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PROFESSOR SPOTLIGHT: MARK BALAGUER

The first thing I learned upon sitting down to interview Dr. Mark Balaguer is that we are both army brats. Mark was born on Fort Bragg in North Carolina, lived in Hawaii and then Chicago, attended middle school in Stuttgart, Germany, and then returned stateside to complete high school in Sparta, New Jersey. Unsurprisingly (at least to a fellow army brat) Mark described himself as being a very philosophical kid. By the time Mark happened into taking a philosophy class during his undergrad at CU Boulder, he recognized the thoughts being expressed by philosophers as mirroring his own.

Mark lit up with excitement in front of me as he described the first time he read Descartes' *Meditations*. The first meditation, Mark explained, was all about what can be doubted. Reading philosophers like Descartes would inspire Mark's later interest in a particular question: whether or not there are abstract objects. The question of abstract objects fits into an overlap between philosophy and mathematics, the two areas of study Mark pursued during his undergraduate degree.

Mark would go on to write his doctoral dissertation in philosophy on this same question regarding abstract objects while studying at the Graduate Center at City University of New York. His decision to pursue an academic career in philosophy turned on his love for writing, creativity, and, as he described it to me, "techy stuff." Mark had considered a career as a writer, perhaps

writing fiction, but he found himself attracted to problems in meta-physics and was excited about trying to determine what could be said about these problems, if anything.

Mark found a niche for himself as a professor at California State University Los Angeles, where he's spent his time investigating questions of meta-ontology, meta-metaphysics, and what he calls "philosophy of philosophy." Mark explained to me that after his initial attraction towards metaphysics, he found himself feeling uneasy about the problems being tackled in metaphysics. So, his focus shifted from trying to answer the questions of metaphysics to asking whether there was something wrong with the questions themselves. In asking this, Mark discovered that getting the right view of metaphysics required taking a step back and first getting the right view about meta-metaphysics. In other words, a lot of metaphysical questions needed to be approached not by trying to figure out what the fact of the matter is, but rather by trying to figure out whether there is a fact of the matter, and if so, what kind of fact it might be.

I asked Mark about the kinds of projects and writings that he's done. He told me first about his book *Platonism and Anti-Platonism in Mathematics*. Here, Mark first presents the Platonic view that math deals with abstract objects; second, he presents the anti-Platonic view that math does not deal with abstract objects; third and finally, he argues that there's no right answer, because there's no fact of the matter about whether abstract objects exist. In another book of his, *Free Will as an Open Scientific Problem*, Mark argues that questions regarding free will boil down to empirical questions, the most important of which is the question of whether human beings have libertarian free will. Mark contends that this central question can only be answered via neuroscience research that does not yet exist, and as such, the question of free will remains both open and scientific. There's a third book that's still in the making; in this work, Mark traverses through a number of metaphysical questions and argues that these questions either decompose into being factually empty—no fact of the matter exists to answer them—or the questions are actually empirical ones. He

leaves open a third category for logical or modal questions but focuses in on giving admittedly anti-metaphysical responses to metaphysical questions.

When I got around to asking Mark why he thinks philosophy is important and why he does it, he gave me an answer that I probably should have expected from someone who has spent years subverting typical philosophical methods and approaches. Mark explained that he thinks that philosophy, especially socio-economic philosophy, can have external importance in that it can help people understand suffering and diminish it when possible. He explained that he also thinks that philosophy can equip us to be better people and to build better societies. He does not, however, think that the philosophy that he does contributes to this external kind of importance. For Mark, the philosophy that he does is important to him because it has intrinsic value. He wants to work through arguments and find good things to say because he finds it interesting, because it is something good in itself.

My final question for Mark was inspired by the first time I met him. Sitting in a graduate student orientation for the department, I listened as Mark told us not to be soap-box philosophers—not to assume that we knew everything, because that diminishes the opportunity to learn, both for our classmates and for ourselves. So I asked Mark whether he thinks there is any particular characteristic a philosopher should have if they want to be a good philosopher. He leaned back in his chair and let out a sigh before admitting that he thought there were "many of them." He told me that philosophers should never believe something without good arguments. He said that shame is the enemy of being a good student in philosophy because it stops you from asking questions—and you should just ask your questions. He even repeated the soap box comment that inspired the question, stressing the importance of humility once more. The most important characteristic for Mark, though, is to be creative: for a good philosopher, philosophy should be an opportunity to create something original.

— K.R. et al

Persistent Beliefs

Troy Polidori

Introduction

Growing up under the auspices of evangelical Protestantism, I was taught the inflexible doctrine that belief was the factor by which all human beings would be judged by God. The Pauline dictum was clear: "If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified..." (Rom. 10:9-10).

It was understood that on Judgment Day, God would not call you to account for your deeds, but for your beliefs: specifically, did you believe in Jesus Christ as the redeemer of your sins? There are many facets of this understanding of salvation which one might criticize, but the notion that belief could in principle serve this function was not one of them. It was simply accepted as a matter of fact that a belief such as this was the type of thing which, once one has it, one has it persistently unless one consciously divests oneself of it. One either has a belief like this or doesn't have it at every moment. It is always there under the surface of every occurrent thought. Whether a belief could be the arbiter of salvation or not may have fallen into theological disrepute, but the notion that such a belief could at least function in this manner remains intuitive in orthodoxy.

One may ask, however: What if belief does not function in this manner? What if beliefs, like the phenomenal experiences of sound or sight, are episodic in nature, coming and going with distinct, temporal beginnings and ends? If this is so, then by which belief are we to be judged in the hypothetical divine courtroom? Surely everyone would believe the correct thing when directly faced with divine judgment, so the belief-function must be served at some point before death. Is there then a designated point in time

when one must have had the belief, such as on one's deathbed? What if one's death was sudden or unpredictable? Does this put those who "die with their boots on" at a salvific disadvantage?

It seems clear to me that we have divided intuitions in this regard. On one side, some beliefs appear persistent. The religious example used above simply directs us to the fact that many of our most established beliefs seem to be held persistently. This would include beliefs constitutive of our personal identity, such as "I believe that I am a man," as well as beliefs which hold strong moral weight, such as "I believe that I love my wife" or "I believe that it is good to sacrifice of oneself for others, even without the potential for reward." Additionally, beliefs play an ample role in epistemic justification and in the psychological rationalization of behavior and must be persistent in order to play these roles. For instance, my belief that it is sunny outside has as its epistemic foundation the belief in the accuracy of my senses, but we only rarely bring this latter belief into the realm of occurrent thought. Likewise, it would seem obvious that someone who eats a cheeseburger believes that cheeseburgers satisfy hunger, even if the person was not in an occurrent state of belief at the moment of burger consumption. There must therefore be some category of beliefs which are persistent underneath occurrent conscious thought and experience.

On the other hand, there is good reason to believe that beliefs *cannot* be persistent. According to the phenomenal intentionality of thought (PIT) thesis, thoughts are a distinctive kind of experience (Pitt 2004). As distinctive experiences, like sight or sound, thoughts then have a proprietary phenomenology all their own, and like all other phenomenal experiences they must be episodic in nature. This would mean that in the same way "hearing middle C" is necessarily a temporally-defined experience (whether it takes one second or resembles John Cage's *As Slow as Possible*), thinking "I love my wife" likewise has a defined beginning and end. Thoughts, therefore, cannot be persistent in the way required above.[1] If PIT is true, then thoughts are experiences, and if beliefs contain thought contents, then beliefs cannot be anything but

occurrent conscious experiences as well. I am persuaded that at least this portion of PIT is true: thoughts are individuated experiences. So, what am I to do with these conflicting intuitions?

I. BELIEF TYPES: EPISODIC AND PERSISTENT

First, let us look at the structure of beliefs. A belief is typically understood as a complex object composed of a propositional attitude and a thought. For example, I believe that I am a man. It makes sense to say that this is a belief because it contains a propositional attitude (belief, as opposed to doubt, desire, hope, etc.) and a thought ("I am a man"). I could certainly think this thought on its own ("I am a man"), but clearly my believing this thought is different from merely entertaining it as a pure thought. Belief thus necessarily requires a thought content, and all thought contents are occurrent experiences.

A belief like "I believe that I am a man" can certainly be experienced episodically. I might, for instance, take a gender studies class where gender identity is thoroughly questioned. I may begin reflecting on what exactly it is to be a man and come to realize that I take it to be the case that I fit within this category. I would then be convinced that the thought "I am a man" is true. This would be an obvious case of an episodic and occurrent belief that is consciously experienced. Upon basic introspection, I think we have these experiences every day, and it seems absurd to me to deny that these are anything other than occurrent episodes of a belief-type experience.

This occurrent, consciously experienced belief is clearly episodic in nature. It has a beginning and an end. Through introspection, I can immediately detect that I am having this belief, that it is a belief (because I am taking a thought to be the case), and when the belief ends.[2] However, if someone were to ask me whether or not I believe that I am a man, would I need to recreate a type-identical experience in order to truthfully answer affirmatively? This would seem a strange requirement. I would simply answer, "Yes, I believe that I am a man," since this is the kind of belief which one often holds persistently once one has it. Impor-

tantly, I may also truthfully give an affirmative answer *without consciously considering the thought contained in the belief*. I would not need to first entertain the thought "I am a man" in order to affirm that I believe it, whereas my initial belief-experience seemed to require a conscious episode of the thought before taking it to be the case.

It seems clear to me that there is a complex process of belief formation occurring here. One first entertains a thought, then takes it to be the case (i.e. *believes* the thought), and then in some special cases installs the belief into something like one's mental hard drive, which allows the belief to be called upon for easy access in the future. The notion of "easy access" here is the ability to reference the belief in cases of epistemic justification (e.g. "I am a man and therefore believe I should be treated like one") and in issues related to personal identity (e.g. placing a checkmark under "male" on a DMV form) without re-entertaining the thought in question. The software installation metaphor is apt for precisely this reason: when one installs software on a computer, this enables the calling up of the program without using an abundance of resources (compared to re-downloading the program every time). The program may run as a service in the background of surface activity (e.g. browsing, word processing, etc.). Likewise, when one recalls a belief persistently held, one relies on having already installed the belief previously, and the additional resources no longer required would include the phenomenal, episodic belief-experience and the process necessary for installing it (i.e. making it a *persistent* belief).

II. Contra Persistent Beliefs

With this process in mind, we can clearly distinguish between two different kinds of beliefs: episodic belief-experiences and persistent non-experiential beliefs. One might argue, as Crane does, that this is a metaphysical distinction between kinds and that only one of these can rightfully be called a belief: "If I am right that there is a fundamental metaphysical distinction between episodes/occurrences and persisting states, then it is misleading at best to use

the term 'belief' for entities in both categories" (Crane 2013, p. 165). Additionally, Crane holds that the functionality of beliefs is at stake when considering the status of occurrent beliefs. Beliefs explain why we do things, and occurrent beliefs can't perform this function since they would cease to exist as soon as the experience ended, no longer being available to play the role of *explanans*. Crane concludes based on this distinction that there are no occurrent beliefs, but only occurrent judgments. Beliefs, therefore, are only dispositional states and are related to thought-judgments like the state of fragility is related to the breaking of a vase (Crane 2013, p. 163).

What seems to be missing in this analogy is precisely the notion of installation and ease of recall previously presented. If an occurrent judgment that a thought is true is presented as simply the instantiation of a static property (like the breaking of something fragile), then the process of how something came to have that property to begin with has been obscured, especially when it is these same occurrent judgments that led to the installation of the property in the first place. Can the breaking of a vase both serve as the mechanism by which the vase is made fragile and as the instantiation of the property *fragility*? Perhaps this is how we would describe an object's slow descent toward brokenness over time, but this is surely not a necessary condition of the state of fragility. Objects can be fragile for many reasons (they are made poorly, composed of fragile materials, etc.). Persistent beliefs of the kind we are investigating, on the other hand, *must* be produced by (typically, a series of) occurrent beliefs and must enable the possible instantiation of type-identical belief-experiences. A clear metaphysical distinction between persistence and occurrence seems less obvious given this composition.

Pitt has argued that even with a distinction between persistence and occurrence, an occurrent judgment and a persistent belief might still have type-identical tokens (Pitt 2016). For instance, one might for various reasons be disposed to believe that one is a man, and one might consciously have an "I believe that I am a man" type episodic belief-experience. Is there an *a priori*

reason to reject the idea that these might be type-identical? If not, then it is possible that occurrent beliefs and persistent beliefs are more intimately related than Crane would have it.

Pitt goes on to ask, "What could it be to persistently instantiate the property of endorsing that p, if endorsement is an event?" (Pitt 2016, p. 124). Pitt argues that beliefs, as episodic events, can only be conscious experiences and must be distinguished from unconscious dispositional states, which may only be the causes of belief. He uses the analogy of a sleeping singer, arguing that when we say that she sings well, what we mean is that she has the ability to sing well, not that she is currently singing while sleeping. Likewise, when we say that someone has a persistent belief, we mean that they have a disposition to believe something, not that they are having an occurrent belief-experience (assuming they aren't having a dream-belief). As described above, I think Pitt is correct to point out, contra Crane, that we can have occurrent belief-experiences, and that these are strongly associated with dispositions to believe. However, based on the account of persistent beliefs sketched above, I think something important is still missing from this account.

III. ANALOGUES OF PERSISTENT BELIEFS

Let's return to the analogy of the sleeping singer, as practical skills are a helpful analogy for understanding belief-formation. The singer must have undergone a particular set of experiences in order to be said to sing well (e.g. singing lessons, music school, self-training). These experiences will have added together to form a kind of disposition: the ability to sing well. It would be strange, for instance, if a great singer were to swing back and forth between singing well and singing poorly without some explanatory externality as sufficient cause. When the singer is sleeping, then, we may truthfully acknowledge that "she sings well," meaning that she has a disposition to sing well (i.e. she can instantiate this skill at will without re-performing the conditions through which it was installed in the first place). This is to be distinguished from her occurrently singing well, as in instantiating the dispositional

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property through singing, an action which is also an experience (both for herself and others in proximity). This all seems relatively clear, but how does it correlate with persistent belief?

Like the sleeping singer, one may have a disposition to believe something even while sleeping. For instance, one may be in a persistent dispositional state to believe that "I love my wife" even while one is not consciously experiencing anything, let alone experiencing the pure thought which is the content of the belief in question. However, is there a distinction to be made between dispositional states like this one, which as argued above have certain necessary conditions, and other dispositional belief states? I believe so, and I think a few examples will make this clear.

Consider the thought, "President Obama is wearing socks right now."[3] Should one, after considering the pure thought, take this to be the case? This would obviously depend on where Obama currently is in the world, the time zone in question, and any other epistemically relevant considerations (knowledge about when he goes to bed, whether he wears slippers or socks around the house, etc.). Imagine one was disposed to believe this thought to in fact be the case. Is there a certain sense in which one was disposed to believe this? It seems so, as long as one admits that this kind of disposition is based on (and perhaps reducible to) a disposition towards logical inference. "I believe that Obama is wearing socks right now because it is 8pm in Washington, D.C., and I don't think he's the type of person to wear slippers around the house," one might conclude. This dispositional state is clearly different from the other kinds of dispositional states previously analyzed, since it requires no previous entertaining of the thought in question, but does require some degree of inference from other thoughts that must be entertained and then taken to be the case.

Consider another kind, such as that of the slave boy in Plato's Meno. The slave is shown to believe in the basic fundamental truths of geometry through a short dialogue with Socrates. Are these beliefs, ostensibly acquired through Platonic *anamnesis*, of the same type as those concerning Obama's sartorial tendencies? It seems to me they are not, for the following reason: whereas

the belief that Obama is wearing socks right now must be based on some degree of inference from other belief-experiences, the slave in the *Meno* is able to take geometrical principles to be the case without any other belief-experiences as a condition. Surely, there is still inference happening here, but not immediate belief-experiential inference. It is simply taken to be the case that these geometrical concepts are true *a priori*. The Obama example required immediate belief-experiences as inferential conditions, but Meno's slave requires only a basic disposition to believe in rational concepts, with or without other belief-experiences. In fact, Plato's entire argument for knowledge as recollection depends on this very distinction. And yet, neither this nor the Obama example quite tackles our main issue: persistently-held belief dispositions which require previous belief-experiences having installed the belief as a kind of service on one's mental hard drive.[4]

A third and final example will help make the point clear. Consider, "I believe that God is good." This can clearly be an occurrent belief-experience. One may, for instance, undergo a rapturous religious experience where one takes it to overwhelmingly be the case that God instantiates the moral property of goodness (Euthyphro's considerations aside). However, this is also a paradigmatic case of a persistently held belief. Identifying oneself or others as believers in divine goodness is typically accomplished through witnessing actions or behaviors other than having this kind of occurrent belief-experience: recognition of meaning in fortuitous events, sacrificing for others without selfish motive, explaining away cases of worldly evil as an ignorance of the divine plan, etc. In what sense does one persistently hold this belief? Not in the same way as one believes that Obama is wearing socks, since the latter requires immediate belief-experiential inference; and not in the same way as one believes that the square of the hypotenuse of a right triangle is equal to the sum of the squares of the other two sides, as this requires rational (but not necessarily belief-experiential) inference. This disposition to believe that God is good requires no *immediate* experience or inference, but only requires that this disposition be installed by a previous series of

belief-experiences (e.g. religious conversion, spiritual awakenings, textual study, etc.). Crucially, this disposition may also be revised by this same process: one may, through the experience of many worldly evils, take it to be the case that God is not good, or that God likely does not exist, thus installing a new persistently held belief. It is this process, I think, that distinguishes what we typically call persistent beliefs from simple dispositions to believe, whether of the rational inference or belief-experiential inference variety.

A hypothetical might help to bring this distinction to light: if one were to ask a close friend of mine whether I would be likely to believe that Obama was wearing socks right now, or whether I would be likely to believe in the Pythagorean theorem, my close friend might answer "yes," but this would clearly be different from affirming that I would be likely to believe that God is good. My friend would have to consider a very different set of criteria for answering the latter (i.e. would have to consider different things *about me*), such as whether this is a persistent belief I am able to immediately recall as an occurrent belief-experience. Importantly, this distinction is both *phenomenological* in that these persistent beliefs are experienced differently by the believer (i.e. not necessarily connected in chronological sequence with immediate belief-experiences or inferences) and *metaphysical* in that persistent beliefs are necessarily conditioned by the belief-installation procedure.

Consider another analogy to help make this distinction clear: that of complex emotional dispositions. One may, for instance, find oneself in an occurrent affective state of hatred towards one's enemy. In being in this occurrent affective state, one is immediately aware of the distinctive phenomenal qualities of the experience. However, we often claim that individuals can be in certain emotional states even when these episodes have ended (or perhaps when they are in-between them). Again, the rationalization of behavior is a key factor in this regard. For example, we might explain the outbursts of a co-worker by referencing the fact that "he doesn't realize it, but he really just hates his ex and is taking it

out on everyone else." This is typically just armchair psychology, but there are certainly occasions where it may be true. If the underlying, unconscious affective state of a person can account for their behavior, then is there not a sense in which the state is persistent, whether or not there is an occurrent episode present?

If so, then the analogy is clear: just as affective states can be persistent underneath phenomenologically distinct episodes, so beliefs can be persistent underneath distinct belief-experiences. And, crucially, in the same way that emotional episodes such as hatred might surface at a moment's notice without any necessary inferences (perhaps on a psychiatrist's couch), belief-experiences that are tokens of a particular persistent belief-type can arise without either rational or immediate belief-experiential inferences. They are simply "called up" to occurrent consciousness like a program running in the background of a computer would be when opened.

IV. Taxonomy of Belief Types

So far, we have considered at least four different types of belief-related entities: (1) simple occurrent belief-experience episodes (e.g. "I believe that I am cold right now"), (2) dispositions to believe based on inference from other immediate belief-experiences (e.g. "I believe that Obama is wearing socks right now"), (3) dispositions to believe based on rational inference with neither a belief-installation process nor other immediate belief-experiences being required other than the thought content of the belief itself (e.g. "I believe that bachelors are unmarried"), and (4) persistent beliefs requiring previous belief-experiences to have installed the belief as a service on one's mental hard drive, making it available for easy recall (i.e. enabling tokens of the belief to occur without any other immediate belief-experiences, in contrast to type-2). The key here is to understand the distinction between type-4 beliefs and the other three. Persistent beliefs, whatever else, have conditions of possibility not shared with the other belief-types. Namely, they require a belief-installation process unique to deeply held persistent beliefs. This alone should cause us to take caution when

either making a clean distinction between occurrence and persistence or rejecting the notion that persistent beliefs are anything other than dispositions.

