or productive) relations is determined. Material relations consist in the economic institutions of a society, i.e. the ways in which goods are produced and exchanged. These material relations, in turn, are the basis for the superstructure. The superstructure consists in the non-economic institutions of society such as the legal and political system, which Cohen focuses on. Ideology may or may not be part of the superstructure according to Cohen, but he indicates that “much of what we say [about the legal and political system] will apply to ideology too.” Since this is the case, ideology may be considered part of the superstructure for our purposes. Cohen also provides an example, albeit “partly fanciful,” of how these three levels relate along this trajectory:

It was impossible to use [the heavy plough introduced in the early Middle Ages] efficiently on the small plots of land typical before its advent. "The old

---

square shape of fields was inappropriate to the new plough: to use it effectively, all the lands of a village had to be reorganized into vast, fenceless "open fields" ploughed in long narrow strips. The altered means of production also necessitated co-operation in tilling the soil. Co-operation is a variety of material relations of production, but its institution carried social consequences: to establish open fields worked in common the previous ownership rights in small blocks or strips of land had to be abolished.  

The invention of the new plough is an alteration in the forces of production which induced cooperation in the material relations and, in turn, effected a change in the ownership laws in Medieval society. Thus, an alteration in the base material conditions seems, and only seems, to provide a causal explanation for changes in the superstructure.

However, historical materialism is not only materialistic, but also historical in that material relations are explained by the historical development of the forces of production. Since the forces of production have the tendency to develop over time due to human ingenuity (as exemplified by the Medieval plough), the material relations must adapt to changing circumstances. Similarly, the superstructure must adapt to the changing structure of the material relations. If the material relations or superstructure fails to adapt to the more basic-level innovations, then the forces of production are fettered, or unable to develop further. A higher level in this schema is not simply a causal effect of its immediately lower level; rather, it is essential for the stability of the lower level. If the Medieval farmers were forced to operate their plough illegally under the previous land ownership laws, for example, then the material relations would have been much less stable. Hence, the higher level functions to provide stability for the lower level. The superstructure, therefore, explains the stability of the material relations which, in turn, explain why the forces of production are able to continue their natural development. This explanatory structure is referred to by Cohen as functional or consequence explanation. It is not that the lower level base simply causes, and therefore explains, the higher level

---

1 Ibid., p.166-167.
superstructure; the fact that a given superstructure has the consequence of providing stability for the base explains why it has come into existence.

This conception of explanation seems to imply the teleological structure for history that Marx advocates, in which communism is its final culmination. John Elster, another prominent Marx scholar, points out this connection:

In Marx’s thought, a teleological philosophy of history became wedded, in an apparently paradoxical way, to scientific socialism. The paradox is that teleology explains everything by backward connections, from the end to be realized to the means that realize it, whereas science proceeds by forward connections from cause to effect.7

On this reading, functional explanation can only be explanatory if the end is already in view. In Marxist functional explanation, having the teleological end, i.e. social stability and ultimately communism, as the consequence of an element in the superstructure is what explains the element’s proper functioning and continued existence as part of the superstructure. The paradox which results – that teleology is unscientific – is the reason Elster here claims teleology and functional explanation are aspects of Marxism that are “dead.”8

Cohen apparently comes to agree with this assessment of Marx’s theory of history. This is the reason he turns from Marx’s naturalistic project to normative theory in the hope that communism can intentionally be brought about. Leiter sums up Cohen’s objection as follows:

Cohen’s argument, then for why Marxists should turn from Marx's naturalistic project to normative theory can be reconstructed as follows:

(1) Normative moral and political theory is not necessary to bring about communism if history has the teleological structure Marx says it has.


8 Ibid.
(2) History does not have the teleological structure Marx says it has.

(3) Therefore, moral and political theory is necessary to bring about communism.

Cohen's arguments in support of (2) are twofold:

(2a) The imputation of teleological structure is not a scientifically sound methodological move.