V. Unconscious Phenomenology

One further problem must be addressed before concluding. Even when taking for granted the complexity of persistent beliefs as argued for here, it may be claimed that beliefs are simply experiences and that unconscious beliefs (such as the persistent beliefs in question) are a contradiction in terms. As I can see it, there are two options available with which to respond to this criticism: (1) invent some third term to satisfy our intuitions that persistent beliefs are categorically distinct from both dispositions to believe (type 2 and 3) and occurrent belief-experiences (type 1), or (2) explore the possibility that there might be unconscious phenomenology. As I am not a linguist, I have no desire to investigate the potential for track 1, so let us address whether there is evidence for track 2. For if there is any evidence that unconscious phenomenology is possible, then persistent belief-experiences, with a proprietary what-it-is-likeness all their own, would become a leading candidate for the job.[5]

Consider once again the role of persistent beliefs in the psychological rationalization of behavior. When a person behaves in a peculiar way, we may seek to explain this behavior by attributing a particular set of persistent beliefs to the subject in question. For instance, if one were to witness a friend acting anxiously around his spouse, one might speculate something like, "he must believe he's done something wrong." Is it necessary that the subject in question occurrently has a belief-experience of this type for our speculation to be true? I don't think so, for all of the reasons given above in accounting for the existence of persistent beliefs: he must have undergone previous belief-experiences that have installed this persistent belief as a service in his mental hard drive, and this belief must be available for immediate recall without either rational or belief-experiential inference. I believe these conditions can be easily met by our hypothetical.

The key question, however, given that we may assume it is possible that our subject has the persistent belief in question, is whether or not there is some unconscious phenomenological quality to having this persistent belief. Of course, being unconscious, the subject would not be aware of this quality of their experience, but it would be instantiated nonetheless. How can we possibly account for it then? Given our account of the persistent belief formation process, I think an account becomes somewhat clear: much like how the software running in the background of a computer is active and affecting changes in the processor's behavior, so persistent beliefs are active and affecting changes in human behavior even when we are not consciously aware of them.

Importantly, this is also the way we are able to read individuals in such a way so as to attribute to them these persistent beliefs: they behave in such-and-such a way, and so they must believe such-and-such (or in this case, must be having a belief-experience of such-and-such, even if they are not aware of it). Compare this to simple dispositions to believe. These would be akin to the hardware of a computer, states we are simply born with[6] (such as rational inference, or the ability to infer from one belief-experience to another). An account of unconscious belief-phenomenology is therefore more readily available (especially in the rationalization of behavior) than other possible candidates for unconscious phenomenology, since unconscious, persistently held beliefs seem to manifest themselves in behavior (as well as in their proprietary way of being "called up" as occurrent belief-experiences) in a way distinct from other potential forms of unconscious phenomenology (e.g. the phenomenology of non-conscious entities like plants in forms of panpsychism, or universal unconscious states like those found in Jungian psychology). In the same way that we can more readily tell which services a computer may be running in the background (and infer that they must have been installed at a previous point) compared to which hardware may be included in a processor,[7] we can likewise deduce the possibility of unconscious belief-experiential phenomenology more easily than the usual speculative attempts.

Ultimately, we have a weaker and a stronger claim to consider regarding the status of persistent beliefs. The weaker claim is that what we intuitively call persistent beliefs are either a malleable form of belief-dispositions or a special kind of persistent belief (the difference being purely terminological). The stronger claim is that persistent beliefs have their own unconscious proprietary phenomenology and should therefore be categorized as belief-experiences of which we just happen to be unaware, although we may become aware of them during particular episodes in which type-identical beliefs are occurrently called up to consciousness. I have no current preference for either the weaker or stronger claim, although I think the stronger claim is a more interesting one and is worthy of further investigation. Contrast the possibility of persistent belief-phenomenology as sketched here to something like the Freudian id and superego: it seems to me that the former, given the role it may play in everyday observable behavior and the theoretical simplicity it features compared to the Freudian unconscious, is a more intriguing candidate for the role of unconscious phenomenology than unconscious states so much farther removed from observation.

CONCLUSION

We have seen that there are beliefs which occur in distinct episodes of experience. We have distinguished these pure belief-experiences from both dispositions to believe based on rational inference and dispositions to believe based on inference from other immediate belief-experiences. Lastly, we have used the account of occurrent belief-experiences to explain how the process of persistent-belief formation takes place: a series of occurrent belief-experiences must install a persistent belief into one's mental hard drive in such a way that this belief can be recalled without inference from any other belief or thought, save the thought content of the persistent belief itself. Persistent beliefs are therefore ontologically and phenomenologically distinct from other types of beliefs, in that they require this belief formation process in order to exist and are experienced without a previous series of immediate belief-expe-

riences, respectively. We have concluded that persistent beliefs may therefore be a special type of disposition to believe, or a unique type of belief-experience altogether, given the possibility of unconscious phenomenology.

It is my contention, following the phenomenal intentionality of thought thesis, that all occurrent thoughts are experiences, and, since all beliefs contain a propositional attitude and a thought content, that all occurrent beliefs are also discrete experiences. Beliefs would thereby have a proprietary phenomenology all their own, and I have attempted here to present a brief taxonomy of those basic belief-types. Whether we accept the controversial and difficult thesis that unconscious phenomenology is possible, which would allow us to unequivocally claim that unconscious persistent beliefs can be type-identical with occurrent belief-experiences, or we determine that what we call persistent beliefs are merely a distinct disposition to believe, is left open to disputation. All that remains clear is that these persistent beliefs, so integral to our notions of personal identity and moral responsibility, have a distinctive, intrinsic nature and form of experience (at least when occurrently called up). They may or may not win us eternal life, but they are no less important to our everyday lives despite that theological demotion.

Notes

1. A thought could perhaps be held for the entire life of an eternal being, but this still would not meet the requirement of a persistent belief which exists in some manner underneath occurrent conscious experience.

2. Perhaps this ending isn't immediately available to consciousness, but clearly one might realize later that one had ceased having the same belief-experience.

3. I have to thank David Pitt for this delightful example.

4. With regard to the notion of installation as a service, I have in mind the sense in which software on a computer can run in the background, ready to be called up quickly and efficiently, as opposed to having to be manually booted on each occasion of use.

5. This would of course mean that unconsciously experienced persistent beliefs would be necessarily episodic, as all experiences are necessarily episodic. However, I take this to be true of all type-4 persistent beliefs as

I have defined them: if they must be installed by a series of immediate, type-identical belief experiences and can be changed through the same process, then they were already in some sense episodic, and only persistent *relative* to what we usually think of as conscious episodes of belief (i.e. persistent *underneath* the conscious occurrent episodes). As an explanatory example, consider the possibility that a certain disposition could lead to the unconscious experiential belief that one is on a lucky streak while gambling (perhaps one feels impelled to continue playing without knowing exactly why), which could then produce a type-identical conscious experiential belief (perhaps one becomes hungry and needs to consciously decide whether to keep going). Both of these belief states (unconscious persistent belief-experience and conscious occurrent belief-experience) are contingent relative to one another, and the first (the unconscious persistent belief-experience) could persist through the waxing and waning of several occurrent belief-experiences of the second.

6. These can of course be improved upon or damaged, but it doesn't yet seem like we have the ability to switch out our hardware in the same way that persistent beliefs can switch out our software.

7. Clearly some of these would be obvious: that there is a processor, a video card, a sound card, etc. The point, however, is that the type of unconscious phenomenology often posited doesn't require the experiential-installation process unique to persistent beliefs as argued for here.

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MODAL FICTIONALISM AND THE PROBLEM OF INCOMPLETENESS

David Fonth

INTRODUCTION

This essay investigates an issue central to the modal fictionalist debate: the incompleteness problem for modal fictionalism. Since the development of David Lewis' modal realism, metaphysicians have attempted to find other ways to understand modality that do not entail ontological commitment to possible objects. One theory, modal fictionalism, has seen recent discussion as a tenable alternative to Lewis' ontologically plenitudinous theory. Despite its popularity, modal fictionalism is not without its own share of problems, and the incompleteness problem is one such problem. In this essay, I will focus on evaluating two responses to the incompleteness problem: Richard Woodward's Indeterminacy Response and Lukas Skiba's Modal Content Response. After evaluating the core of each of these responses to the problem, I will turn my attention to the issue of arbitrating between both responses and discuss one probable desideratum for adjudicating between both positions: the timid/strong modal fictionalist distinction. After putting forth this criterion, I will analyze the timid/strong modal fictionalist distinction itself, emphasizing the ways in which one might choose one view over the other. I finish my analysis by concluding that while the timid modal fictionalist ought to adopt Skiba's response over Woodward's, metaphysicians ought to be hesitant with respect to the adoption of timid modal fictionalism as an approach to modality.

To get a flavor for this issue, consider the following statement: Mars could have been green. At first glance, this seems obviously true: it is possible for Mars to be green. However, a peculiar issue arises when we turn to the truth-conditions of this

proposition. What is it about the world that makes this proposition true? One analysis is to maintain that a proposition is true just in case it corresponds to the way that the world is. But, on the contrary, it appears to be the case that the world is precisely such that the aforementioned state of affairs fails to correspond to reality!

One popular way of analyzing modal claims is by adopting modal fictionalism. Under this framework, the truth of modal claims is determined by the truth of some non-modal, possible-worlds paraphrase within a certain fiction—the fiction of possible worlds. So, 'Mars could have been green' is true just in case, according to the fiction of possible worlds, there is a possible world in which Mars is green. While this appears to provide one with some further understanding of modality, another problem arises when we turn to the issue of completeness. Literary and film fictions often remain silent on a number of issues. Unfortunately, the fiction subscribed to by the modal fictionalist is also susceptible to this incompleteness problem, which arises from the fact that it, like every other fiction, also remains silent on some issues. The reason why this is such a pressing issue is because, within such a theory, one will eventually arrive at a contradiction: one will eventually arrive at an instance of *p* & *~p*. *Prima facie*, this is unacceptable. How, then, should one go about solving this problem?

In Section I, I will discuss the fundamental aspects surrounding contemporary discussions of modal metaphysics, setting the stage for the incompleteness problem. In Section II, I will turn my attention to the incompleteness problem and evaluate its consequences for modal fictionalism. The discussion of Woodward's indeterminacy response to the incompleteness problem will constitute the focus of Section III. After this, I will focus on Skiba's modal content response to the problem in Section IV. Section V will introduce the timid and strong modal fictionalist distinction and will include my evaluation of its significance and relevance to the incompleteness discussion. In Section VI, I will discuss the shortcomings of adopting timid modal fictionalism

and show how Woodward's response could be amended for those that subscribe to strong modal fictionalism.

SECTION I – MODAL METAPHYSICS

The discussion of modal incompleteness is a discussion within modal metaphysics. Metaphysics is commonly understood as the study of the nature of reality or of the nature of existence (Van Inwagen 2007). Moreover, modal metaphysics is commonly understood as the study of the metaphysical consequences of modal statements—statements about what is possible or necessary (Van Inwagen 2007). As such, the question of what determines the truth of the claim 'Mars could have been green' will be a question within the realm of modal metaphysics, since these kinds of claims, i.e., 'could have been' claims, are asserting the possibility of something, which makes them modal claims.

Besides this basic modal claim, another kind of modal claim that will be pertinent to this discussion is the counterfactual conditional. A counterfactual conditional is a conditional that holds that some state of affairs would have been the case if some other state of affairs had in fact been the case. For instance, take the following statement:

(1)　　If Donald Trump had lost the presidential election, then Hillary Clinton would have won.

To start, (1) is a conditional: it says that something is the case if some condition holds. What makes (1) a counterfactual conditional, however, is that it is discussing what is actually not the case; it is discussing what is counter to the fact. More specifically, (1) asserts that if some non-actual state of affairs had been the case—i.e., the failure of Donald Trump's presidential bid—then some other state of affairs would have been the case—i.e., the success of Hillary Clinton's presidential bid.

With this in mind, how, then, are we to understand the truth or falsity of modal claims? One well-known way of responding to this question is by adopting a modal realist approach to modality. Modal realism, as championed by 20th century philosopher David

Lewis, is the view that basically holds the following thesis: modal claims are claims about possible worlds, and these possible worlds exist in the same way that the actual world does (Lewis 1986, pp. 2, 81). In order to make sense of this, let us start with defining what a possible world is. For Lewis, a possible world is a way that the world could be.[1] Moreover, when we contemplate the truth-conditions of modal claims, what we are really contemplating is a way that the world *could be*—not about the way the world is. And it is these 'ways-the-world-could-be' that Lewis calls "possible worlds" (Lewis 1986, p. 84). So, for instance, consider the original example claim:

(2)   Mars could have been green.

When we utter (2), we are obviously not talking about the way that the world is, since the world is such that Mars is red. Rather, when we utter (2), we are talking about a way that the world *could be:* we are talking about a possible world in which Mars is green. Thus, the truth-maker of (2) is a green-Mars possible world, not the red-Mars actual world.[2]

While Lewis' modal realism is clearly theoretically robust—i.e., it provides a clear conceptualization of modal claims—it does carry some ontological baggage. That is, it requires ontological commitment to possible worlds. This is primarily because, for Lewis, if the truth of modal claims depends on the existence of possible worlds, and if we do take certain modal claims—claims like (2)—to be true, then possible worlds exist. Now, it is important to note that this is an oversimplification of Lewis' reasoning behind believing in possible worlds. He gives various arguments for this belief. However, because this essay is not primarily on modal realism, the important take-away here is the fact that Lewis' modal realism is a strong contender for a theory of modality: it provides one with the ability to reduce modal talk into talk about possible worlds, which then only requires one to believe in these possible worlds in order to reap the theoretical benefits. Can these theoretical benefits be retained without such a high ontological cost?

The theory of modal fictionalism, as put forth by Gideon Rosen, appears to provide an alternative that meets such criteria. Modal fictionalism is the view that modal claims are logically equivalent to non-modal, possible worlds claims within a particular fiction (Rosen 1990, p. 335). It shares the usage of possible-worlds talk with its realist alternative, but it departs from it by qualifying this possible-worlds talk as being talk within a certain fiction. More specifically, modal fictionalists, following Rosen, hold the following biconditional: Let 'p' be a modal claim, 'PW' the fiction of possible worlds, and 'p*' the possible-worlds paraphrase of P (Rosen 1990, p. 335):

(F)   p, if, and only if, according to PW, p*.

In order to better understand this, let us apply our original example claim (2) to this biconditional:

(3)   Mars could have been green if, and only if, according to the fiction of possible worlds, there is a possible world where Mars is green.

It should be clear the similarity (3) shares with how the modal realist approaches (2). (3) maintains the semantic connection that (2) has with possible worlds, except that it qualifies this possible-worlds talk within a certain fiction: the fiction of Lewisian possible worlds.[3] For the fictionalist, the chosen fiction refers to Lewis' realism. So, under this framework, (2) is true because, according to the fiction of possible worlds—i.e., because of what Lewis' theory says about modal claims and possible worlds—there is a possible world in which Mars is green.

The fictionalist's modal strategy should thus be clear: it borrows the theoretical machinery of modal realism with its usage of possible-worlds, but it evades the ontological costs by maintaining that this possible-worlds talk is talk within the fiction of possible worlds. If there were no further issues with modal fictionalism, then it seems that one would be hard-pressed to accept modal realism in the face of this ontologically economic theory. Modal fictionalism is not without its own problems, notably that

of incompleteness.

SECTION II – THE INCOMPLETENESS PROBLEM

Before diving into the incompleteness of modal fictionalism, it would be beneficial to first examine the incompleteness of fictions in general. Fictions are incomplete because they remain silent on a number of issues. Take, for instance, the fiction of *Star Wars*. The fiction of *Star Wars* remains silent on the following proposition:

(S)   Luke Skywalker's favorite color is blue.

It is never explicitly addressed within the fiction whether (S) is true or false. As such, the following statements are both true:

(S1) ~ (According to the *Star Wars* fiction, (S)).

(S2) ~ (According to the *Star Wars* fiction, ~(S)).

In other words, the fiction of *Star Wars* remains silent on the issue of Luke's favorite color; the fiction neither affirms nor denies (S).

Since our primary interest when we engage with the fiction of *Star Wars* is, I assume, for entertainment, not for any theoretically metaphysical purpose, its incompleteness is a non-issue. The same, however, cannot be said about modal fictionalism. Similar to other fictions, the chosen fiction of the modal factionalist—the fiction of Lewisian modal realism—is incomplete. In Lewis' modal realist theory, it remains silent on the maximum number of objects that a world can contain (Lewis 1986, p. 89). More specifically, according to Lewis' theory, the following is true. First, let 'p' be the statement 'it is possible that there are x objects' and 'p*' be the statement 'there is a world with x objects', where x is some cardinal number greater than the power set of the actual number of objects (Woodward 2012, p. 782).[4] Given this, consider the following:

(M1)~ (According to the fiction of possible worlds, p*)

(M1) is true: it is not the case that Lewis' theory says that there is an x-object world—it remains silent on the existence of an

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x-object world. However, the following is also true:

(M2) ~ (According to the fiction of possible worlds, ~p*)

(M2) is also true: it is not the case that Lewis' theory says that there is not an *x*-object world—it remains silent on the existence of an x-object world. Thus, the conjunction of (M1) and (M2) is true, since Lewis' theory ultimately says nothing about the existence of such a world. The problem becomes clear, however, when we apply the fictionalist's biconditional—(F)—to (M1) and (M2). If we apply (F) to (M1), we get the following:

(M1*) ~p

To clarify, the reason why this is the case is because (M1) constitutes the right side of biconditional (F); (M1) is the 'according to PW, p*' part of (F). And since (F) is a biconditional, (M1) is thus logically equivalent to (M1*). Nevertheless, if we apply (F) to (M2), we get the following:

(M2*) ~~p

And, as should now be apparent, if we then take the conjunction of these two propositions, we get the following:

(MX) ~p & ~~p

(MX) is a contradiction: it says that some proposition and its negation are both true. But, in classical logic, such contradictions within a theory render the entire theory inconsistent. And, if a theory is inconsistent, then the theory is untenable. And so, the theory of modal fictionalism appears to be as such. What avenues, if any, can the modal fictionalist pursue in order to resolve this problem?

Section III – Woodward's Indeterminacy Response

One response to the incompleteness problem is put forth by philosopher Richard Woodward in his article "Fictionalism and Incom-

pleteness" (Woodward 2012, pp. 781-790). Woodward approaches the incompleteness problem by considering altering his treatment of truth-value gaps in his logic. After all, if one rejects a classical conception of truth, then the derivation of (MX) will not be possible. However, Woodward notes that unless one appeals to some independent reason for foregoing one's classical intuitions about truth, then adopting such a stance would be *ad-hoc* and, therefore, unattractive.

In considering such independent reasons, Woodward notes that one may come from an interpretation of the fictionalist's prefix—the 'according to the fiction' part of (F). The interpretation that Woodward eventually adopts is that of the counterfactual-conditional understanding of the fictionalist's prefix. Under this interpretation, to say that 'according to the fiction, p*' is true is tantamount to saying 'if the explicit content of the fiction were true, then p* would be true' (Woodward 2012, p. 785). More specifically, what this says is the following. Let 'EXPLICIT' represent the explicit content of the fiction, 'p*' the proposition 'there is a world with *x*-objects,' and 'PW' the fiction of possible worlds:[5]

(W) According to PW, p* if, and only if, if EXPLICIT were true, then p* would be true.