(2b) The specific reasons Marx offers for thinking communism is the inevitable outcome of history are no longer sound. 9

Leiter goes on to point out, correctly, that (3) does not follow from (1) and (2). Furthermore, while agreeing with (2a), he rejects (2b) on grounds that Cohen fails to prove communism is not inevitable. According to Leiter, it is still possible for a proletariat to emerge that is both capable and willing to revolt and for the capitalist system to produce the productive abundance communism necessitates. Of course, this does not show that communism is the inevitable teleological end to history. Oddly, even Leiter himself doubts that communism will come into existence because he thinks it may be prevented by “the most fertile part of Marx's theory: the theory of ideology.” 10

According to the theory of ideology, the lower class is prevented from understanding the benefit communist revolution will bestow upon them. Thus, if communism has to come about by an intentional act, rather than of historical necessity, the beliefs necessary to motivate the intention to bring about communism will never be formed. Leiter draws attention to why this is so: “The Marxian theory of ideology predicts that the ruling ideas in any well-functioning society will be ideas that promote the interests of the

9 Leiter, The Hermeneutics of Suspicion, p. 79.

10 Ibid., p. 84.
ruling class in that society, i.e. the class that is economically dominant.” As noted previously, ideology is based in material economic relations. When the material relations form a capitalist economy (or one of many other non-communist sets of material relations), economic classes are formed. Furthermore, whether or not they are a part of the superstructure, ideologies function to maintain stability in the material relations. Thus, in a capitalist system, the prevailing ideology will function to maintain the capitalist system. Ideologies, just like superstructures, are prone to functional explanation. Since the dominant class benefits from this system by virtue of the fact that they are dominant, the prevailing ideology promotes the interests of the dominant class.

If history does not have a teleological structure, then it seems necessary for the communist revolution to be brought about intentionally, since it will not happen of historical necessity. Ideology could prevent this from happening by blinding people to the value of bringing about this revolution. Cohen argues that normative moral theory is needed to contribute to waking up the future revolutionaries. However, as Leiter argues, this seems to be a futile task. Since ideology fulfills a stabilizing function for the materials relations of capitalism, ideological beliefs could not be overcome until the forces of production are fettered and require a new superstructure. The question becomes: if the forces of production are not driven along a teleological path toward an organization which necessitates communism as their stabilizing economic organization and ideology cannot be altered without fettering the forces of production, what could bring about communist material relations? It seems Nietzsche’s explanation for morality offers a model that allows for both naturalistic explanation of ideals and the possibility of communist material relations.

Nietzsche’s Explanation for Morality

Moral ideals, for which Nietzsche attempts to account, are a sub-set of the more general ideals – moral, political, and religious – that are explained by Marx’s picture. However, Nietzsche’s explanation for morality rests on a much more nuanced moral psychology than Marx’s. This explanatory

---

11 Ibid, p. 84.
method offers an alternative naturalistic account which also opens the possibility that communism will one day prevail.

Unlike Marx, the crux of Nietzsche's explanation for morality is presented in the contents of one book, On the Genealogy of Morality. However, like Marx, it is disputed whether a unified, systematic theory is presented because it is comprised of three seemingly distinct accounts of the genesis of morality. Leiter presents a systematic reconstruction of these accounts just as Cohen did for Marx. Nietzsche's genealogical method is the starting point for the unified presentation Leiter advocates. This method attempts to trace the various functions (or meanings, values, or purposes) which have been attributed to a given, relatively permanent, practice throughout history. “Relatively” is significant here, as Leiter points out: “the 'relatively permanent' element need not be present in all instances of morality for the analogy to genealogy to work. Even in a family genealogy...it suffices that between each generation there is an appropriate, shared element (e.g., a blood tie).”

According to Leiter, what counts as this relatively permanent element in the case of morality is “the practice of evaluating oneself and others.” This is because morality is itself a functional concept, so genealogy cannot identify the concept of morality as the permanent element because the various functions are precisely what genealogy attempts to track. This is indicative of the naturalism in Nietzsche, to which Leiter aims to draw attention. The basis for the various functional attributions is practice in the natural world, just as it is for Marx; the analysis Nietzsche offers elucidates the psychological mechanisms by which various impermanent values are attributed to evaluative practice throughout history. These mechanisms include ressentiment, internalized cruelty, and the will to power.

Ressentiment, which is discussed in the first essay of On the Genealogy of Morality, is the psychological mechanism by which the moral evaluations good and evil came into existence. This mechanism is one wherein the

---


13 Ibid.
lower classes in early civilization came to invert the original evaluations in use – good and bad – in favor of Judeo-Christian values which remain prevalent today. According to Nietzsche, the term 'good' was originally used by the members of the higher class in society to refer to themselves, while the term 'bad' was used by them to refer to those who were not members of their class. Due to their mistreatment, the lower-class “slaves” felt resentment toward the higher class and sought revenge on their “masters.” This revenge came in the form of a revaluation of the term 'good', which the lower class began to use to refer to their own weak qualities. The negative evaluative term 'bad' was “revalued” and replaced with 'evil', which the lower class used to refer to the qualities of the higher class who abused them. These terms thereby took on a normative connotation which was not previously present. Where 'good' and 'bad' simply picked out a class, 'good' and 'evil' became evaluations of what ought to be. This over-simplified account illustrates the first example Nietzsche provides of how the stable practice of evaluation took on a new function in society.

The second essay of the Genealogy elaborates on this story by explaining another factor contributing to the assent of “slave morality” as the dominant view among all members of society. There, Nietzsche explains that internalized cruelty is necessary for civilization to succeed because it functions to relieve the natural tendency to outward cruelty to which humans are naturally prone. In conjunction with the first essay, this also explains the function of guilt in society. Prior to the slave revolt in morality, internalized cruelty was expressed as bad conscience, and this did not take on any normative connotations. However, after the slave revolt, with evaluative practice now imbued with normative connotations, bad conscience became transformed into guilt.

“The third essay,” as Leiter points out, “answers the questions left open by the earlier essays – why did slave morality triumph? why did bad conscience turn into guilt? – and thus brings the book to a satisfying close.”

The answer to these questions lies in the will to power, i.e. the instinctive desire for maximization of one's feeling of power, for which every

\[14\] Ibid., p. 190.
individual strives. The third essay explains how the new ascetic ideals of the slave revolt actually maximize power even for the higher class. They do so because these ideals make life bearable; ascetic ideals accomplish this by giving meaning to the suffering endured as a result of bad conscience. When bad conscience turns into guilt, it takes on the function of displacing ressentiment. Guilt transfers blame for suffering from other human beings to the sufferer's own self.

Just as the explanation of ideals Marx provides might initially appear causal, the explanation these three essays together provide seem based in the causal origin of ascetic ideals. However, it is clear that this is not the case when Leiter gives greater specification to what gives suffering meaning. He writes:

"...human beings are fundamentally creatures of desire...This means, of course, that humans stand almost continuously in violation of the ascetic ideal: all their basic instincts and inclinations are fundamentally anti-ascetic! The ascetic priest seizes upon this fact in order to provide a meaning for human suffering: in a nutshell, one suffers, according to the priest, as punishment for failure to live up to the ascetic ideal.\footnote{Ibid., p. 261.}

Thus, one suffers because one punishes oneself, and one punishes oneself because one suffers. This is the function of the ascetic ideals. Nietzsche's genealogy does not therefore explain ascetic ideals by their origin. In fact, the origin does not even matter to the explanation. As long as no metaphysical picture is necessary to explain how the ascetic ideals arose, it is legitimate for Nietzsche to appeal to a naturalistic explanation. The account of the historical development of ascetic ideals makes it plausible that conscious acceptance of metaphysical norms are not how ascetic ideals came to prominence. Rather, explanation for their wide acceptance is that they have a beneficial (or pseudo-beneficial) consequence as a result of their function; once a set of ideals come into existence, they continue to exist if they have a beneficial function, no matter how suspect their origin.

Conclusion: Nietzsche's Path to Communism
The problem with Marx's explanation of ideals is that it seems to conflict with the promise of a future communist society. This problem does not exist if there is a natural historical teleology in which the forces of production necessarily develop toward communist equilibrium, as Marx originally advocates. However, given the untenability of such a teleology according to contemporary science, Cohen presents the alternative that Marxists should turn to marketing communist revolution with normative theory until a sufficient level of awareness is reached for the revolution to be intentionally brought about. The explanatory theory of ideology seems to undermine this possibility, since only the current economic system is stabilized by the current ideals. The forces of production would have to be fettered for a new economic system and new ideals to take hold. Without teleology, it is uncertain whether communism will ever result.