At first glance, it may be difficult to see how this interpretation solves the issue. However, if we accept (W), then the following disjunction also follows (Woodward 2012, p. 786):

(W1) (if EXPLICIT were true, then p*) v
(if EXPLICIT were true, then ~p*)

(W1) appears to be true. After all, if the explicit content of the modal fictionalist's fiction—Lewis' modal realism—were true, then either p or p* would be true; it either would or would not be the case that there is an x-object possible world. However, if (W1) is true, then the following must be false:[6]

(W2) ~ (if EXPLICIT were true, then p*) &

$$\sim (\text{if EXPLICIT were true, then } \sim p^*)$$

But, if we recall, (W2) is the conjunction of (M1) and (M2) that previously led to the incompleteness problem! Therefore, since (W2) is false, then the logical inference from (W2) to (MX), which is the logical step that led to contradiction, no longer follows. And since it was the truth of (MX) that rendered the modal fictionalist's theory inconsistent, the modal fictionalist no longer has to worry about her fiction being incomplete. The incompleteness problem resolves itself. And, it resolves itself without violating the classical conception of truth.

While this is sufficient to resolve the incompleteness problem, Woodward pushes further and comments on the way in which (W1) is true. Given the aforementioned counterfactual-conditional analysis of (W2), it is clear that (W1) is true. However, which disjunct is it that is causing (W1) to be true? Roughly, for Woodward, there is a sort of indeterminacy that enters into the discussion. To illustrate this point, consider the following two statements:

> (G1) If George Washington and Albert Einstein were siblings, both would be American.

> (G2) If George Washington and Albert Einstein were siblings, both would be German.

For Woodward, (G1) and (G2) are, when considered on their own, unacceptable; considered on its own, it seems false to accept (G1), and considered on its own, it seems false to accept (G2) (Woodward 2012, p. 786).[7] However, if we were to take the disjunction of (G1) and (G2), then, given our previous interpretation, the disjunction would have to be true. But, since there does not seem to be any reason for one to favor the truth of one disjunct over the other except mere stipulation, then it appears that we should perhaps accept that, in this case, at least, it is indeterminate which disjunct is true.[8] And, since there is indeterminacy with respect to the truth-value of these biconditionals, then perhaps we should also say the same about the truth-value of the biconditionals that

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constitute (W2).

SECTION IV – SKIBA'S MODAL CONTENT RESPONSE

Another recent response to the incompleteness problem is put forth by philosopher Lukas Skiba. Skiba recognizes the threat that the incompleteness problem poses for the consistency of the modal fictionalist's position. As such, he crafts a "modal content response" which, according to Skiba, adequately responds to the incompleteness problem for modal fictionalism. In order for Skiba's response to work, it requires a certain view of modal fictionalism—an explicitly *non-reductive* view of modal fictionalism—by the philosopher interested in solving the incompleteness problem.

To start, Skiba asserts that within the fiction of possible worlds, the following two biconditionals hold (Skiba 2017, p. 1352):

(K1) It is possible that there are x objects if, and only if, there is a world that contains x objects.

(K2) It is not possible that there are x objects if, and only if, there is no world that contains x objects.

This is where Skiba's approach drastically differs from Woodward's approach. Since Skiba explicitly espouses a non-reductive view of modal fictionalism—i.e., since Skiba is not interested in reducing modal claims to non-modal claims—Skiba maintains that the modal fictionalist should then take all of our "ordinary modal truths" and incorporate them into the content of the fiction (Skiba 2017, p. 1352).[9] As such, the modal fictionalist's fiction will then have either one of these propositions (Skiba 2017, p. 1352):[10]

(K1.1) It is possible that there are x objects.

(K2.1) It is not possible that there are x objects.

The question of which one—(K1.1) or (K2.1)—is a part of the fiction will then just depend on which one happens to be true,

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since the one that happens to be true will get incorporated into the fiction as a member of the 'ordinary modal truths.'

It should now be clear how Skiba's modal content response responds to the incompleteness problem. If, let us suppose, (K1.1) is true and, subsequently, that (K1.1) is a part of the fictionalist's fiction, then the following is also true (Skiba 2017, p. 1532):

(K1*) There is an *x*-object world.

Under our supposition of the truth of (K1.1), (K1*) would be considered part of the fictionalist's fiction. And, if this is the case, then the incompleteness problem does not arise, since the fiction will not be silent on matters of an *x*-object world; the initially intimidating incompleteness conjunction—(W2)—would be false. The same consequence follows if, instead of (K1.1), (K2.1) is true: the fiction will still maintain some stance with respect to the question of an *x*-object world.

SECTION V – TIMIDITY AND STRONGNESS

While there are a couple of issues with respect to the inner workings of both Woodward and Skiba's positions, something first needs to be said about the ways in which both positions construct modal fictionalism. That is, something needs to be said about what each position requires of the philosopher interested in addressing the incompleteness problem and avoiding the threat of inconsistency carried by (MX). As such, I find it pertinent to bring up the distinction between timid and strong modal fictionalism.

The discussion of timid and strong modal fictionalism can be found in the work of philosopher Daniel Nolan. In one of his articles, Nolan describes the distinction between timid and strong modal fictionalism as the following: timid modal fictionalism is the view that "the statements about possible worlds (or to be more precise, how possible worlds are described in the fiction) rely on the facts of modality, rather than the other way around," while strong modal fictionalism is the view that attempts to "reduce modal claims into non-modal claims (in this case truth in fiction)" (Nolan 1997, p. 263). In other words, this distinction

between timid and strong modal fictionalism can be understood as a distinction between a *reductive* and a *non-reductive* view of modal fictionalism. As such, I will be using these terms as a way to describe whether a position of modal fictionalism assumes a reductive or non-reductive view of modality.[11]

With this distinction in hand, let us apply it to the two positions that have been espoused thus far. It should first be clear that Skiba's position takes a timid view of modal fictionalism. In order for his position to be able to incorporate modal truths, it needs to be the case that his position is not attempting to reduce modality into non-modal terms. If he were attempting to provide a reductive account of modality, then incorporating ordinary modal truths into his analysis of modality would be circular. But, because Skiba accepts that his modal content response closes off the possibility of a reductive account of modality, he is able to provide a response to the incompleteness problem that resolves the inconsistency worry of modal fictionalism—albeit by adopting a timid attitude towards modal fictionalism.

While it is therefore clear that Skiba's position requires timidity, what does Woodward's position require?[12] Well, unlike Skiba's position, it does not wear its timidity or strongness on its sleeve. That is, Woodward does not explicitly state whether the brand of fictionalism he is defending is that of a timid or of a strong modal fictionalist. However, there is one aspect of his kind of fictionalism that may trouble the strong modal fictionalist. If we recall, Woodward's position first requires a certain interpretation of the fictionalist's operator—namely, a counterfactual conditional interpretation which renders the conjunction (W2) false. More specifically, under Woodward's response, the modal fictionalist's fiction avoids the incompleteness problem because if the explicit content of the fiction were true, then the fiction does not stay silent with respect to an *x*-object world; without this interpretation, the fictionalist cannot block the move from (W2) to (MX). However, since the position adopts a counterfactual conditional interpretation of the fictionalist's operator, and since a counterfactual conditional is a modal notion, then Woodward's position

cannot advocate a strong-view of modal fictionalism—to do so would invite a circularity objection. Rather, it, construed with this interpretation of the fictionalist's operator, is only consistent with a timid view of modal fictionalism.

Given my evaluation of both of these positions with respect to the timid/strong modal fictionalist distinction, I thus submit one desiderata for possible adjudication between the two theories: if one takes a timid approach towards modal fictionalism—i.e., if one views modal fictionalism as being a non-reductive endeavor—then Skiba's response ought to be adopted over Woodward's response. After all, Skiba's response merely requires the positing of modal truths into the fiction of possible worlds, while Woodward's response requires a counterfactual interpretation of the fictionalist's operator and also leaves the door open to indeterminacy. And while it can certainly be argued that postulating these ordinary modal truths into the fiction is not, as I will demonstrate shortly, a completely parsimonious act, if the philosopher already accepts a timid approach to modality, then just postulating these truths seems more attractive than construing a certain view of the fictionalist's operator *and* accepting some kind of indeterminacy. Therefore, given that both views are, upon further examination, timid modal fictionalist views, and given the aforementioned problems facing Woodward's view, the metaphysician ought to endorse Skiba's particular position over Woodward's on the incompleteness problem for modal fictionalism.

Before I turn to the issue of evaluating timidity and strongness themselves, I would like to raise one aforementioned concern for the philosopher persuaded by my comments and enticed by Skiba's flavor of timidity. It is clear that in Skiba's response, the 'ordinary modal truths' of the fictionalist's fiction does a fair amount of work: without these modal truths, his response fails to adequately meet the incompleteness worry. Moreover, Skiba motivates the incorporation of these modal truths by appealing to none other than David Lewis by using Lewis' comments on how we tend to regard the content of a fiction:

> As Lewis points out we are familiar with regarding the content of a fiction as a joint product of its explicit content and a background of genuine truths carried over into the fiction 'not because there is anything explicit in the fiction to make them true, but rather because there is nothing to make them false' (Skiba 2017, p. 1352, Lewis 1978, p. 42).

Thus, Skiba takes these 'ordinary modal truths' to constitute—either partly or entirely—the background of genuine truths that get carried over into the fiction of possible worlds. It is important to note that Skiba, apart from citing Lewis and espousing a non-reductive view of modality, adds no further justification for the positing of these modal truths into the fiction. Furthermore, while it may be argued that the fictionalist's fiction does require some sort of carried over background of truths in order to be able to generate all of the necessary non-modal paraphrases of our modal claims, historically, the most well-known approach has not been Skiba's. In Rosen's original conception of modal fictionalism, he maintains that the fictionalist's fiction, in order to churn out all of these non-modal paraphrases, must contain, along with the axioms of modal realism, an "encyclopedia," which would be "a list of the non-modal truths about the character of the universe" (Rosen 1990, p. 335). So, on Rosen's conception of modal fictionalism, which sets the foundation for much of the contemporary discussion on modal fictionalism, the background of genuine truths does not include truths about modality. This then raises a further question: which set of truths most accurately captures what Lewis had in mind? While I will not answer this question, my goal is to merely raise a concern that the proponent of Skiba's modal content response will need to be able to respond to before retiring herself from the incompleteness problem.

SECTION VI – TIMID OR STRONG MODAL FICTIONALISM?

With all of this talk about timidity and strongness, a further question naturally arises: namely, which one should the philosopher

interested in modal metaphysics adopt? While the full scope of such a question exceeds the limits of the discussion I have presented thus far, there are two points I would like to make with respect to this issue.

The first point I would like to make has to do with modal realism and the fictionalist's initial rejection of it. If we recall, David Lewis puts forth a theory of modality that attempts to reduce modal talk into talk about possible worlds, which would then only require the metaphysician to believe in possible worlds in order to complete the reductive endeavor. While the theoretical benefits of realism are obvious, its ontological baggage may leave a sour taste in one's mouth. As a result, several philosophers, beginning with Gideon Rosen, sought to create an alternative theory of modality that still maintained the same theoretical benefits, but without requiring one to foot the ontological bill. So, Rosen puts forth, amongst other things, a biconditional (F) which attempts to reduce modal talk into talk about possible worlds *within a certain fiction*. While Rosen acknowledges that this view is not entirely free from problems, nevertheless, the view is one that is *reductive* at its core: it aims to provide a reduction of modal terms into terms that are not themselves modal. In positions such as Skiba's, this reductive aim is absent: modal fictionalism is not a reductive enterprise. While this is a coherent view to take, it requires a break away from the metaphysical motivations of philosophers following in Lewis' and Rosen's footsteps and requires that the metaphysician take a certain view of fictionalism that she may not initially align with. So, if one enters into the incompleteness debate with Lewisian or Rosenian intuitions about the end-goals of one's theories of modality, then taking a timid approach to modal fictionalism would require a change in one's such views.

Besides this point, there lies the further issue that I would like to characterize as the validation of timid modal fictionalism as a preferred theory of modality.[13] As I have just mentioned, both Lewis and Rosen hold a certain view on the theories of modality—one that is reductive in scope. Rosen, moreover, may be seen as espousing a strong modal fictionalist view. Skiba's position

instead espouses a theory of modality that rejects such a reductive endeavor. While Skiba does manage to craft a response to the incompleteness problem, it is, in a sense, skirting the responsibilities that theories of modality were historically required to meet.[14] As such, one may even get the sense that Skiba's position is more of an avoidance to philosophize about modality than an exercise in metaphysical philosophy. This is further regimented by Skiba's own views about his non-reductive stance: Skiba notes that possible-worlds talk is still useful to philosophers when they want to do "modal logic by proxy" (Skiba 2017, p. 1355). In other words, possible-worlds talk is still useful as a conceptual tool for the philosopher; it is not useful as a final explanation of modality.

Now, I do not claim to be invalidating such metaphysical enterprises. I am claiming that such metaphysical theories— theories that theoretically limit the scope of certain metaphysical endeavors—ought to perhaps only be pursued once theories that leave open such theoretically reductive prospects have been explored completely. That is, since it is not clear to me that strong modal fictionalism completely fails in every respect as a tenable theory of modality, adopting a timid modal fictionalist view seems short-sighted.[15]

I agree that this view may just be a consequence of my epistemic limits. Nevertheless, I think that strong modal fictionalists ought not to look at the incompleteness problem as an insurmountable problem for strong modal fictionalism. After all, Woodward himself recognizes that *one* way that the problem of incompleteness can be avoided is by denying the move from (W2) to (MX), which can be accomplished, in, again, *one* way, by altering one's conception—the classical conception—of truth-value gaps. Of course, Woodward himself notes that, without an independent reason for doing this alteration, one may fall prey to an *ad-hoc* objection (Woodward 2012, p. 784). This is why Woodward turns to the interpretation of the fictionalist's operator that he ends up employing in his position. It does not appear to me that this is the only way that the strong modal fictionalist can pursue the issue. Perhaps the strong modal fictionalist can turn to other areas in

philosophy—areas where non-classical notions of truth are more aptly discussed—for assistance in cultivating such an independent motivation.[16] Or, perhaps the strong modal fictionalist can put forth a different interpretation of the fictionalist's operator that does not ultimately bottom out into more modal talk. If these avenues do not prove fruitful, then timidity may be the way to go. There does seem to be at least one coherent avenue available and so it may be more fruitful, as a philosophical endeavor, to pursue such an avenue.

CONCLUSION

Given my analysis, it should hopefully be clear where we now stand with respect to the incompleteness debate. I began this essay by first examining the incompleteness problem within modal fictionalism, which required the defining and explication of certain terms pertaining to modal metaphysics. With this examination complete, I then turned to two different responses to the incompleteness problem—those of Lukas Skiba and Richard Woodward—and discussed the manner in which they resolved the problem. Having stated both positions, I then brought up the timid/strong modal fictionalism distinction as a possible desideratum for adjudication between the two. While I concluded that Skiba's response is more attractive to the timid modal fictionalist than Woodward's response, something more needed to be said about timidity in general. More specifically, I noted the difference in the approach to theories of modality by Skiba with that of his predecessors: Rosen and Lewis. I also touched upon my own meta-metaphysical/metaphilosophical view on the issue of timidity and strongness, with the goal being that my meta-metaphysical/metaphilosophical comments hopefully bring attention to this issue for the philosopher interested in modality. Lastly, I commented on the way in which a strong modal fictionalist could perhaps go about responding to the incompleteness problem, noting that such an avenue, at least *prima facie*, seems available for theoretical exploration. As such, while timidity does offer the metaphysician an adequate response to the incompleteness problem, she should nevertheless question

her motivations for adopting timidity, lest she aims to evade the difficulties of philosophizing about modality purely for the sake of evading such difficulties.

Notes

1. Or could have been.

2. The description 'the actual world' refers to this possible world—our world. This is because, for Lewis, actuality is an indexical; the actual world merely denotes the world that one is in. So, while this possible world happens to be the actual world for you and for me, for the denizens of a green-Mars possible world, their possible world is the actual world. The important take-away is that actuality does *not* bestow any ontological priority or superiority unto a possible world; rather, it is more of a useful linguistic tool.

3. The fictionalist *treats* Lewis' theory of possible worlds as a fiction—his theory is not a fiction.

4. The power set of some set S is the set of all the subsets of S, and the cardinality of a power set is the number of elements—i.e., the number of things—in the set ("Cardinality," "Power Set"). In other words, *x*—as used here—is an incredibly huge number.

5. The explicit content of the fiction is "the axioms that characterize whichever theory (modal realism, arithmetic, universalism, etc.) the fictionalist's account is parasitic upon" (Woodward 2012, p. 784) In our case, the explicit content refers to the axioms laid out by Lewis in his characterization of modal realism, since that is the theory that the modal fictionalist—the modal fictionalist I am characterizing, at least—is using as her chosen fiction.

6. The reason why the truth of (W1) entails the falsehood of (W2) has to do with the logical forms of (W1) and (W2). Since (W1) is of the form [A v B], and since (W1) is true, then either A, B, or both A and B must be true. However, if [A v B] is true, then [~A & ~B] must be false, since at least one of its conjuncts—A or B—is true. And since (W2) is of the form [~A & ~B], the truth of (W1) thus entails the falsehood of (W2).

7. Woodward's reasoning for believing this has to do, in part, with the way in which he conceptualizes the truth-conditions for counterfactuals. In short, he follows Lewis' lead and maintains that a counterfactual conditional of the form 'if A had been the case, then B would have been the case' is true at the actual world—our world—just in case some (A & B) world is closer to the actual world than any (A & ~B) world is (Lewis 1986, p. 22). However, for philosophers such as Woodward, it is not clear whether or not it is always the case that there is some (A & B) world that is closer to the actual world than, say, an (A & C) world. To put this into context, for philosophers of Woodward's ilk, it is not clear why one should suppose that some possible world where Einstein and Washington are both American is, say, closer to

the actual world than some possible world where Einstein and Washington are both German. In other words, there does not seem to be any reason as to why one cannot suppose "closeness ties" with respect to these counterfactual scenarios (Woodward 2012, p. 786). As such, it appears to be indeterminate which particular possible world is closer to the actual world (Woodward 2012, p. 786).

8. Now, I do admit that Woodward's view of indeterminacy is somewhat more nuanced than this, since he introduces several levels of indeterminacy in his ultimate position. However, since I will not be arguing against the specifics of his indeterminacy, since such specifics are not entirely pertinent to my discussion, but rather on the fact that his view accepts indeterminacy on some level, this surface analysis of his indeterminacy—the fact that, on his position, the values of (G1) and (G2) are indeterminate—will suffice for my discussion.

9. This is similar, Skiba claims, to the implicit carrying over of facts such as 'water is H2O' into the content of the Sherlock Holmes fiction (Skiba 2017, p. 1352).

10. With all of this talk of the 'content' of the fictionalist's fiction, it would perhaps be of use to make clear what the positions of Skiba and Woodward claim with respect to this 'content': Skiba claims that the content of the modal fictionalist's fiction consists of the axioms of Lewis' modal realism *and* our ordinary modal truths, while Woodward merely claims that the *explicit* content of the modal fictionalist's fiction consists of the axioms of Lewis' modal realism.

11. The reason why I make this point clear is to ward off any arguments one may try to pose against me on purely exegetical grounds—i.e., on grounds that I am not truly capturing the essence of Nolan's terms as used in Nolan's paper. I am merely using these two terms in order to capture a reductive/non-reductive distinction, which is also the way that these two terms tend to get used in the contemporary literature on fictionalism (see the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy entry "Modal Fictionalism" for evidence of these terms being used as such) (Nolan 2002).

12. I use 'timidity' to refer to the timid modal fictionalist approach, and I use 'strongness' to refer to the strong modal fictionalist approach.

13. I am aware that what I go on to describe here is not uncontroversial. I am also aware that further justification would be required to defend this view. However, my goal here is to merely explicate a meta-metaphysical/metaphilosophical concern that I do believe ought to be considered whenever differing, yet similar, metaphysical theories are available. That is, I do believe that the question of theoretical scope ought to be a matter that the individual interested in metaphysics ought to consider before embarking on a metaphysical endeavor. This just so happens to be my particular reaction to such considerations.