Nietzsche's genealogical explanatory paradigm, while functional, operates in a slightly different manner than that of Marx. The naturalistic basis is not forces of production, but conventional practices. These practices are valued in different ways throughout history, but the values survive according to their functional success in fulfilling the will to power. Nietzsche, however, makes no prediction about the coming of maximal satisfaction of will to power, so no historical teleology seems to be operative in his account. Such teleology is unnecessary because the will to power does not develop, but always remains the instinctive drive by which values are deemed more or less prudential. Thus, will to power does not conflict with the interests of any particular group in society, so there should be no theoretical hindrance to a more prudential ideal structure arising that will motivate communist revolution.

Furthermore, no intentional action is required to bring about a revaluation of ideals on this account. Although Nietzsche's first essay tells the story of how the lower class attached a normative connotation to evaluative terms, this action was not the result of a conscious effort to obtain a revaluation. Rather, it is the result of the moral psychology of ressentiment, which may equally have brought about the change in value structure by random generation of the new use of evaluative terms and preservation of that use due to its beneficial function. Similarly random generation of ideals may bring about the ideals necessary for a communist revolution.
Thus Nietzsche provides a naturalistic explanation of ideals without any necessary appeal to a teleological structure or intentional action. Contrary to Cohen, normative moral theory is not necessary to bring about the ideals required for motivating communist revolution. An added benefit of this explanatory structure is that it conforms to standard functional explanation in evolutionary science today: attributes of organisms are randomly generated through mutation and are maintained if a beneficial effect results. Even if this perspective is less optimistic than the one originally advocated by Marx, it is more optimistic than Cohen’s view. As Leiter points out, Cohen’s own moral theorizing failed to convince even other egalitarian philosophers, let alone the masses that would be required for communist revolution. Furthermore, the revaluation of ideals that is necessary for communist revolution is not hindered on Nietzsche’s model as it is on Marx’s. Even if random generation never brings out the objectively best ideals for fulfillment of the will to power, more prudential ideals will always be accepted by the masses. Thus, if communist ideals do arise and are the best for fulfillment of will to power, then no economic material relations could hinder their acceptance.

\footnote{Leiter, The Hermeneutics of Suspicion, p. 89.}
“Evil” is an uncommon word in contemporary “intellectual” discourse. It goes against the grain of many fashionable ideas that have come and gone over the past two centuries. And, in a sense, when people claim “evil doesn’t exist,” they are correct. They are not correct because all viewpoints are equally valid, or because human beings are the product of socio-economic determinism, or because God is dead. Quite the opposite! It is beyond the scope of this paper to counter each of these arguments. Instead, we shall attempt to define “evil” by drawing on both Greek and Christian Platonist thought, using this model to construct a sketch of the truly evil person. It will ultimately be argued that evil is an activity of the soul which voids the soul itself through greed, lust and hunger for power. By the cogency and applicability of this definition, we hope to win some small victory in the noble cause of evil.

To understand evil, let us first examine Plato and Aristotle’s views of justice and injustice. Both philosophers identify justice and injustice with Virtue and Vice, respectively, so these two concepts may provide a basis for considering good and evil. Plato puts forward his definition of justice in The Republic. “And the truth is, justice was something like that, as it seems, but not anything connected with doing what properly belongs to one’s self externally, but with what’s on the inside, that truly concerns oneself and properly belongs to oneself, not allowing each thing in him to do what’s alien to it...becoming his own friend.” Justice for Plato is having and doing what is properly one’s own, both in relation to the Polis and in the soul’s relationship to itself. Injustice, logically enough, is the opposite. “Doesn’t it

---

turn out to be some sort of faction among these three things, a meddling and butting in and an uprising of a certain part of the soul against the whole?" This argument renders the case that vice brings happiness absurd, because it is a state in which the soul is at war with itself. The implicit cause of injustice, both in the soul and the Polis, according to a class lecture by Dr. John Kress of Emory University in the Fall of 2008, emerges from this argument as Pleonexia, "Wanting-more-ness," the desire and pursuit of more than what is properly one’s own to have or do. Also implicit in The Republic is a certain identification of justice and injustice with virtue and vice in general. Aristotle makes this connection explicit in The Nichomachian Ethics. “This type of justice (general Justice), then, is the whole, not a part, of virtue, and the injustice contrary to it is the whole, not a part, of vice.” We can now safely connect injustice, vice and Pleonexia with evil. However, we will soon see Pleonexia is not the complete definition of Evil.