14. To see some examples of these problems that timid modal fictionalism evades—problems such as the issue of ontological priority and the issue of artificiality—see, once again, the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy entry "Modal Fictionalism" (Nolan 2002).

15. I do want to make clear that I am not asserting that one should only move from reductive theories of, say, modality, to non-reductive theories of modality once every possible reductive avenue has been fully explored and clarified. Rather, I am saying that, if there are clear and/or obvious avenues still available—one of which I touch upon in the following paragraph—then perhaps those avenues ought to be explored further first before conceding, in this case, timidity.

16. Woodward briefly mentions the realm of semantic paradoxes as an example of non-classical conceptions of truth being entertained by contemporary philosophers (Woodward 2012, p. 784).

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LOGICAL PLURALISM AND ITS COLLAPSE PROBLEMS

Taylor A. Dunn

OVERTURE

In the pursuit of truth, logic is perhaps the most valuable tool. With the development and increasing popularity of numerous variations to classical logic, however, it is not so clear upon which logic we should rely. So, it is worth asking if there is only one true logic, if all these logical systems are legitimate, or if we can be justified in using different systems for different situations. Logical pluralism attempts to resolve these questions, and J. C. Beall and Greg Restall present in their 2006 book a form of logical pluralism that has taken on a number of advocates and critics. One of the central criticisms of this view has been called the Collapse Problem, which states that the formulation of pluralism presented by Beall and Restall simply collapses into a non-pluralist view. There have been several responses to the possible collapse of pluralism, and it is here that a new problem arises. Two distinct collapse problems have been presented, with two distinct solutions. In their 2009 paper, Otávio Bueno and Scott A. Shalkowski offer what I will call the Necessity Collapse Problem, a collapse into nihilism, which hinges on the necessity requirement of logical consequence. Their solution involves taking modality as primitive. Colin Caret offers in his 2017 article what I will call the Normativity Collapse Problem, a collapse into monism, which hinges on the principle of normativity. Caret's solution involves a slight reformulating of Beall and Restall's original view that results in logical contextualism.

The central issue is that both solutions manage to solve the Necessity Collapse Problem, but neither can solve the Normativity Collapse Problem. Despite its purporting to resolve the

Normativity Collapse Problem, we find upon closer inspection that Caret's contextualist solution merely pushes the Normativity Collapse Problem into a given context, and so a collapse into monism persists. If we assume both avenues to collapse are legitimate, and it can be shown that neither solution successfully blocks the Normativity Collapse Problem, then there is no way so far to prevent collapse for Beall and Restall's logical pluralism.

I will begin in Section I by reviewing Beall and Restall's logical pluralism and the two ways Bueno, Shalkowski, and Caret characterize its collapse. In Section II, I will present the two given solutions and argue that the modalist solution does not resolve both Collapse Problems. Finally, I will argue in Section III that though contextualism avoids the Necessity Collapse Problem, it fails to solve the Normativity Collapse Problem.

I. Logical Pluralism and Two Collapse Problems

Logical monism is the view that there is a single logic, or more specifically, a single relation of logical consequence, which is the true or correct one. However, with many different logical systems on offer, all with their own strengths, some believe it prudent to develop a view other than monism in order to justify the use of more than one logical system. Beall and Restall's logical pluralism aims to do just that. While logical relativism might be characterized as the view that arguments or the notion of validity can be relativized to a particular system, logical pluralism takes the more substantial view that there is more than one true logical consequence relation. As Rosanna Keefe describes it, "More than one true logic govern[s] the same arguments, involving the same subject-matter, and [is] taken in the same context" (Keefe 2014, p. 1377). Beall and Restall's formulation of logical pluralism rests on what they call the General Tarski Thesis (GTT), or the standard Tarski definition for validity.

GTT: An argument is valid iff' in every case in which the premises are true, so is the conclusion (Beall and

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Restall 2006, p. 29).

Beall and Restall claim that the concept of logical consequence is indeterminate, and as a result of this indeterminacy, it can be precisified to instantiate different relations, all of which are equally legitimate. Some logical systems are complete, which means that every sentence expressible in the system is provable within the system, while others are incomplete, leaving some expressible sentences in the system unprovable from within the system. Some logical systems are consistent, which means that it cannot be the case that both a sentence and its negation are true, while others are inconsistent, allowing for true contradictions. When a system is complete and consistent (like classical logic), complete and inconsistent (like a paraconsistent logic), or incomplete and consistent (like intuitionistic logic), then the nature of that system's logical consequence relation is established. For example, the law of noncontradiction, $\sim(A \,\&\sim A)$, is classically valid due to classical logic being consistent, and it is invalid in a paraconsistent logic due to paraconsistent logic being inconsistent. According to Beall and Restall, both notions of validity are equally acceptable, as the cases of validity are partitioned by the indeterminacy of the logical consequence relation.

There are certain limits or conditions, however, that Beall and Restall give that dictate whether some logical system is an acceptable precisification of logical consequence. On their view, logical consequence must have necessity, formality, and normativity (Beall and Restall 2006, pp. 40-43). The necessity constraint requires that the truth of the premises necessitates the truth of the conclusion. The formality constraint requires that a logic abstracts away from semantic content and that it does not depend on the identities of particular objects in question. The normativity constraint requires that a logic can account for mistakes made within the system or be able to specify the nature of a logical violation.

I.1 The Necessity Collapse Problem

The first collapse problem given by Bueno and Shalkowski relates

to this first necessary condition of necessity. They argue that in order to ensure that classical logic can meet the necessity requirement, it must be shown that there is a corresponding model for every possibility (Bueno and Shalkowski 2009, p. 297). However, Beall and Restall simply presume that the relevant possibilities all have corresponding models (Beall and Restall 2006, pp. 40-41).

The flaw in this is that the domain of cases being quantified over has to be broad enough to include both classical and non-classical logical consequence relations in order to grant legitimacy to both classical and non-classical logics. But, every possible instance where true premises entail a true conclusion outstrips the number of models there are in classical logic. The domain must include cases where there is consistency and completeness, cases where there is consistency and incompleteness, and cases where there is inconsistency and completeness. The result is that the necessity requirement fails for each logic: cases that are either incomplete or inconsistent do not hold for classical logic, cases that are complete do not hold for intuitionistic logic, and cases that are consistent do not hold for paraconsistent logic. For clarification, Bueno and Shalkowski write:

> For the premises to necessitate a conclusion is a matter of them doing the right thing in *all* cases. Having recognized that cases may or may not be complete, and that they may or may not be consistent, to do the right thing over all cases is to do the right thing regardless of whether a case is complete or consistent. Consequence relations suited to reasoning about complete situations fail to satisfy the necessity constraint, since by following them exclusively we do not manage our inferences correctly over incomplete cases (Bueno and Shalkowski 2009, p. 299).

Bueno and Shalkowski conclude that without amendment to logical pluralism, it collapses into logical nihilism, as no logical consequence relation is able to meet the necessity requirement. Logical nihilism is not simply a rejection of monism; nihilism in this case means that there are in fact no acceptable logical systems at all.

I.2 The Normativity Collapse Problem

Caret identifies a different avenue to collapse by considering the normativity of logic and a line of argumentation from Stephen Read's 2006 paper. This is not the same sense of normativity that Beall and Restall provide as a constraint for the logical consequence relation, but rather, it is a principle that many accept about the nature of logic. This principle of normativity states that logic has a goal of getting at truth. Frege states it thusly: the laws of logic "prescribe universally how one should think if one is to think at all" (Frege 1893, p. xv).

Caret argues that if we take this principle of normativity seriously, then one true logic will naturally present itself in the following way:

> Any logic that judges the argument from P to Q to be valid will give a *direct affirmative answer* to the central question [of whether we can conclude Q from P]: an agent who knows that P is true should infer that Q is true. A logic that judges the argument from P to Q to be invalid, on the other hand, will give no answer to the central question: it is agnostic as to whether an agent who knows that P is true should infer that Q is true. Since these attitudes do not conflict, an agent who endorses both logics should comply with the stronger demand (Caret 2017, pp. 742-43).

So, the logical consequence relation that can offer us the most valid inferences and, therefore, is more capable of helping us get at truth must be privileged over other logical systems. If we take logic to be normative, a relatively uncontroversial position, then the normativity of logic therefore preferences one singular logic, and pluralism collapses into monism.

II. COLLAPSE SOLUTIONS – MODALISM AND CONTEXTUALISM

II.1 Modalism

Because the Necessity Collapse Problem results from quanti-

fying over too general a domain, Bueno and Shalkowski suggest that pluralism can avoid this by taking modality as a primitive background feature, such that modality is more fundamental than 'cases'. When a feature of a theory is taken as primitive, it means that it cannot be further analyzed in terms of anything else or be reduced to any other feature. Additionally, primitives in a theory precede analysis, in a sense. Therefore, in the case of taking modality as primitive, modality does not need to get built into an analysis of logical consequence, as it's already a feature of the theory. This allows for a way of characterizing logical consequence without presupposing the logical notion of modality (Bueno and Shalkowski 2009, p. 307). Bueno and Shalkowski maintain that with modality as a primitive feature of the view, there is no longer a concern with quantifying over a domain of cases as a way of meeting the necessity requirement of logical consequence. For clarification, they write:

> Since the modalist logical pluralist is not quantifying over cases, there is no issue of having restricted or unrestricted quantification. The modalist relies only on what is uncontroversial... (Bueno and Shalkowski 2009, pp. 316-17)

However, if the modalist solution is applied, the pluralist must still contend with the Normativity Collapse Problem. Taking modality as basic does not come to bear on the principle of normativity resulting in the privileging of a single logical consequence relation.

II.2 Contextualism

Caret's solution for the Normativity Collapse Problem is that rather than taking logical consequence to be indeterminate, he concludes that 'valid' is a contextual term analogous to an indexical, which would therefore make the domain it refers to change based on the context of use (Caret 2017, p. 752). Different contexts of use would make 'valid' refer to one logical system or another. By taking a different approach to what it is about the GTT that results in pluralism, where this approach would no longer hinge on the

indeterminacy of the logical consequence relation, Caret seems to avoid the way the normativity of logic naturally privileges a singular logical consequence relation.

Caret's solution also solves the Necessity Collapse Problem. In a given context of use, the domain of cases shifts relative to the system being referred to. Recall that the impetus for applying the modalist solution is the threat of quantifying over a domain which includes cases that prevent each system from meeting the necessity condition. But, because the domain of cases gets restricted based on the context of use, the contextualist pluralist view does not suffer from too broad a domain of possible cases. The domain of possible cases never outstrips the models in a given system.

III. CONTEXTUALISM – A FAULTY SOLUTION

Despite the success of the contextualist solution in blocking one avenue to collapse, it fails to block the collapse it purports to address. Caret claims that the way context selects a particular logical system is through "'structural' assumptions, such as assumptions of consistency or determinacy" (Caret 2017, p. 753). So, for any given context, certain consistency and determinacy assumptions, presumably along with other assumptions, are meant to pick out a single logical system as a referent. By restricting the realm of logical discourse to one logic at a time, there is no competition amongst a number of logical systems, no privileging of one system over others, and the Normativity Collapse Problem is blocked. For example, when we say that the law of noncontradiction is valid, 'valid' might refer to either classical, intuitionistic, or a paraconsistent logic, and which it refers to depends upon which assumptions are being made in a given context. In this case, if consistency and incompleteness are being assumed, then Caret would conclude that intuitionistic logic is being referred to.

One immediate problem is Caret's lack of clarity regarding consistency or determinacy. If only one structural assumption is being made in a given context, such as an assumption about consistency, the assumption is far too permissive—an assumption of consistency, for example, does not succeed in selecting between

intuitionistic logic and classical logic. And, while some contexts present their structural assumptions more readily, others do not. For example, accepting the validity of $A \& {\sim} A$ demonstrates an assumption about consistency that clearly points to paraconsistency, while accepting the validity of $A = A$ leaves assumptions about consistency totally unclear.

However, even if we put aside the potential problems of unclear or conflicting assumptions in a given context, when there are clear assumptions about both consistency and determinacy, contextualism about validity still fails to pick out a single logical system as a referent. There are multiple consistent and incomplete systems, multiple complete and consistent systems, and multiple complete and inconsistent systems, and therefore, there are numerous instances where, despite clear assumptions, the referent of 'valid' remains ambiguous.[1]

For any given context, at least two logical systems are possible referents. If consistency and incompleteness are assumed, then intuitionistic or an infinitely-valued logic might be the referent. If inconsistency and completeness are assumed, then LP (Logic of Paradox) or relevance logic might be the referent. If consistency and completeness are assumed, then classical or a three-valued logic might be the referent. Structural assumptions in a given context do not succeed in selecting a single logical system.

The issue of context-relative terms like 'tall' or 'she' requiring further disambiguation isn't itself a problem, and in a given case, clarifying statements or the making explicit of certain assumptions would prevent ambiguous reference. But, given that for any set of assumptions about consistency and completeness there will be at least two logics up for reference, the only explicit or clarifying statement to provide a unique reference for 'valid' is to simply name which logic is the reference. However, this step in response doesn't seem all that different from logical relativism, where we are merely relativizing the notion of validity to a given system.

It would be worth considering what other structural assumptions Caret has in mind and how they might succeed in selecting

only one logic for a given context, but Caret seems to want to keep the reference conditions relatively loose by not providing further explanation, and so it is not evident what might also contribute to selecting a single logical system. Without a clear way to isolate individual logical systems, the Normativity Collapse Problem simply reappears for a given context. And, without an unproblematic solution to the Normativity Collapse Problem, logical pluralism remains open to collapse.

CONCLUSION

The goal of logical pluralism is to allow for multiple true logical systems, but we have seen that Beall and Restall's formulation cannot stand up on its own, collapsing into nihilism or monism. Although the collapse into nihilism can be prevented by either of the modalist or contextualist solutions, the collapse into monism resulting from the Normativity Collapse Problem is not prevented by modalism or contextualism.

Another potential concern we might have for a contextualist solution is raised by Bueno and Shalkowski. They briefly consider what it might look like to alter the domain of quantification for a given conversational context, where we might shift our attention to one system while we "turn a blind eye" to other systems (Bueno and Shalkowski 2009, p. 300). They argue, however, that this approach fails to be true logical pluralism, and it can actually lead to a form of logical universalism where all arguments are valid given the appropriate context. For example, in order to take the classical notion of validity as legitimate, we operate in a context where consistency is assumed, or put another way, we ignore all the invalidating cases of inconsistency. Bueno and Shalkowski ask why we can't, then, take any set of inferences and call them valid as long as we ignore all the invalidating cases. So, perhaps Caret's contextualism is too permissive: with the correct set of assumptions for a given context, any argument can be considered valid when adopting Caret's framework. Along with a collapse into monism remaining open, Caret's contextualism may also have to contend with a possible collapse into universalism.

Notes

1. Perhaps it's worth noting that I am not considering systems which are both inconsistent and incomplete because, as far as I know, there is but one rather obscure system known as FDE logic, or "first-degree entailments" logic from Anderson and Belnap's 1963 paper, "First Degree Entailments". As it is not discussed by any of the authors interested in logical pluralism, I didn't feel it was necessary to mention.

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THE LOW-ENTROPY PAST STILL REQUIRES EXPLANATION

Katelyn Rogers

INTRODUCTION

Among philosophers of science there exists a debate surrounding what is called the Past Hypothesis, or low entropy past. This hypothesis claims that the beginning state of the universe was such that there was a high degree of uniformity and order and, thus, a low degree of entropy, or disorder. The Past Hypothesis is connected to the second law of thermodynamics, a law which claims that entropy in a closed physical system may increase, but it never decreases. In other words, closed physical systems may behave such that they become more and more disordered, but they will never behave such that they become increasingly ordered. One explanation for why entropy rises is the claim that it began at such a low level, as the Past Hypothesis posits.

The low entropy past is a hypothesis regarding the initial conditions of the universe. As such, there are those who argue that it requires no further explanation, since physical conditions are often explained in virtue of appealing to previous conditions, and with initial conditions, there are no previous conditions. The problem arises, though, that a state of affairs in which the universe, or even a region within the universe, was ordered and uniform in the way the Past Hypothesis claims is highly unlikely. There are those who argue that this improbability requires an explanation; in other words, an account must be given for why the universe was in such an improbable state as opposed to a more probable one.

This is precisely the debate between philosophers Craig Callender and Huw Price. In Callender's "There is no Puzzle about the Low-Entropy Past," he argues that an initial condition of the universe requires no explanation because it is a kind of phys-

ical brute fact. Appealing to Hume and an argument regarding the uniqueness of the universe, Callender argues specifically that the improbability of the low entropy past requires no further explanation. In "On the Origins of the Arrow of Time: Why there is Still a Puzzle about the Low-Entropy Past," Price contends that the common philosophical move to assert initial conditions without requiring explanation is itself suspect. In the particular case of the low entropy past, it is not merely the improbability of the universe's initial uniformity that requires some kind of explanation—it is also the fact that such an ordered state is extremely unstable. This combination of improbability and instability, Price argues, needs to be explained or accounted for.

In this paper, I will argue that Price's demand for further explanation regarding the Past Hypothesis is correct. In the first section, I will set up the puzzle of temporal bias and how it plays into the question of the Past Hypothesis. In the second section, I will present Price's argument for further explanation. In the third, I will present Callender's argument against further explanation. In the fourth section, I will argue that Price's view is the correct one before offering concluding remarks regarding initial conditions, low-entropy, and explanation.

SECTION I – THE PUZZLE OF TEMPORAL BIAS

The second law of thermodynamics claims that in a closed physical system, a system in which matter and energy cannot enter into it or leave it, the total entropy for the system will inevitably increase and will never decrease. In other words, a closed physical system will, over time, become more and more disordered, but it will never be the case that it becomes more ordered. Embedded in this physical law is a puzzle: the puzzle of temporal bias. Physical laws are supposed to be such that the physical processes described by the laws can work in either direction in time. To put it another way, physical processes as described by physical laws should always be reversible. The second law, however, works only in one direction with regard to time—entropy increases as the physical system moves forward in time, and this process is irreversible.

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There are other physical phenomena to which this temporal bias applies: air leaks out of a tire but never leaks back in, hot drinks cool down in a room temperature space but never heat back up, etc. If one were to look at physical laws alone, it should be possible for air to leak back into a tire or for a cooled drink to heat back up. The puzzle is essentially that physical laws are even-handed, or symmetrical, but physical phenomena are not (phenomena are asymmetrical).

In an attempt to explain the increase of entropy in particular, physicist Ludwig Boltzmann argued that, in regards to gases, the collisions between randomly moving gas particles necessitated that the entropy of a gas would increase until it reached its highest possible value. This argument is called Boltzmann's H-theorem. A colleague of Boltzmann, Josef Loschmidt, argued in return that, based on mechanics and mathematics, there must be possible situations in which entropy does decrease, given the time-symmetry of Newtonian mechanics. In other words, the mathematical/mechanical calculations regarding entropy and gases allowed for a reverse process in which the entropy of a gas could decrease. So Boltzmann revised his conception of the second law and his H-theorem. Rather than saying that the collision of gas particles was causing an increase in entropy, Boltzmann argued that macroscopic, observable properties—properties like pressure or temperature—had a number of microstates that could correspond to those macrostates. Macrostates that are not in equilibrium, like the macrostates of gases as they fill a container, are such that their underlying microstates are, more often than not, ones in which entropy increases.

This did not completely solve the problem Loschmidt had presented; again, because of the time-symmetry of the mathematics and mechanics, the microstates to which Boltzmann referred had to come in pairs, so any process associated with one microstate happening in one temporal direction would necessarily have a corresponding process associated with another microstate happening in the opposite temporal direction. That is to say that for the microstates in which entropy would increase, there would

always be corresponding microstates in which entropy would decrease. The question of how to reconcile the temporal asymmetry of physical phenomena with the temporal symmetry of physical laws remained. The puzzle of temporal bias comprises the beginning of Price's work, the arguments of which will be examined in the following section.

SECTION II – PRICE AND THE NEED FOR EXPLANATION

Price begins his piece by drawing out and explaining the puzzle of temporal bias discussed in Section I. He explains two ways of approaching the time asymmetry of physical phenomena: the first is a one asymmetry approach. Applied specifically to the low-entropy past, this approach involves considering the universe as a closed physical system and placing a boundary condition of low-entropy on the beginning of the entropy process in that closed physical system (ie. the beginning of the universe was in a state of very low entropy). Entropy then necessarily increases because of how low the starting point is. The second approach is a two asymmetry approach that also places the low entropy condition on the beginning of the universe, but adds a final condition of high entropy at the end of the universe.

Boltzmann offers a different approach. Boltzmann suggests first that we are in a low entropy space-time region of the universe, which, even though a low entropy region itself is highly unlikely, is bound to happen given the age of the universe. The reason we as human beings find ourselves in such a region is because it is only in low-entropy regions that intelligent life can develop. When one of these low entropy regions does occur, it works its way back to a higher equilibrium on a gradient. This approach constrains the issue of a low-entropy past to a particular region, deals with the issue of improbability by appealing to the age and expansion of the universe, and explains why entropy rises. Boltzmann also avoids any question of temporal bias by explaining that for the universe as a whole, there is no significant distinction between

past and future—just like how in outer space, there is no significant difference between up or down.

There are two fundamental concerns with Boltzmann's approach, however. The first is that the likelihood of low-entropy regions throughout the universe is actually more improbable than a single low-entropy past state for the universe as a whole. This is because each low-entropy region marks a "dip" in the mathematical curve tracking the probability of such low-entropy regions. What this means is that as the universe ages and progresses, each time a low-entropy region occurs, it becomes less likely that another low-entropy region will occur thereafter. So, our low-entropy region at this moment in the universe has a far greater improbability problem than the original Past Hypothesis did. The second is that these low-entropy regions only extend to a certain degree in either space or time. Theoretically, we should expect to see a spatial limit on our own low-entropy region, yet in all of our exploration of space, no such limit has (yet) been found.

Price moves on from Boltzmann's approach and engages the issue of the improbability of the Past Hypothesis by comparing the puzzle of the low-entropy past to a puzzle about initial smoothness. In the early universe, matter distributes itself evenly and smoothly with a kind of uniformity. This process of distribution should be an unstable one, yet it is not. There is something about the instability and unlikeliness of this process that demands an account or explanation. Similarly, the Past Hypothesis presents an initial condition of the universe that, for many reasons, was more likely to be other than what it was. Why was the beginning of the universe this way when there are so many reasons it was more likely to have been another way?

This is the crux of Price's contention with initial conditions. It is not enough in terms of philosophy or physics to assert an initial condition like the low-entropy past and be done. There is more work that needs to be done to account for why the initial conditions occurred as they did, since there were other more feasible and more likely ways that they could have occurred. In addition, Price stresses the point that even the smallest changes

or differences would have yielded an entirely different picture of initial conditions and entropy in our universe. Price recognizes that in regards to philosophical tradition, it is often the case that initial conditions are simply accepted and are not required to have any kind of further explanation. While Price holds that initial conditions need explaining, he delves into two objections that are given as arguments for not explaining initial conditions.

The first objection Price examines is the "just good luck" objection. This objection argues that an initial condition like the low-entropy past and the resulting increase in entropy in the universe is just a result of chance. Price brings up an argument found in D.H. Mellor, who compares initial conditions to bullet trajectories. In Mellor's thought experiment, the bullets have no prior mechanism that is determining their trajectories or even the probability of the bullets following one trajectory as opposed to another. Rather, the trajectories themselves just are, and similarly, the reality of the low-entropy past just is. Our universe having a low-entropy past is the case simply because that is the 'trajectory' that happened to be. Price takes issue with this in terms of "new cases." Should we expect that the luck of our region would extend to or apply to new regions of the universe that we have not yet discovered? If we expect it to extend or continue, then it is no longer accurate to call it luck—rather, we are admitting to some kind of law-like thing.

The second objection Price deals with is the "only one universe" objection, a stance which is taken by Callender and will be further discussed in Section III. The objection takes up David Hume's position that, "...since the cosmos happens only once, we cannot hope to gain knowledge of any regularities in how it is created." From this perspective, it does not make sense to explain initial conditions in terms of comparison to other possibilities or probabilities, because the universe and its beginning are unique. Price points out that even if one were to accept that the universe is unique, there are multiple kinds of boundary conditions and multiple kinds of initial conditions, and among these conditions, the one given by the Past Hypothesis is improbable. As such, it

still makes sense to offer an explanation of an initial condition like the Past Hypothesis by means of comparison. In regards to the issue of explaining regularity, Price's second point is that if low-entropy is regional, then such regions occur throughout the universe and, so, the regularity of these regions is still a reasonable thing to seek to explain. Third and finally, Price rejects the very notion that uniqueness is a reason for refraining from explaining something, since it is often those things that are unique that we are most motivated to try to explain.

In terms of explaining initial conditions, Price offers three approaches to building an explanation for the Past Hypothesis. The first is based on an inflationary model found in cosmology. An inflationary model is a picture of the extremely early stages of the universe in which physical properties do not work in the way in which we are familiar with them—for example, gravity repulses rather than attracts. The model works such that all, or at least most, possible universes (i.e. ways the universe could be) have similar constraints. In regards to the Past Hypothesis, using an inflationary model would allow for the physical constraint of low-entropy to be applied across the vast majority of possible universes. This means that, at least in one way, the improbability of the Past Hypothesis becomes greatly diminished.

The second approach is what Price calls an anthropic strategy. This explanatory strategy appeals back to Boltzmann and the notion that intelligent life can only come to be in regions of the universe with a low-entropy past. The unusualness of such a past only sticks out to us because we are limited to such a region. The third and final approach Price offers is called Penrose's Weyl Hypothesis. From this hypothesis, Price uses what is called a Weyl curvature to aid in explaining entropy. The hypothesis was originally given by Roger Penrose as a way of accounting for the initial smoothness of the universe. What the hypothesis does is create a kind of smoothness constraint based on a Weyl curve in which, as this curve approaches the extremities of the universe, it also approaches zero. Applied to entropy, the claim is that there is an analogous kind of constraint in which, as a Weyl curve for entropy

approaches the extremity of the universe—for example, the origin or beginning of the universe—it approaches zero. As such, entropy in the past is going to be very low, since it is approaching zero. Price acknowledges that while this explanation captures the mathematical value of entropy in the Past Hypothesis, it does not sufficiently grapple with the problem of improbability.

In the next section, I will outline the argument given by Callender against further explanation for the Past Hypothesis. In the fourth and final section I will return to why Price's argument in this section is correct.

SECTION III – CALLENDER, INITIAL CONDITIONS, AND THE ONE UNIVERSE OBJECTION

Callender begins his piece with a hypothetical story about the end of the universe. In Callender's story, a person is informed by some supernatural power that the universe is coming to an end, and that that moment will be marked by all of the world's Faberge eggs ending up in the person's dresser drawer. This person convinces all the owners of the world's Faberge eggs to place GPS trackers on the eggs, and this person watches as the eggs move closer and closer, through odd coincidences, to this person's drawer. The person tries to sabotage the process, but circumstances always work out such that the eggs continue to move towards the drawer. Eventually, all of the eggs end up in the drawer and the universe ends. Callender then drops the supernatural element from the story and instead suggests that, in the story, science hypothesizes this ending to the universe. The hypothesis is simple and has explanatory power in regards to the number of seeming coincidences that occur to move the eggs into the drawer. It also allows for understanding why so many improbable events are in fact probable.

This story stands as a parallel for how Callender wants to conceive of the Past Hypothesis. The Past Hypothesis claims that the universe began in a state of very low entropy. Like the hypothesis about the Faberge eggs, the Past Hypothesis is simple and it helps explain why the second law of thermodynamics is what it

is: entropy increases because it started so low. Callender explains that the Past Hypothesis is a kind of initial condition set as one of the parameters for the beginning or origins of the universe. He argues that initial conditions are like brute facts, and as such, they require no further explanation than to simply be stipulated as basic boundary conditions. To illustrate this point, Callender appeals to David Hume, Thomas Aquinas, and the problem of infinite regress.

In his philosophical writings, Thomas Aquinas summarizes five ways by which one could form an argument for the existence of God. One of these ways is a cosmological argument based on causation. The argument essentially runs as follows: every effect has a cause, there is no infinite chain of cause and effect, and therefore, there must be one first cause. This first cause, or Uncaused Cause, is God. David Hume pushes at this argument by asking what it is, then, that caused God. A couple of possible answers arise. The first option is to not posit a "first cause" and instead posit an infinite regress of gods, or causes. The second option is to say that God is somehow able to cause himself. But if it is possible to opt out of positing a first cause or to have a first cause be the thing that causes itself, then you might as well just posit the universe or the big bang in place of "God."

Callender applies a similar logic to the Past Hypothesis. What is it, Callender asks, that could explain a low-entropy past state? One answer could be a regress or chain of low-entropy past states occurring before the Past Hypothesis, which is even more improbable than the Past Hypothesis as it currently stands. The other answer is to say that the Past Hypothesis is analogous to a first cause that causes itself, in that the Past Hypothesis just is: it is simply the fact of the matter about the initial conditions of the universe and there is nothing more to be said. For Callender, it makes more sense to go with the second option.

Though Callender does not think there is any kind of explanation to be given for initial conditions, he does acknowledge the improbability of the low-entropy past, but he talks about this improbability in terms of abnormality. His answer for this diffi-

culty is found again in Hume, from Hume's *Dialogue Concerning Natural Religion*. The argument given is that the universe, the cosmos, happens only once. As such, it does not make sense to talk about an abnormality in the initial conditions of the universe. This is because there is no way to give an account of regularity, since regularity is a relationship between things of the same kind and there are no other cosmos to compare this one to—there is just this one. In other words, talking about the abnormality of the initial conditions of the universe carries the burden of establishing what is regular, and Callender does not think this can be done.

Callender recognizes that there are those who may not buy into the Humean argument regarding the uniqueness of the cosmos. So, he offers a second approach to dissolve any puzzle regarding the low-entropy past. He argues that the Past Hypothesis should be considered a physical law in terms of the Ramsey-Lewis notion of physical laws. The Ramsey-Lewis conception of physical laws is to say something like the following: laws of nature are laws of nature because it is physically impossible for the state of affairs, or fact of the matter, to be otherwise. Callender thinks the Past Hypothesis should be regarded in this way because it does not seem as though it is physically possible for the universe to have had anything but a low-entropy past. Callender argues further that the Past Hypothesis carries a great deal of philosophical weight when conceived of in this way. It is a hypothesis that is simple to state, it allows for thermal regularities to be explained through an initial state, and it allows for accurate empirical predictions in thermodynamics.

Callender then poses the question: if the Past Hypothesis were to be regarded as a Ramsey-Lewis physical law, what kind of explanation would apply to it? Callender offers three options. The first is to reframe the problem such that the low-entropy past "naturally" follows from the dynamics. In other words, replace either classical or quantum dynamics with an account of dynamics in which this low-entropy past state is a product of the dynamics as opposed to a kind of prerequisite. The second option is to explain the Past Hypothesis in terms of other physical laws or hypoth-

eses. The third is to give a physical theory in which improbability no longer applies to an initial condition like the low-entropy past. Callender gives the example of the Ghirardi-Rimini-Weber (GRW) interpretation of quantum mechanics. This interpretation treats statistical or mechanical probabilities as being corollaries for quantum mechanical probabilities. Since the GRW interpretation frames probability in terms of quantum states, it does not require any kind of probability measurement for initial conditions. In this theory, statistical and mechanical probabilities still work. This would dissolve any question of improbability in regards to the Past Hypothesis.

In the next section, I will show why Callender's argument does not adequately answer Price's argument, and so, Price is correct to contend that a puzzle regarding the low-entropy past remains, and his push for further explanation of the low-entropy past holds.

Section IV – The Pursuit of Explanation Remains

Callender's argument can be summed up in two primary claims. The first is the claim that initial conditions should not be explained, because trying to do so results in an infinite regress, and it is better to instead treat an initial condition as a brute fact. The second is that the initial conditions of the universe should not be conceived of in terms of regularity or irregularity because the cosmos is unique. The first claim is a result of a misinterpretation of Aquinas on Callender's part. Going back to the question of an Uncaused Cause, it matters that for Aquinas, this first cause is the kind of thing that does not need to be caused at all. The first cause is not the kind of thing that somehow causes itself as Callender, via Hume, seems to think. The philosophical move Aquinas makes is to stipulate an existing thing that is "first" not by virtue of chronological order, but rather by virtue of the kind of thing it is—namely, an uncaused kind of thing. Callender's notion that one has to choose between infinite regress and stipulating initial conditions as brute

facts does not fully grapple with the kind of philosophical move Aquinas makes. One could push back against Callender and ask the following: what if it were possible to stipulate something that makes an initial condition what it is, not because that something is chronologically prior to the initial condition, but rather because of what the stipulated thing is? This seems to be the kind of explanation Price has in mind when he offers the cosmologist's inflationary model. Many of Callender's arguments are ways of rephrasing or reframing this first claim that initial conditions should not be explained, whether it is by appealing to a Ramsey-Lewis conception of physical laws, by explaining the Past Hypothesis in terms of other laws or initial conditions, or by rearranging the dynamics. All of these approaches offered by Callender assume that it is never worthwhile to explain initial conditions, because regress is somehow inevitable.

Price deals with Callender's second claim head on when he deals with the "only one universe" objection. Price explains that even if one agrees that the universe is unique, there are still regularities or generalities within the universe and with regards to initial conditions that call for explanation. Since the improbability of the low-entropy past violates these regularities and generalities, it still requires explanation. Essentially, Callender's argument about the uniqueness of the universe is not rich enough or deep enough to respond to Price's points.

Further, Callender's options for explaining initial conditions rely on the validity of treating the Past Hypothesis as a Ramsey-Lewis physical law. This makes the hypothesis stronger than it actually is, both in terms of philosophy and in terms of giving a physical theory. Price's approaches, on the other hand, do not alter the strength of the Past Hypothesis. Instead, Price shows how current models and mathematical tools in cosmology can be used to build an explanation of the hypothesis as it is. Price's choice to retain the hypothesis as it is, instead of altering its strength as Callender does, is a stronger philosophical move, and this strengthens Price's overall position.

CONCLUSION

While Price does not settle on a final explanation for the low-entropy past, his argument shows that the puzzle of the Past Hypothesis persists despite Callender's claims to the contrary. Callender's approach is to try to dissolve the puzzle entirely, which can be a desirable philosophical solution. Price's approach is the more creative one, however, and it extends beyond the Past Hypothesis. There may be other kinds of initial conditions—Price mentions initial smoothness—that need to be reexamined, and they may, like the low-entropy past, be puzzling in such a way that requires further explanation.

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ANARCHY AND DISCLOSURE

Bryan Knittle

INTRODUCTION

Anarchism is an ethical political philosophy. This claim might seem paradoxical since anarchism is often portrayed as a chaotic and disorderly state of affairs bereft of any feasible ethical system. This misleading account is often used as a rhetorical device to bolster which ever conflicting political system employs it. Moreover, this account has been used to justify colonialism, imperialism, and militarism around the globe. Any community whose discourse, practices, and forms of life are not under the purview of state authority is said to suffer from an "anarchic" loss of faith and reason. They are therefore a threat to the stability and security of the state.

Anarchists consistently reject this account and have shown that such a distorted image not only legitimizes but amplifies state power. Although the ethical commitments of various anarchists are often comparable, the manner in which these commitments find social and political expression differ and, at times, are in conflict from thinker to thinker. It is generally maintained, however, that authoritarian relations of domination and exploitation are inherent to the state form insofar as the state imposes laws that restrict individual liberty and violates equality. This does not mean that anarchists endorse an antagonistic, "everyone for themselves" way of life. For anarchists, individual liberty and equality are interdependent and can only make sense in relation to the other. They are correlative and each requires the other in order to find its fullest expression. That is, one is free only to the extent that the people around them are free. This includes economic and social equality as well, where an asymmetric distribution of wealth implies the stratification of individuals and communities into unequal hierarchies of wealth, power, status, and access to

resources and opportunities.

A problem with classical anarchism is that its theorists have recourse to various accounts of human nature that conceive of humanity as inherently rational and tending towards cooperation. Numerous accounts of anarchism that remain committed to equal-liberty and anti-authoritarian social arrangements but eschew these essentialist assumptions have emerged in the past few decades. The postanarchism of Saul Newman, for example, incorporates the insights of thinkers like Michel Foucault, Max Stirner, and Reiner Schürmann in order to propose an account of anarchism that is as critical of its own potentially oppressive assumptions as it is of oppressive social arrangements. I believe that this call to recursive self-critique can illuminate an ethical framework consistent with the anti-authoritarian *ethos* of anarchism by emphasizing the ethical importance of self-interrogation and a receptivity to alternative interpretations and practices.

In the first part of the article I will give a fuller account of classical anarchism, disentangling its commitments from various other political philosophies that seek more egalitarian social arrangements. I will conclude the section by exploring Newman's challenge to classical anarchism. In the second part I will examine the notions of disclosure and reflective disclosure in order to outline an open-ended ethical framework that I believe is consistent with the anti-authoritarian *ethos* of anarchism. In the final part I will further develop this thesis by showing that postanarchism *requires* an open-ended ethical framework insofar as it is concerned with minimizing oppressive practices wherever and whenever they arise. Practices that are believed to be more liberatory *at some particular historical juncture* may end up being more oppressive at another. The "open-ended" ethics of reflective disclosure and postanarchism demands a recognition of the contingency of our forms of life.

ANARCHISM AND CRITIQUE

Herbert Spencer's law of equal freedom states that "Every man has the freedom to do all that he wills, provided he infringes not the

equal freedom of any other man" (Newman 2010, p. 21). Spencer believed that all governmental institutions should be subordinate to this principle and that citizens have the right to disobey the state when it infringes on their right to equal freedom. "The principle outlined here is that we all have an equal right to be free, and, therefore, that no free action should constrain or limit the freedom of another" (Ibid.). Traditionally the concepts of equality and liberty have been seen as antagonistic, where the more liberty one has the greater the potential threat one poses to the liberty of others, or that equality will generally come at the expense of individual liberty. When subordinate to liberty, equality is less important than the "opportunity" to be free (usually understood as the "freedom" to accumulate capital and increase one's economic status, even at the expense of others). At first sight it would seem that Spencer endorses an account of equal-liberty that conceives of equality and liberty as mutually conducive to one another with neither taking precedence over the other. However, this is only superficially so since in Spencer's formulation "equality is narrowly understood as formal equality (equality of rights, legal equality and the equal claim to non-interference), thus excluding the broader claims for social and economic equality" (pp. 21-22). There is thus a tension between equality and liberty, with liberty taking priority over equality.

One need not conceive of the relationship between equality and liberty as requiring such friction. The liberalism of Rawls and Dworkin goes to great lengths to accommodate social and economic equality and freedom. From an anarchist perspective, however, the problem with liberal theories is that they are often imagined as being embedded within a capitalist market "whose inequalities can perhaps be ameliorated through social democratic measures, but never entirely overcome" (p. 22). Furthermore, liberalism requires that the state protect its liberties and distribute resources accordingly. Since its inception liberalism has been conceived of in terms of the state.[1] Even the libertarianism of Spencer or Robert Nozick demands that a state enforce the "freely entered into" contracts and agreements of its citizens. "The liberal

notion of equal-liberty is always premised on the individual, the individual whose liberties must be reconciled with, or protected against, those of other individuals … or whose disadvantaged status or bad luck in life must be compensated for through social welfare measures" (Ibid.). Newman believes that this is problematic for two reasons. First, the subject "is positioned as a passive recipient of either state protection or redistributive rights: there is no notion of the subject seizing, constructing and organizing for himself in collaboration with others" (Ibid.). The only "appropriate" opportunities a liberal subject has to actively transform her conditions are to vote for representatives that are *mostly* sympathetic (or at least more so than any other) to her cause, or to nonviolently protest her inequalities so as to "pressure" the state to transform these conditions for her.[2] Secondly, "because liberalism is based on the sovereign self-interested individual … it sees only a competition of liberties that must be balanced with one another" (p. 23). This preoccupation with the sovereign individual restricts the liberal imagination to an antagonistic conception of liberty and a formal conception of equality—formal *because* the state must secure the rights of free, self-interested individuals.