For many, the word “evil” has a religious flavor, perhaps accounting for some of its unpopularity with certain modern thinkers. All the same, it is worthwhile in formulating our definition of evil to examine its theological implications. The basic “problem of evil” is, “if God is good, how can evil possibly exist?” For the Christian Platonist, Boethius, in his work, The Consolation of Philosophy, the answer is deceptively simple. It doesn't! “‘Surely no one doubts,’ she (Lady Philosophy) said, ‘that God has power over all things?...Now, if someone has power over all things,’ she added, ‘there is nothing he cannot do?...But God cannot commit evil, can he?...And so evil is a nothing, for there is nothing that he cannot do, but he cannot commit evil.” In other words, if God is truly good, evil cannot exist, so evil

---

2 Ibid.
itself turns out to be a kind of non-existence. And what of evil people? According to Boethius, evil people do not exist. This is due to their abandoning pursuit of the true good in favor of false goods. “If that is the case, they cease not just to be powerful, but to exist at all, for people who abandon the goal which all existing things have in common likewise cease to exist.” For Boethius, evil renders a human being less real and less human, a sort of void surrounded by flesh.

Through standing on the shoulders of giants, we have reached a point where we may embark on a definition of evil. Pleonexia is clearly the root of evil, since the desire and pursuit of what is not properly one’s own is the basis for the pursuit of false goods as opposed to true goods, which we may easily identify with those that are properly one’s own to have and do. Pleonexia, therefore, may be said to make void the soul as well as to divide it against itself. Pleonexia only increases as we seek to fulfill it because it creates a lack of the true good, which alone exists. We struggle to fill the emptiness, but, ignorant of the true good, we only widen it. Pursuing Pleonexia is like drinking salt water to slake our thirst; it only becomes more intense.

In addition, we may say the definition of evil will be something that is the opposite of happiness. According to Dr. Kress, Plato implicitly identifies justice with happiness in The Republic, as it causes harmony in the soul. In The Consolation, Boethius explicitly identifies happiness with the good and with God. “But we have shown that God and true happiness are one and the same...Therefore, we can safely assume that God’s substance to lies in the good and nowhere else.” If good and evil are opposite each other, and happiness is one with the good, happiness and evil must likewise be opposites. Therefore, if happiness, as Aristotle said, is an activity of the

\[\text{Ibid., 75.}\]

\[\text{Ibid., 61.}\]
soul, than evil must likewise be an activity of the soul as well, an activity of ceasing to exist.

This, then, is our definition of evil; an activity of the soul in accordance with Pleonexia that voids the soul itself. With this definition before us, let us sketch the personality of the truly evil person. The evil person, above all else, is sort of vast, chaotic, vacuous non-entity, an ever fading half-reality, a disintegrating shadow, sucking in everything around it like a black hole, only to widen the emptiness. The evil person is ruled by Pleonexia. The more the person acts in accordance with (or in obedience to) Pleonexia, the stronger Pleonexia's rule becomes, the more he becomes a powerless slave, and the more he fades away into the void. It is a cycle feeding on itself. It follows the truly evil person is unhappy beyond imagination, because he is experiencing the process of his own disappearing. It is as if his consciousness were being buried alive and slowly suffocated to death. The evil soul is not just at war with itself, as Plato imagined, but is winning this war and successfully destroying itself.

Over the course of the 19th century, various sociological, psychological and physiological theses were given to explain the phenomenon we call "evil" by reducing it to something material or otherwise concrete and determinable. However, for many, these explanations fell short before the horrors of the 20th century, and some suspect they may even have contributed to them. A line of reason that tries to reduce human beings to something other than human beings seems not only generally unsuccessful in practice, but, from the perspective of the Ancients, to be the very heart of evil itself. It is a war for what C.S. Lewis described as "the abolition of man," the war of the soul against itself. If we are to successfully face the next century, we must recognize human beings, not as objects subject merely to deterministic laws of motion, but as human beings, and we must once more learn to praise of the notion of evil.
General bibliography


---------. Sein und Zeit. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 2006. ("SZ")

Heidegger, Martin, "The Origin of the Work of Art." in Philosophies of Art and Beauty


Minnich, Elizabeth K. “To Judge in Freedom: Hannah Arendt on the Relation on Thinking and Mortality.” *In Hannah Arendt: Thinking, Judging,


Soames, Scott. "What are Natural Kinds?" *Philosophical Topics, Forthcoming*.