Newman claims that we need a conception of equal-liberty that goes beyond "the limits of the liberal formulation" (Ibid.). He asserts that a more radical formulation would conceive of equal-liberty as a more "open-ended horizon" that "allows for endless permutations and elaborations [so that] political equality is meaningful only with economic equality; civil liberty makes sense only if it also comes with a political equality; economic equality is desirable only if it is accompanied by civil liberty and full political equality, and so on" (Ibid.). Newman argues that we ought to reject the traditionally asymmetrical account of equal-liberty in favor of a more radical one that conceives of liberty and equality as correlative and mutually enhancing: the enlargement or reduction of one implies a corresponding enlargement or reduction of the other. On this account, "the liberty of one is only imaginable in the context of the liberty of all; and in which liberty must come not only with formal equality (of liberty) but with social and

economic equality" as well (pp. 22-23).

Newman sees this approach to equal-liberty as being closer to the political ethics of anarchism. In fact, he believes that anarchism "provides the fullest development and the most radical expression of equal-liberty" insofar as it conceives of equal-liberty and its implementation as incompatible with the state and sovereign political authority (p. 24). Traditionally, for anarchists, it is not human nature that produces inequality and relations of domination but the state and exploitative economic systems. It is precisely this rejection of sovereignty and political authority that distinguishes it from most other political philosophies. Not only does the state delimit and impinge upon liberty through the legislation and enforcement of its laws, it violates equality by posturing as the sole locus of power and authority. This critique of sovereign authority is a common theme in the anarchist tradition.[3] Mikhail Bakunin claimed that the state presupposes inequality and seeks legitimacy by affirming a need to manage this inequality. If human beings are inherently egoistic and self-interested then they need to be organized and managed by the state in order to combat "anarchy." Indeed, in the liberal tradition "anarchy" expresses a law-less state of affairs where everyone lives in fear of others because there can be no consistent ethical framework without the state. Anarchists, however, presuppose a completely different account of human nature that is diametrically opposed to the liberal picture. Classical anarchists conceive of humanity as inherently good-natured and tending towards cooperation and mutual-aid. There is, within the anarchist tradition, a common belief in an "inherent goodness" to humanity. People were believed to "naturally tend to their affairs in ways that are helpful to themselves and to others and that are not, or mostly not, harmful or destructive" (May 1994, p. 63). Bakunin, for example, thought that human beings were inherently rational and would naturally tend towards equal-liberty and cooperation if they were not coerced and distorted by the state. In *Mutual Aid*, Peter Kropotkin challenges Darwin's Theory of Evolution and provides an account that foregrounds the cooperative foundations of human evolutionary development throughout

history. Moreover, in *The Conquest of Bread*, Kropotkin proposes a more decentralized economic system based on similar insights.

We might say, then, that classical anarchism "is imbued with a type of essentialism or naturalism that forms the foundation of its thought" (Ibid.). Newman argues that this essentialism, expressed in a belief in some organic unfolding of anti-authoritarian social relations along rational or evolutionary lines, frames classical anarchism within "an Enlightenment rationalist-humanist discourse" (Newman 2010, p. 46). The rationalist-humanist discourse that Newman refers to relies on concepts like identity in order to fabricate and impose a *particular* conception of human nature upon all of humanity. He sees this as a problem insofar as this aspect of the Enlightenment paradigm has been criticized and shown to be untenable by thinkers like Foucault, Stirner, and Schürmann. Proclaimed universality always "disguises a particular position of power—it is always someone's [particular conception of things] that is imposed coercively upon others" (Newman 2016, pp. 61-62). This is not to say that Enlightenment discourse has been completely abandoned or shown to be absolutely false; rather, there is a certain skepticism regarding its totalizing tendencies—that is, its universal claim to be true everywhere and always for all people. Such a skepticism is concerned with highlighting the ethical import of reconsidering and critically interrogating accounts of human nature or "essences" so as to weaken their claims to incontrovertible certainty, rather than with being arrogantly dismissive of or carelessly submissive to them. Newman writes: "We must be aware, as Foucault says, of the historicity of the Enlightenment, and the sense in which the Enlightenment is an event and a complex of heterogeneous set of processes, transformations, discourses, institutions and practices which constitute us as subjects, as well as providing conditions and possibilities for our escape from subjectification" (Newman 2010, p. 47). Frederick Douglass and millions of others were enslaved, murdered, and brutally degraded because it was believed that they were lacking rationality in their very nature; women were prohibited from intellectual pursuits and relegated to domestic labor because they were

thought to possess an essentially inferior intellect and diminished physical capacity.[4] Even though the anarchists were among the first to fight for marginalized peoples, their discourse was still largely embedded in a male-dominated, Eurocentric paradigm. The appeal to "human nature" or "essence" is simply an articulation of the Enlightenment's influence on classical anarchism.

The line of critique that we are pursuing does not aim to replace the foundations it criticizes with new ones; rather, it is meant to encourage a critical interrogation of the very notion of essence and stable foundations. It is an ethical call to "openness," to being ever vigilant in the eradication of potentially oppressive thought and practice. Again, the point is not to overthrow the Enlightenment and its ideas but to open them up to critique and to expose their vulnerability to further investigation. If we set aside for a moment the talk of essences and foundations we can make sense of this line of critique by highlighting the emphasis it places on fostering alternative, often conflicting, opinions, interpretations, and practices. The point is to foreground forms of life that were previously suppressed, marginalized, or concealed so that they may be expressed on their own terms and in their own voice. This is in stark contrast to the reactionary tendencies of more conservative projects that seek to preserve and propagate the discourse and practices of a dominant culture. By exposing the fragility of dominant forms of life, the wretched of the earth are encouraged to speak for themselves, to make sense of the world in their own language and according to their own traditions, practices, and conceptual framework. To return to a previous example, Frederick Douglass was not concerned with "refuting" or "abolishing" rationality. What he wanted was the opportunity to be heard, to show that he was not inferior simply because he was black and did not speak or read English to the degree that white slave-holders deemed acceptable. Douglass showed that the criteria used to determine personhood was *contingent* and not necessary; or not necessarily as it had been conceived.[5]

Radical and "progressive" politics are not free from the critique of essences that we have been discussing. To return to the

question of anarchism, this critique would entail giving up on the depiction of human beings as righteous subjects merely perverted by the corrupt state. The challenge that such a critique poses to anarchists is thus:

> If you are anarchists, then you must at least question your own foundations; you must question the authority not only of the state and capitalism, but also of the systems of knowledge and thought and the stable identities upon which your anti-authoritarian political project is based. In other words, for anarchism to be consistent, it must also engage in—or at least consider the implications of—an *epistemic* and *ontological anarchism*. (p. 50, modified)

Newman suggests that the seeds of this critical self-interrogation are already contained in the anti-authoritarian *ethos* of anarchism. As I will show in the next section, I believe that this anti-authoritarian *ethos* is consistent with the ethical framework of Nikolas Kompridis' account of reflective disclosure. Highlighting this consistency will allow me to make sense of the ethical dimension implicit in Newman's account of postanarchism.

DISCLOSURE AND REFLECTIVE DISCLOSURE

Disclosure is a technical term that has been elaborated upon by philosophers such as Charles Taylor, Hubert Dreyfus, Stanley Cavell, and Jürgen Habermas, although the phenomenon can also be found in the works of John Dewey and Ludwig Wittgenstein. The sense with which I will be using the term is motivated by Martin Heidegger's analysis of disclosure (*erschliessen*) in *Being and Time*. In that work, the notion of disclosure is first mentioned in a discussion of the practical way in which we usually live our lives. He argues that the primary way in which we comport ourselves is practical rather than merely theoretical; that is, we generally encounter things in terms of their use or employment. When we relate to objects in this purposive way we encounter them as *equipment* conducive or impotent for the sake of some task rather than as foreign objects with which we are wholly unfa-

miliar. There is a certain familiarity to the things we encounter in our everyday dealings. This familiarity, however, is not something that we think about very often. Nor do we really pay much attention to the objects that we use when we are using them; we are much more concerned with the task at hand. Heidegger's famous analysis of a hammer, for example, shows that the intelligibility of a hammer is contingent on its embeddedness in the practical context of hammering (e.g., in the construction of a sturdy shelter in order to provide reliable protection from inclement weather, which is ultimately for the sake of our well-being). We pick up the hammer and use it without ever really paying attention to its material construction, physical properties, or atomic structure. The practical context *discloses* the object *as* a hammer rather than as a piece of wood with some metal attached, a collection of sense-data, or an inspiration for a work of art. When the hammer is disclosed as such and we are able to use it effectively toward our projects, we are not at all interested in the fact that it appears differently when viewed from one angle than it does when viewed from another; nor do we find this fact to be a compelling argument against its usefulness *as* a hammer.[6]

Heidegger argues that much more is implicated in our encounter with equipment than the object itself. He writes: "Taken strictly, there 'is' no such thing as *an* equipment [since] there always belongs a totality of equipment, in which it can be this equipment that it is. Equipment … always is *in terms of* its belonging to other equipment: ink-stand, pen, ink, paper, blotting pad, table, lamp, furniture, windows, doors, room" (Heidegger 1962, p. 97/68). When I encounter the hammer I understand its "belongingness" to things like nails, wood, protective eye-wear, and so on. These things are disclosed with the hammer and are as familiar to me as it is; it "refers" to them, and they to it. This is another way of saying that the whole practical context of carpentry, for example, is disclosed when I encounter the object *as* a hammer. A house is disclosed as a home and with it certain practices like cooking, cleaning, sleeping, being leisurely, and other intimate activities involved in the context of "inhabiting" or

"dwelling." Gaston Bachelard points out that when asked to draw a house, children tend to express a familiarity with the context of dwelling by drawing a door *with* a handle—for how else would one enter a home?[7] It is a handle because it opens the door, not because it looks thus and so or has this or that physical property.

One may object that practical comportment is founded on a merely "subjective" representation of objects as useful for an equally "subjective" project. I simply represent the object as a hammer in order to satisfy my intention of hammering something—an intention which is itself the representation of a desire to be fulfilled or a goal to be accomplished. Practical comportment, however, does not simply consist in representing a task to be completed or in representing objects as conducive for completing that task; rather, practical comportment is most accurately expressed in and during the activity itself—activity which subordinates any "subjective" intentions "to the 'in-order-to' which is constitutive for the equipment we are employing at the time; the less we just stare at the hammer-Thing, and the more we seize hold of it and use it, the more primordial does our relationship to it become, and the more unveiledly is it encountered as that which it is—as equipment. The hammering itself uncovers the specific 'manipulability' of the hammer" (p. 98/69). While it is true that the door-handle a child draws "represents" the practical comportment involved in entering a house, this representation is itself founded on the actual *activity* of opening the door and entering the house, or at least of being involved in a similar activity. It is not enough to simply look at a thing and say: "This thing is a hammer. It is used for hammering." To do so would not be to *disclose* it as a hammer, but merely to represent it as being such. The representation of equipment *presupposes* a prior disclosure of that equipment within a practical context. It is only in virtue of the practical context and the serviceability of an object having been disclosed that I am able to relate to it in a practical way *as equipment* and not merely as an inert thing. Even if I do represent the object as being useful for hammering *before* I begin hammering, it is the activity of hammering itself that confirms the "accuracy"

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of my representation or the "truth" of my belief. It is only in the activity of hammering that the efficacy or impotency of the object *as* a hammer is revealed. Likewise, we will soon see that it is only by engaging in a particular social arrangement or practice that we are able to determine whether it is more liberatory or oppressive.

Other people are disclosed in a practical way as well. This is not to say that they are disclosed as equipment but as owners, employees, coworkers, friends, relatives, and in other *meaningful* roles. Insofar as we encounter people in various roles, we encounter them as "belonging" in various degrees to our equipment and projects. A particular piece of clothing, for example, refers to "possible wearers … for whom it should be 'cut to the figure'" (p. 153/117). When we encounter equipment we also "encounter its producer or 'supplier' as one who 'serves' well or badly…. The book we have used was bought at So-and-so's shop and given by such-and-such a person and so forth" (pp. 153-154/118). All this is to say that we do not generally encounter people as objects or strange beings with whom we just happen to exist alongside. Even if we are "indifferent" to the people we encounter, they are nevertheless familiar to us in some sense; that is, unless we are being figurative, we do not usually assume that we are dealing with something from another planet. Equipment, projects, and other people are thus correlative, or what Heidegger calls *equiprimordial*, in our everyday dealings.

For Heidegger, the everyday way in which we live our lives is done so *pre-reflectively*. That is to say that the world is disclosed *for* us in a way that we often take for granted and are unaware or uncritical of. We are familiar with a hammer and the context in which it is disclosed as such, but *how* did we encounter such a context in the first place? Who determined that *this* particular array of equipment is suitable for such a task, or that one must use *these* materials and follow *this* set of procedures in order to, say, appropriately build a shelter or construct a door? Of course there are multiple ways to accomplish our goals and to complete our projects, and there are a variety of tools we can use to do so. Heidegger's point is that, nevertheless, there are conventions and

ways of doing things and conceiving of the world that we inherit from the society and cultures into which we are born. People and objects are disclosed according to a *shared* world of practical involvement.[8]

For the most part our everyday dealings are governed by social and cultural norms that dictate how we are to comport ourselves appropriately. The disclosure of a person in a position of authority, for example, delineates the range of behavior appropriate to my interaction with this figure. I am expected to comport myself towards this person in a manner that is appropriate to our relationship—a manner largely informed by convention. I am careful about what I say to my superiors and do my best to satisfy or exceed what is expected of someone in my subordinate position. Even if this figure of authority is a friend of mine, the intimate gestures and informal manner of speaking to which we *as friends* are accustomed are generally set aside and exchanged for practices more appropriate to the public work place.

Each of us is *thrown* into a society which has its own particular ways of making sense of the world. We inherit the conventions, practices, and forms of life of the society into which we are thrown (or born). These conventions dictate which projects, roles, and comportment are appropriate and which are forbidden. In a sense, we are always "conditioned" or "socialized" to view the world, each other, and ourselves through the narrow lens of whichever cultures we are born into. One's possibilities are largely limited by a society that has already disclosed what *is* and *is not* the case and how the world, and each of us, *ought* to be. Subjection to the shared conventions of a society seems to preclude any alternative account of the world. The world is as we found it and it will continue to be much like it is long after we have passed.

Nikolas Kompridis argues that we can, and should, reflectively engage with the inherited conventions from which things receive their meaning and intelligibility. He claims that we can "reopen and transform" these conventions "through novel interpretations and cultural practices" (Kompridis 2006, p. 34). For Kompridis, reflective disclosure (or redisclosure) enables us to

transform these inherited forms of life by exposing the contingency of our largely pre-reflective manners of being in the world. Redisclosure thus "involves rethinking how we 'receive' our understanding of being" (p. 190). The need for reflective disclosure arises from the tendency of the disclosedness of things to rigidify and appear as *the* manner of being in the world. Not only does this mystification conceal the contingency of disclosedness, it seeks to foreclose possible alternatives as well.[9] Reflective disclosure allows us to resist oppressive practices that appeal to this apparent immutability in order to justify their continued existence.[10] Illumination of their contingency extends the space in which new possibilities can emerge and enables us to critically rethink our entrenched forms of life.

Insofar as our forms of life are *shared* forms, a change in one's conception of the world demands reflection upon the ways in which we exist in the world *together*. Kompridis points out that "the kind of change in our relation to our inherited understanding of the world … is a kind of change that requires a complementary change in our understanding of one another" (p. 191). In other words, openness to the contingency of our practices requires an openness to the disclosedness of others. By understanding the disclosure of the world as a contingency indebted to culture, history, language, etc., others are encouraged to share forms of life that had previously been concealed or suppressed by the dominant orthodoxy. Reflective disclosure allows us to evaluate our inherited forms of life in order to determine whether they foster (are open to) or suppress (are antagonistic towards) the discourse and practices of marginalized communities.

Kompridis states that there is a normativity to his account of reflective disclosure. He asserts that "bad" disclosure conceals the contingency of its practices, values, and traditions while, contrarily, "good" disclosure reveals its contingency. Furthermore, "good" disclosure fosters and cultivates, rather than impedes and suppresses, new forms of life. One ought to ensure that the contingency of what is disclosed *and* the contingency of the disclosure itself is made explicit to others so as to invite participation in

the reflective critique and interrogation of what is disclosed and promote further redisclosure if necessary. Thus, in addition to an openness toward previously suppressed possibilities, "good" disclosure resists colonizing the possibilities of future communities as well. The normativity of reflective disclosure presupposes a commitment to more fluid and egalitarian practices. The ethical dimension of Kompridis' account of reflective disclosure is thus committed to the principle of radical equal-liberty outlined in the previous section and appears to be motivated by the same anti-authoritarian *ethos* as anarchism.

Whether a disclosed possibility ends up being emancipatory or oppressive cannot be determined in advance. The practices, discourse, ideas, and so forth that have been disclosed need to be taken up by those for whom it has been disclosed and "tested," so to speak. We will not know that an anti-authoritarian practice has been disclosed until we have tried it and discovered it to be so. Reflective disclosure should undermine the pretensions of those discourses and practices that are put forth as totalizing and demanding allegiance. "Good" disclosure requires ongoing experimentation or "play" in order to determine which forms of life enlarge our possibilities and which merely reinforce or correspond with what is already said to be the case by the dominant culture.

It is not a question of "erasing" previously oppressive forms of life but of challenging the legitimacy of these forms in order to promote and adopt less oppressive ones. What was once thought to be an inferior way of being in the world may turn out to be more desirable to another community, or to the same community at a different time. As Kompridis writes: "disclosure of the world cannot eliminate relations of power and domination, but it can bring about a change in the conditions of intelligibility on which those asymmetrical relations depend, giving them much less 'ontological support'" (p. 35). We might say, then, that reflective disclosure is "dangerous," as Foucault liked to say about power relations, in that it always risks rigidifying and becoming oppressive. Not only must a critical eye be kept on our practices, we must

consistently interrogate the cultural conditions according to which these practices are justified as well. Although it is the case that the world is disclosed *to* us, it is also disclosed *through* us: "it is we who make its disclosure possible…. Thus disclosure involves both receptivity and activity, both openness to and engagement with, what is disclosed" (p. 34).[11] Our everyday practices are both governed by our inherited forms of life *and* serve as the site in which alternative forms are made possible. The ethical dimension of reflective disclosure is thus motivated by what Newman defines as *an-archy*: a perpetual openness to the contingency of the world and engagement with the forms of life found therein. This commitment to a recurrent displacement of rigid assumptions is precisely what motivates the critique of classical anarchism discussed at the close of the previous section. In the following section I will discuss the notion of *an-archy* in greater detail and argue that it is this openness to the contingency of the world that characterizes the ethical dimension of Newman's account of postanarchism.

THE ETHICS OF POSTANARCHISM

In *The Politics of Postanarchism*, Newman develops an account of anarchism that accommodates the critique of foundations by Foucault, Stirner, and Schürmann. He refers to this kind of anarchism as poststructuralist anarchism, or postanarchism for short. Postanarchism remains faithful to classical anarchism's commitment to equal-liberty and anti-authoritarian social arrangements but eschews its various ontological assumptions regarding humanity as inherently good-natured and cooperative. Classical anarchism's essentialism is replaced by a critique of consistent, stable, and totalizing foundations. Newman understands this critique as motivated by a commitment to *an-archy* which "implies the notion of a critique of questioning of the authority of ontological foundations, *including those of anarchism itself*" (Newman 2010, p. 51). Postanarchist critique is thus directed both at oppressive social relations and its own potentially oppressive assumptions.

In the previous section I showed that the ethical dimen-

sion of reflective disclosure lies in its continual problematizing of existing practices and institutions so as to minimize relations of domination and subjection, and enlarge ones that are more fluid, reciprocal, and egalitarian. Reflective disclosure requires perpetual self-reflection and experimentation if it is to determine whether the possibilities disclosed are viable alternatives to the current order of things, or whether they merely reinforce dominant forms of life to the exclusion and suppression of more liberatory ones. It thus requires an openness to the contingency of practices both inherited and produced—that is, it requires a commitment to Newman's principle of *an-archy*. Just as reflective disclosure urges us to disclose more egalitarian practices, so, too, does postanarchism assert that we ought to seek social arrangements, discourse, and practices that are less authoritarian and exploitative. Using the language of disclosure we might say that the state is problematic not because it is the sole site of power but because it conceals its contingency and seeks to foreclose alternative social arrangements—arrangements that threaten the stability and authority of the state by disclosing non-coercive, non-exploitative, and anti-authoritarian practices.[12] The ethical dimension of postanarchism, then, lies in the idea that it is not enough to merely indicate new forms of life *within* a given social order—what must be disclosed are possibilities that run *counter to* and *outside of* the dominant order. Thus, Newman asserts that we should avoid disclosing discourse, practices, and social arrangements that not only endorse or maintain state authority but amplify it as well.

It is important to note that the social arrangements that postanarchism seeks are never fully accomplished ones. What is emphasized is the need to modulate again and again in order to meet particular needs and desires as they arise. In this sense it is a multiplicity of practices that are encouraged. Like "good" reflective disclosure, postanarchism wants to resist colonizing future forms of life by refusing to dictate for future communities the "proper" or "correct" way to organize. Liberatory possibilities should not only be dis-closed for the current community but kept open for future redisclosure. In a sense, we can think of reflec-

tive disclosure as "the motor that generates different articulations of equal-liberty" by facilitating possible "lines of flight"[13] that enable freedom from social relations of domination and resist the foreclosure of alternative possibilities. We might suppose, then, that reflective disclosure is initially *an-archic*, although it may end up becoming rigid and reactionary. It is *an-archic* to the extent that it endorses the disclosure and "development of alternative non-authoritarian relationships, political practices, ways of thinking and modes of living" (pp. 169-170)—in other words, to the extent that it maintains a commitment to equal-liberty and critical self-interrogation. Another way to put this is that reflective disclosure *begins* with *an-archy*, with the contestation and interrogation of any potentially oppressive tendency, instead of taking anarchism as the culmination of all our radical endeavors.

As with reflective disclosure, postanarchism recognizes the "danger" of any practice. One should resist conceiving of less authoritarian social arrangements as free of *any* relations of domination and exploitation. We have seen that the classical anarchists' various critiques of the state are based on an assumption that humanity would develop naturally in accordance with the goodness and rationality constitutive of its essence if only it could express itself freely, i.e., *outside* the oppressive regime of state power. In fact, classical anarchism conceives of *any* form of power as being oppressive. Postanarchism rejects the classical conception of power as inherently oppressive or "top down." Querying the essentialism of classical anarchism involves showing that social relations are "opaque, unstable, and even antagonistic, rather than transparent and immanently harmonious" (p. 51). One can no longer conceive of the state or an economic system as the sole locus of oppressive or exploitative practices; as Deleuze and Guattari point out, "the boss's office is as much at the end of the hall as on top of the tower" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p. 210). Postanarchism is concerned with the ways that individuals and groups oppress each other and are "conditioned" or "socialized" to discipline and punish those that do not act in accordance with the dominant regime. Power pervades even the most intimate rela-

tionships. As Richard J. F. Day explains, we are all "agents of social regulation, we all watch each other; the state [has become] a state of relationships" (Day 2005, p. 135). This insight animates postanarchism's "disavowal of the possibility of living a life *entirely without* relations of power as domination" (p. 137). This is why anarchism should be ever vigilant in criticizing *its own* assumptions about the world for they may be just as oppressive as the state. In fact, they may be even more oppressive insofar as these assumptions inform our everyday practices and determine how the world ought to be disclosed.[14]

This emphasis on the "politics of everyday life" is influenced by Foucault's notion of *micropolitics*. Micropolitics expresses the insight that power, and thus the possibility to impose that power coercively, is as pervasive to our social relations as it is to our political ones. We have seen that anarchism has always been committed to social arrangements that take shape *outside* and *beyond* the purview of the state. Postanarchism takes this a step further by emphasizing the importance of micropolitical analysis to *any* form of life that seeks to avoid relations of domination and subjection.[15] What is at issue is not merely the state or capitalism but any discourse, social arrangement, or conceptual framework that presents itself as ineradicable and totalizing. Postanarchism should thus "be seen as an ethics in which power is continually problematized, and where borders are continually contested. Anarchism *should remain sensitive to* the possibilities of domination and to the inevitability of dissent and disagreement" (Newman 2010, p. 151, emphasis added). The insights of micropolitics show that it is important to resist reifying the state as something over and above a set of relations between people. Conceiving of the state as such means recognizing that "if the state is in all of us, in how we live our lives, then living without the state form means living our lives differently, as individuals and as members of diverse communities" (Day, p. 125).

We should thus think of the state not simply as "a series of institutions and structures of power, but as a certain authoritarian relationship, a particular way of thinking and structuring our

lives" (Newman 2010, p. 63). As Day correctly points out:

> That all modes of social organization involve relations of power does not mean that particular modes cannot be evaluated according to the extent to which they encourage or *discourage* the maintenance, emergence and development of equitable relations between autonomous individuals and groups…. The question should be: how can relations between human individuals and groups and the natural world be structured so as to minimize domination and exploitation, taking the *entire* social/natural field into consideration in the *long term*? (Day, p. 134)

It may be fruitful to describe Foucault's genealogical (or archaeological) project as an attempt to redisclose the institutions that govern our everyday practices and comportment. Indeed, the entire *History of Sexuality* series highlights the ways in which not only individuals but political, religious, and social forces have enabled and constrained our sexuality, i.e., have dictated and regulated proper sexual expression while simultaneously delimiting sexuality's horizon of possibility. Foucault's analysis of micropolitics highlights the potential of our shared forms of life to become sites of dominion and subjugation. Insofar as power is horizontally dispersed throughout our forms of life and not merely exerted vertically by a sovereign authority, all of us, marginalized and privileged alike, risk oppressing others. As Newman asserts: "What we must watch out for is the risk of domination emerging, something is always possible due to the instability and uncertainty of power relations" (Newman 2010, p. 63). We should, thus, ensure that our practices are minimally oppressive and exploitative by maintaining a commitment to radical equal-liberty and *an-archy*.

Notes

1. Cf. Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan* and the political philosophy of John Locke.
2. "The politician is the first cousin to the reformer. 'Pass a new law,' says the reformer, 'and compel men to be good.' 'Let *me* pass the law,' says the politician, 'and things will be better'" in Berkman (2003), p. 65.

3. Although it has been argued that Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, author of *Property is Theft* and perhaps the most well-known anarchist theorist, is more sympathetic to the centralization of power than has previously been believed. See Day (2005).

4. I acknowledge that it seems entirely implausible to ignore the status of non-human animals since they are, perhaps, the most affected by hierarchical thinking and rigid logics of domination. In this paper, however, I am only interested in exploring questions of emancipation and liberatory practices and social arrangements insofar as they concern the human animal.

5. If I may pontificate, the fact that racism, sexism, and other prejudices continue to be pervasive today suggests that we are still very much in need of something like a spirit of recursive critique and self-interrogation.

6. Cf. Wittgenstein's language-games.

7. See Bachelard (1994).

8. Cf. "So you are saying that human agreement decides what is true and what is false?"—what is true and what is false is what human beings *say*; and it is in their *language* that human beings agree. This is agreement not in opinions, but rather in forms of life" (Wittgenstein 2009, para. 241).

9. The phenomenon of "levelling down" outlined in Heidegger's discussion of the "they" (*Das Man*) touches on this tendency. See Heidegger (1963), p. 165/127.

10. Cf. the notion of *épistémè* in Foucault (1970).

11. Kompridis argues that this receptivity towards others is absent in Being and Time, although I believe it is the ethical value of "openness" that motivates the discussion of authenticity (*Eigentlichkeit*).

12. It may be objected that a properly functioning democracy is always attempting to give voice to its constituency, and maintain a fluidity to the times and practices; it is a perverted democracy that attempts to rigidify and maintain a fascist or totalitarian regime. Of course you can always argue that democracy in itself implies a certain level of "stability" which is antithetical to the disclosive "methods" being promoted here. It accomplishes little, however, to restrict democracy to the state form. A more *an-archic* approach to democracy might entail "the questioning of all forms of political power and social hierarchies and the assertion of collective autonomy and equal-liberty. So there is something in the democratic promise which always exceeds the limits of its current articulations, something which suggests an open horizon of political experimentation and endless articulations of equal-liberty" (Newman 2010, p. 33). In other words, radical democracy requires a receptivity and openness to other possible forms of social arrangement and organization. "Authentic" or radical democracy, we might say, is one which discloses the groundlessness of any given social arrangement and fosters alternative, perhaps dissenting, possibilities. See Vattimo and Zabala (2011).

13. See Deleuze and Guattari (1987), p. 9.

14. I would like to suggest that the emergence of more egalitarian social arrange-
ments does not signal the end of oppression and the long-awaited accom-
plishment of the revolution. We should no longer think of radical politics
today "as laying the ground for a revolutionary event or a single, unified
moment of global emancipation, but rather as a series of struggles, move-
ments and communities whose existence is often fragile, whose practices are
experimental, tentative and localized and whose continuity is by no means
guaranteed. Nevertheless, they represent moments of potential rupture with
the global order of power, and they embody—in their singularity—the possi-
bility of an alternative" (Newman 2010, p. 170). Such a hegemonic way of
thinking obscures the ongoing danger that lies in wait for all who seek even
more inclusive forms of life. As I have already noted, it is possible that an
arrangement which once served as a site of resistance atrophies and becomes
more agonistic, increasing its modes of dominion while diminishing its more
libertarian ones.

15. This emphasis on the "politics of everyday life," however, is not only char-
acteristic of postanarchism. Postmarxist analysis has also incorporated the
insights of micropolitical theory into its account of revolutionary politics.
The difference lies in their respective approaches to liberatory possibili-
ties. As Day points out, postmarxism still endorses a hegemonic approach
to social and political transformation. This approach is motivated by "the
assumption that effective social change can only be achieved simultaneously
and en masse, across an entire national or supranational space" (Day 2005,
p. 8). Although it eschews the importance placed by classical Marxism on
a seizure of the state, postmarxism still attempts to achieve emancipation
through a modification of juridical structures. What is sought is recognition
by and integration into the hegemonic order. Not only is this an ultimately
ineffective approach to radical politics, it is one which reduces the scope of
liberatory possibilities to a limited set of practices and arrangements that
takes place within and in relation to the state.

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INTROSPECTION AND COGNITIVE PHENOMENOLOGY

Drew Patterson

INTRODUCTION

An important defense for cognitive phenomenology[1] has been to argue that we have an immediate knowledge of our own thoughts and other mental states. Introspection in and of itself is a crucial tool both for advocates and skeptics of the view, given that there seems to be no other way to talk about our conscious mental states without at some point appealing to it. Still, there is sharp debate about the reliability and soundness of arguments that rely on introspection. After laying out the argument for cognitive phenomenology based on our introspective awareness of our own thoughts, I will describe in some detail a view offered by Eric Schwitzgebel which urges us call into question the credibility of introspection. I will defend cognitive phenomenology against Schwitzgebel by demonstrating that he misses the point originally made by the cognitive phenomenologist.

I. THE ARGUMENT FROM IMMEDIATE KNOWLEDGE OF CONTENT

The argument in support of cognitive phenomenology will be taken from David Pitt. Pitt argues broadly that there are three important things we can do with respect to our own conscious mental states. These things, he argues, would not be possible if there were no way that it is like to think a certain thought. We are not capable of doing these things, in other words, if there was not a qualitatively distinct form of experience to our thoughts. Let's consider his argument in further detail.

The three things that an individual can do introspectively are as follows:

(a) distinguish one's occurrent conscious thoughts from one's other occurrent conscious mental states;

(b) distinguish one's occurrent conscious thoughts each from the others; and

(c) identify each of one's occurrent conscious thoughts as the thought it is (i.e., as having the content it does). (Pitt 2004, p. 7)

Pre-theoretically, what Pitt is saying should be easy to grasp. Consideration of one's own experience should demonstrate this to be the case. When I have a thought, I can distinguish it from other conscious thoughts I have. This includes the variety of conscious mental states. I am aware right now, for instance, that I am having a thought about the air being cold outside. I can discriminate this with respect to the other fleeting thoughts and mental states that pass through my mind. I know, for example, it is not a *wish* or *desire*. And, I know it is not the same as my other thought that I am now hungry for breakfast. We can also see that I know my thought is about the air outside and it being cold and not about the table before me.

This I think, again, is neither profound nor contentious on its own. But, what are we to make of our capability to do these things? Pitt argues further that

One would not be able to do these things unless each (type of) occurrent conscious thought had a phenomenology that is (1) different from that of any other type of conscious mental state (proprietary), (2) different from that of any other type of conscious thought (distinct), and (3) constitutive of its (representational) content. (Ibid.)

We can distinguish between our thoughts and other conscious mental states. And, we can distinguish our conscious thoughts each from the others. This would seem to suggest that there must be a certain *phenomenology* of thought: a what-its-likeness—or qualitatively unique experience—to each of our thoughts and

conscious mental states. The argument is that there must be a certain way that it is like to think that *P* since we are capable of doing (a)-(c). If there were no phenomenology of thought, then it seems that we could not individuate them with respect to their content in the way that we do.[2]

Pitt argues that this type of knowledge we have of our own conscious mental states is a case of *knowledge by acquaintance* and thus a form of *introspective* knowledge or acquaintance (p. 9). He claims that "A subject *S* is introspectively acquainted with a conscious mental particular *M* … if S differentiates *M* from its mental environment purely on the basis of *how it is experienced* by *S*" (pp. 9-10). Let us consider this further. Take the earlier thought that 'the air outside is cold.' I have this thought and recognize it as a thought about the air outside. We will say as well that I form no further beliefs about it. If I then differentiate or distinguish this thought from its "mental environment"—my other beliefs, desires, wishes, or other conscious mental states, that is—then I have become *introspectively acquainted* with that thought.

The way in which we gain acquaintance knowledge with our own occurrent conscious mental states should by no means seem foreign or complicated. We are merely describing our ability to do (a)-(c). Clearly, our discussion of introspection can, from here, get progressively detailed. But, I think this is unimportant for our purposes. Only a few final notes need to be made. Put simply, we have the following understanding: "simple introspection of a conscious mental particular is simply attentive experience of it" (p. 10). We are introspecting, that is, when we turn our attention towards some occurrent mental state, thought, feeling, sensation, and so on. Of course, we may not do this with many of our conscious mental states. It is likely that many pass through our mind without our consideration. But, insofar as we do introspect a conscious mental particular, we have gained acquaintance knowledge of it and can do (a)-(c).

II. OBJECTIONS TO INTROSPECTION

Appeals to introspection are not, however, without some push

back. One skeptic is Eric Schwitzgebel. Schwitzgebel wants to demonstrate that introspection, though usually unquestioned, does not actually provide anything of enough clarity to be useful. To be sure, Schwitzgebel defines introspection as "a species of attention to currently ongoing conscious experience" (Schwitzgebel 2008, p. 248). This then coheres with the view of introspection just given by Pitt. Schwitzgebel, on the other hand, believes using introspection is deeply problematic and thus unreliable primarily because of its lack of clarity in revealing to us what it is that we are introspecting on. Let us consider his view in further detail.

He begins by asking us to consider emotion. Although emotion is a common experience, it is unclear what it is. In addition, it is not even clear what things can be considered emotions beyond the typical examples of joy, anger, sadness, and so forth. It cannot be determined, according to Schwitzgebel, if emotion constitutes a cognitive experience or else something altogether different.

There is, seemingly, still a deeper problem here. He asks the following question: Are emotional states like joy, anger, and fear always felt phenomenally—that is, as part of one's stream of conscious experience—or only sometimes? (p. 249). It seems plausible at the very least to say that not all our emotions are experienced phenomenally. That is, they may come and go without our noticing them. Even if they are experienced phenomenally, it is unclear whether there is a "single, consistent core, a distinctive, identifiable, unique experiential character" (Ibid.) to those emotions. Let us say that I am having an experience of joy. Is this experience of joy the same experience I had yesterday, last year, or a decade in the future? Or, is my sadness over losing a loved one the same as my sadness over the Dodgers losing the World Series? It seems as well that emotions can be experienced in different ways. At one time it may be experienced in a more cognitive manner, while at other times more primitively. If this is the case it is not clear whether we have the same emotion, or a different one at each time.

Schwitzgebel ultimately argues that "most of us have a

pretty poor sense … of what brings us pleasure and suffering. Do you really enjoy Christmas? Do you really feel bad while doing the dishes? Are you happier weeding or going to a restaurant with your family?" (p. 250). When we introspect on our own experiences and feelings, it seems like it may be difficult to give any clear answer to these questions. Introspective attention to our occurrent conscious mental states seems to yield no answers to the worries offered here. We experience emotions often (if not always) but cannot speak as to what even constitutes an emotion.

Schwitzgebel invites us to use introspection on ourselves to examine the point he is trying to make. If one considers one's own conscious experience right now, is it evident that one is even having an emotional experience? If one is having an emotional experience of some kind, it may not be obvious what kind of experience that is. I may be bored, anxious, pensive, or something else. Again, the point here is that using introspection is seemingly useless to tell us anything truly meaningful about our own emotions.

From here Schwitzgebel then turns to visual experience. It could turn out, as he says, that emotions are simply far too complex a phenomenon to understand. Yet, introspection should plausibly bring better results with respect to our own visual sensations. Schwitzgebel claims that if we take a case of simple perception, say of red, it is difficult to imagine how I could be wrong about my introspective judgment that I am having the sensation or phenomenological experience of redness. Take, for example, other perceptual experiences I am now having. The computer that I see before me, the table that it is on, or the tree outside of my window. That these things are 'there' is trivially obvious—Schwitzgebel admits this to be the case. But, as he says, "that in no way proves that it's more secure than external perception—or even as secure" (p. 253). Let us grant that our introspection about our visual experience is accurate concerning these basic facts about the external world. Schwitzgebel seems to be arguing that this trivial fact is just that—trivial. This reveals nothing of real substance or meaning that we should really care about. This does

not tell us our desires, fears, hopes, and so on which he already argued we have failed to establish knowledge through introspection. Thus, even though introspection may tell us something about the phenomenology of visual experiences, that fact alone does not provide a reason to consider introspection any more trustworthy.

Here, again, we find a further problem. Consider cases of hallucination as well or dreaming. These cases are neither uncommon nor extraordinary and thus should seem plausible. We often find ourselves making erroneous judgments in our dreams which we at the time deem to be accurate and true. This may give us reason to pause and have doubt about even our more obvious introspective judgments of what our external perception brings to us. Schwitzgebel goes as far as to say that "if you admit the possibility that you're dreaming, I think you should admit the possibility that your judgment that you are having reddish phenomenology is a piece of delirium, unaccompanied by any actual reddish phenomenology" (Ibid.). Once we admit even a slight likelihood that we could be dreaming or hallucinating, we should have to admit that all our phenomenological visual experiences are themselves a type of hallucination of some kind. That is, what we call hallucination is ultimately of the same nature as everything else we deem to be some kind of phenomenological experience and thus we should not have a naïve trust in introspection given its unreliability.

Let us go further though and consider our visual experience as such. Schwitzgebel asks us to think the following about our visual experience: "does it seem to have a center and a periphery, differing somehow in clarity, precision of shape and color, richness of detail? … how broad is that field of clarity?" (p. 254). He adds quickly after that most people wrongly believe that some large portion of, say, a desk before them reveals itself to them with a variety of colors, shape, or textures—although we think this is the case, we only phenomenologically experience a very small portion of the desk and this experience will, of course, constantly change from moment to moment. Schwtizgebel's point is that our introspection does not reveal as much about our visual experi-

ence as we would like to think. He then writes that "if I'm right about this, then most naive introspectors are badly mistaken about their visual phenomenology when they first reflect on it … they're wrong about an absolutely fundamental and pervasive aspect of their sensory consciousness" (p. 256).

Schwitzgebel argues that everything up to this point is evidence enough to demonstrate that "the introspection of current conscious experience, far from being secure, nearly infallible, is faulty, untrustworthy, and misleading—not just possibly mistaken, but massively and pervasively" (p. 259). If it is the case that our introspection reveals as little as Schwitzgebel has argued for, then it seems we have a huge issue with introspection itself. Because it would then be the case that our introspection about our conscious experience reveals little to nothing to us. It tells us nothing about our emotions or our visual experience. It cannot tell us what we desire, nor even if what we see is truly there.

But, there are still a few more things we could consider here. Consider, pain, for instance. Here, again, we seem to be confronted with something that we could not possibly be wrong about. Consider, if one is having a pain experience and introspectively judges oneself to be having a pain experience, what else would there be to say? For most, there is nothing over and above the sensation of pain to give one reason to judge it to be otherwise. If I *feel* like I am having a pain, then that just means that I am in pain. There would be little sense to telling someone who claims they have a pain in their right leg that what they are, in fact, experiencing is a tickle. There are no tools or procedures that can be done on someone which would reveal if they are having a certain sensation of pain. Again, this is because there is nothing else to pain than its phenomenology. We can distinguish, that is, between the experience of pain from, say, the firing of C-fibers—such as in a phantom limb experience.

An argument can be made here that when one introspects on their experience of a pain that they *could* be wrong. In fact, it is quite common to be initially unsure what one is experiencing. Consider the following case: one takes a drink of tea and believes

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it to have an orange flavor but, upon reflection, decides that it is more lemon in taste. Again, this sort of experience happens often. The cognitive phenomenologist is not arguing that all of our introspective judgments are wholly accurate all the time. Rather, all that is needed is that we at least sometimes can make an accurate judgment about what one is consciously, occurrently thinking.

Schwitzgebel, though, believes we should still have reason to doubt our introspective judgments here. He claims the following:

> There's confusion between mild pains and itches or tingles. There's the football player who sincerely denies he's hurt. There's the difficulty we sometimes feel in locating pains precisely or in describing their character. I see no reason to dismiss, out of hand, the possibility of genuine introspective error in these cases. Psychosomatic pain, too: Normally, we think of psychosomatic pains as genuine pains, but is it possible that some, instead, involve sincere belief in a pain that doesn't actually exist? (p. 260)

Again, we need to introspect here on our own experiences of pain. What exactly is the distinction to be made between a mild pain, an itch, or a tingle? Are all these cases of pain? If they are, why is that the case? And, if not, what exactly is the difference? Although it may be easy to differentiate the pain of burning one's hand in a fire from the pain of a small pebble in one's shoe, our sensory experience is not always so clear. It is not unreasonable to say that there are cases where one is not so sure if one is having a pain or if one is merely unsure of where exactly it is located. Even more extreme is the possibility that the pain, as Schwitzgebel suggests, may not even exist.

It is not just that we may not know if we are in a pain or if that pain exists though. Think about a pain you may be experiencing at any given moment. When you introspect on it, is it clear to you how bad the pain is? Its exact size and shape could also not be readily transparent to you. Or, as we just noted, you may not even be sure where that pain is located on your body. Thus, Schwitzgebel believes that even pain does not present itself in a

sufficiently clear manner through our introspection.

III. Response to Schwitzgebel

Anyone wishing to defend cognitive phenomenology must be willing to deal with the worries and arguments expressed by Schwitzgebel. We saw earlier an argument for cognitive phenomenology by Pitt. But, it is likely that it is not only his argument which could be compromised by Schwitzgebel's attacks. Introspection is inevitable for anyone who wishes to understand better the nature of consciousness.

Let us turn back to what Schwitzgebel has said about emotions. He has argued that when we introspect on our own conscious emotional experience there is little that is revealed to us. There are several aspects to our emotional experiences which are not clear. It seems to be the case that it is not clear what constitutes an emotion or distinguishes certain emotions. It is not apparent whether certain experiences like boredom, are themselves emotions, or something that consists in multiple and separate emotions. It has also not been determined whether emotions are cognitive or physical experiences. And, we cannot say from our own introspection whether each tokening of an emotion is a different emotion on its own or if there is an unchangeable 'core,' so to speak, to each emotion that makes it the same thing each time it is experienced.

To be sure, I believe that these are valid concerns. But, there does seem to be something misplaced about them. This seems to overcomplicate our ordinary, everyday conscious experience by tying up discussion of introspection with epistemological questions concerning the *nature* of what we are introspecting on. Consider it this way. Let us say that I find myself desiring some chocolate cake right now. I introspect on my consciousness and see this desire and form no other beliefs. According to Schwitzgebel, if I introspect at length and try to understand my current conscious experience, I should find myself asking a multitude of different questions. Do I really *desire* chocolate cake? Could it be some other feeling or emotion that I am having? Is this experi-

ence the same as my desire for the other desserts I have in my fridge? Is my experience of desire for the chocolate cake the same kind of experience as it was in the past or may be in the future? Again, I am in no position to confidently assert that one could not ask such questions. But, where the cognitive phenomenologist is concerned, this is unnecessary. Ordinarily, I have a conscious mental state and I can introspect on that state and become aware of it. When I think, 'I desire a slice of chocolate cake' there typically is no further thought that occurs. But, for our concern, all we need to have established is that we *can introspect on our mental states and differentiate them with respect to their content*. We can do what was listed in (a)-(c) earlier, in other words.

Think again about what Schwitzgebel has said about our conscious visual perception. He argued two things: first, that our conscious visual experiences could turn out to be illusions and that, secondly, they lack sufficient clarity to tell us anything reliably through introspection. Here, it could be maintained by the cognitive phenomenologist that what we are concerned with is how things appear to us, not necessarily how they are.[3] Questions about the reality of what we perceive, that is, might be bracketed off by the cognitive phenomenologist in pursuit of understanding *how* it is that things appear to us.

To that end, Schwitzgebel has a response. He claims that "this reasoning rests on an equivocation between what we might call an epistemic and a phenomenal sense of 'appears'" (p. 262). An epistemic judgement is of such a sort that it has no phenomenological implications. For example, when I make some an ad hoc judgement, I may say that "it appears that you have been telling the truth," for example. Now let us take the phenomenal sense of "appears." We can illustrate this the best by using an optical illusion.
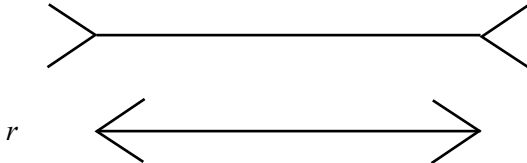
Examine Figure 1 below:

q

Figure 1

In this illusion, *q* and *r*, of course, are identical in length. The addition of the open 'brackets' on *q* makes it *appear* longer than *r*. When one examines these lines and states that the lines appear different sizes, one is using the *phenomenal* sense of "appear," according to Schwitzgebel. He believes the problem is that phenomenal senses of "appear" are just as open to being incorrect as epistemic uses of "appears." For example, lines *q* and *r* in Figure 1 may at first *appear* different lengths, but then we may find ourselves second-guessing our judgement. In other illusions, it may be less apparent how things even appear to us at all.

Here I will grant Schwitzgebel his distinction between epistemic and phenomenal senses of "appears." But, I do not think he exactly grasps what the cognitive phenomenologist is doing. That is, it is unclear to me exactly how we may have conflated the uses of these terms when we claim we are concerned with how things appear to us in experience. If we accept that we are talking about phenomenal appearance rather than epistemic appearance, then the cognitive phenomenologist is talking about exactly that. It seems that most phenomenologists would agree that we want to remain focused on phenomenal appearance and move away from questions concerning epistemic appearance.

To be sure, I would still admit to Schwitzgebel our uncertainty over how things appear to us from time to time. The existence of optical illusion can demonstrate that fine enough. But, our periodic uncertainty over how things appear to us in introspection is by no means enough to completely doubt it. This is how we can, as well, make sense of how to respond to what was said about something like pain states. We briefly argued earlier that if one having the experience or phenomenology of pain, then one is having a pain. All there is to the experience, that is, is the particular *what-its-likeness* of pain.

CONCLUSION

The nature of introspection is clearly difficult problem to tackle. I believe that the arguments against introspection ultimately leave us no reason to reject cognitive phenomenology. As Smithies has said "introspection may be sufficient to establish the existence of cognitive phenomenology even if it is not sufficient to answer questions about its nature" (Smithies 2013, p. 751). Although we may find introspection to be sufficient in establishing the existence of cognitive phenomenology, we may, to be cautious, be sparing in its use given the amount of disagreement over any arguments which rely on it.

We must keep in mind that the argument put forth by those like Pitt only seek to establish that we have, first, the ability to introspect to begin with and that we have the abilities laid out earlier in (a)-(c). We have the ability to differentiate our thoughts with respect to their content and have done so insofar as we introspect on our conscious mental states and thoughts. A stronger argument against cognitive phenomenology could be built by calling into question those abilities stated in (a)-(c).

I have argued that although the skeptic's attacks on introspection do, in fact, reveal questions we might ask about its nature, they do not actually pose a threat to establishing cognitive phenomenology's claim that we can distinguish phenomenal experiences in virtue of their content alone. Schwitzgebel's arguments focus on the nature of the things we introspect on rather than anything which would give us doubt to believe we can introspect in the way the cognitive phenomenologist has argued. Additionally, he misunderstands the goal of phenomenology overall by claiming there is a conflation between epistemic and phenomenal appearance. As it stands then, we should not reject the use of introspection as a means to defending the existence of cognitive phenomenology.

Notes

1. This is to be distinguished from Phenomenology, the method of philosophy developed by Edmund Husserl.

2. It is important to note here that when I say that we have this ability, I simply mean that it is the phenomenology itself that it is doing the distinguishing. Thoughts can be distinguished from each other *because* they each have their own distinct experience of what-its-likeness.

3. This, after all, was Husserl's original concern in motivating us to move away from questions about the relation between mind and body as well as epistemological questions concerning the 'external' world.

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AN ARISTOTELIAN APPROACH TO QUANTUM MECHANICS

Gil Sanders

The field of quantum mechanics (QM) and the theories produced within that field have raised some very difficult metaphysical questions about what the world is really like. This algorithm has rigorously predicted, without fail, all of the baffling behaviors of particles, yet it seems impossible that it should describe something about what the physical world's ontology is actually like. The idea of a superposition, for example, claims that a particle being measured for either a spin up state or a spin down state in the x direction is, prior to measurement, not in both states, not in neither, and not in either state. Physicists are not sure what a superposition is: they can describe it mathematically, they can account for it by negating classical logical possibilities, but what it would be like to experience a superposition defies our understanding. According to the standard interpretation of QM, the Copenhagen interpretation, once measurement occurs, the particle indeterministically collapses into either state. Without measurement, the particle operates deterministically without a definite state and/or position. The idea that prior to measurement something is in a superposition seems to be metaphysically impossible because it defies every logical category of which we can conceive, and it directly conflicts with our experience of material objects as continuously having definite properties. We have never directly observed superpositions, nor do we have a clue as to what it would even mean to observe such a state of affairs.

This has led to the notorious measurement problem. What exactly constitutes a measurement in the first place? Does collapse actually occur, and if so, how does this work? Various answers have been theorized in response to these questions by philosophers and physicists alike. The oldest and standard response is

the Copenhagen interpretation, but others like the Many-Worlds interpretation and Bohm's interpretation give answers that make different trade-offs. For every interpretation, there is some metaphysically undesirable position one must accept as a consequence of that interpretation. In addition, Bell's theorem deduced that any interpretation of QM must either affirm determinism or local causation, but not both. A great deal of the data found in QM seems to challenge typical and deeply held metaphysical intuitions. This has created a situation where some interpreters of QM prize one intuition or feature over another. Some interpret QM in a way that restores a classical, deterministic, and mechanistic picture of physical reality, but this comes at the cost of local causation, which makes spooky action at a distance possible. Others preserve local causation and as such, they embrace indeterminism, which makes causation unintelligible.

This paper contends that an Aristotelian interpretation of QM manages to avoid much of these counterintuitive implications because it preserves local causation, rejects absolute indeterminism in favor of final causality, offers qualitative insights about what superposition is, addresses the aspects of the measurement problem, explains why the micro world does not operate like the macro world, and provides a plausible ontological interpretation of the wave function. In section one I will explain in more detail what both the measurement problem and the problem of quantum entanglement are from a scientific and metaphysical perspective. Section two will provide a brief, critical overview of two major interpretations of QM—Bohm's theory and Everett's Many-Worlds—and will find them either insufficient or metaphysically undesirable. Section three will give an overview of Aristotle's metaphysics and the concepts he works with. Lastly, section four will show how Aristotelian metaphysical concepts can be applied to QM and solve the problems discussed in section one.

SECTION 1: PROBLEMS IN QUANTUM MECHANICS

The standard interpretation of QM, the Copenhagen interpretation, was founded by Bohr and Heisenberg. The first component of

this interpretation of QM is called Schrödinger Evolution. It is an equation that describes the fully linear and deterministic evolution of physical systems from one state to another when those physical systems are not being measured. A consequence of Schrödinger Evolution is that a physical system, prior to measurement, can be in a superposition of two states. This means that the system is not in both states, not in neither state, and not in either state. It is not clear what a superposition is: it can be described mathematically or accounted for by negating classical logical possibilities, but what it would be like to experience a superposition defies our understanding. The second component is called the Collapse Postulate. This postulate is probabilistic and says that a physical system in a superposition of possible quantum states indeterministically collapses into one of those quantum states when measured. Probability of measurement outcomes in this interpretation are calculated using the Born rule, which states that the probability of a certain measurement outcome for a system is equal to the square of the corresponding amplitude in the wave function. All of the experimental data in QM confirms Born's Rule, and the rule can be used to accurately predict future phenomena. The probability of collapse is not epistemic, but is essential to the basic ontology of the world. In other words, even if we had access to every detail about a physical system, it would be impossible to predict collapse with certainty because collapse is indeterministic.

A wave function is a complete mathematical description of the properties of particles (represented as state vectors) in a physical system. The standard interpretation treats the wave function as a mathematical object only and it uses the wave function and state vectors to mathematically describe superpositions. While, again, we do not know what it would be to experience a superposition, Schrödinger Evolution still correctly describes physical systems when they are not being measured. Superpositions still present a phenomenological problem: What would it phenomenologically mean for a human to observe a system that is in a superposition? The whole notion appears incoherent because human consciousness experiences singular definite states and because a superpo-

sition seems to violate the laws of logic. The collapse postulate gives us back definiteness, in a sense, because it tells us the probability for a system being in one or another definite state. This is where the measurement problem in QM comes in.

It turns out that precisely defining measurement is remarkably difficult, and this is the crux of what is known as the measurement problem. Perhaps the best way to define measurement is via some empirical event: the moment at which collapse occurs. When trying to decide between two competing theories of when collapse occurs, it is not empirically possible to determine which is correct. While a mathematical operator was discovered that, in theory, could determine the moment of collapse, the operator is impracticable because it (a) requires exact knowledge of the locations of all the particles in a system and (b) requires an impossibly sensitive measurement device. Wigner suggests that collapse occurs precisely at the level of consciousness. The conscious mind fixes its attentive eye to the entire state of affairs that it seeks to observe, thus causing the entire system (including the brain, measuring devices, and particles) to collapse. Once the conscious mind closes its attentive eye to this state of affairs the system operates under Schrödinger Evolution. Two problems with this account of measurement is first that providing a definition of consciousness is controversial and second that it gives us no account of *how* consciousness is doing this. It seems somewhat implausible to suggest that the quantum world depends on consciousness for its operation. Bohr suggested a similar solution to Wigner, but ran into a problem as well. If definite properties are a product of the mind of the observer, then a possible consequence is that quantum physics can never know the world as it *really* is. This is because whenever we observe something, our mental structure imposes its subjectivity upon reality. Another proposal is that a physical system collapses into a definite state when a microscopic system comes in contact with some macroscopic system, but this depends the problematic task of defining a macroscopic system.

Another particularly mystifying problem in the Copenhagen interpretation of QM is the entanglement problem. Whenever a

particle is measured to be spin up in the y direction you can know with certainty that another particle entangled with it will be in an opposite state, i.e., spin down in the y direction, no matter how far away the particles are from one another during measurement. This is particularly troubling because these particles have no way of "communicating" with one another: they cannot possibly be sending each other signals. Einstein was bothered by this because it seemed to imply that there is "spooky action at a distance." In other words, things can act upon each other from a distance without physical interaction of objects in between.

An aspect of QM that complicates the entanglement problem is Bell's Theorem. This theorem showed that no interpretation of QM can simultaneously include both locality and determinism as classically conceived. If locality is abandoned, then particles can act on one another at a distance without any intermediary contact between them (i.e., spooky action at a distance). If we reject determinism for locality, then the world is indeterministic and fundamentally chancy. Bell's theorem makes it difficult for any interpretation of QM to avoid the undesirable consequence of abandoning plausible metaphysical intuitions about the world.

Any adequate interpretations of QM have to be able to answer both the measurement problem and the problem of quantum entanglement. The next section will look at what two current interpretations of QM have to say.

SECTION 2: CURRENT INTERPRETATIONS OF QM

Two current interpretations of QM, Bohm's interpretation and Everett's Many-Worlds interpretation, try to solve the problems of measurement and quantum entanglement. These two approaches appeal to different metaphysical intuitions to try to solve these problems, but each approach comes with different metaphysical costs.

The standard interpretation of QM treats the wave function as only a mathematical object, but other interpretations, like Bohm's theory, treat the wave function as a real entity. Bohm's interpretation provides a completely deterministic view of reality that

preserves the ontology of classical mechanics. This view postulates that every particle in the world has a definite position, and that from knowledge of a particle's current position and its corresponding point on the wave function, we can deduce with certainty what its position will be at any future time. The wave function guides particles with definite trajectories, and Bohm compares this to the particles being like corks floating down a river, where the river is analogous to the wave function. To appreciate how strange this is, Bohm is essentially saying that the wave function really exists out there spread throughout all of space, rather than confined to just one location. This makes the theory non-local in that it allows for instantaneous interaction between particles over long distances by means of the wave function, thereby making the behavior of particles quite unlike in classical physics. Bohm's theory avoids the measurement problem because he denies that an actual collapse of the wave function ever occurs. All particles are in some definite position both prior to and after measurement. Bohm's theory also works in accord with the empirical content given by the Born rule. He reinterprets the issue of collapse by claiming that the way in which the wave function guides particles creates the empirical *appearance* of collapse. For this view, properties are not intrinsic to particles but are contextual, in that they depend on where a particle is on the wave function when it is measured.

The second view we shall cover here is Everett's Many-Worlds interpretation. This interpretation rejects that collapse is indeterministic and, in fact, rejects that collapse occurs at all. Instead, Many-Worlds claims that there is a universal wave function and that when "collapse" occurs, patterns in the wave function called branches emerge, and each branch constitutes a world. Say, for example, that a particle is in a superposition. "Collapse" of that particle in Many-Worlds would mean that upon measurement, distinct worlds come into existence in which each possible measurement outcome is manifest. If the particle were in a superposition of spin-up in the y direction and spin-down in the y direction, and it was measured, the Everettian would say that the

universe splits into two kinds of branches or parallel worlds—worlds in which the particle is spin-up in the y direction and worlds in which the particle is spin-down in the y direction. Exactly how many worlds of each kind are created at measurement is unknown. Once this split occurs, the two kinds of worlds never interact with each other. This branching happens endlessly whenever the wave function is in a superposition. The main problem with this view is that it fails to explain the empirically verified probabilities given by the Born Rule. How can there be probabilities in a theory in which every outcome is manifest? The second problem is that this approach requires a preferred basis, which is something that dictates that our world is one of the branches in the wave function. A preferred basis can be determined through a decoherence process, but decoherence has further problems (which are separate from the problem of the preferred basis). Some respond to these problems by reference to decision theory, but whether this response is successful is a matter of controversy.

Both Bohm's theory and Many-Worlds interpretation reify the wave function, which means that instead of treating it as a mere mathematical object, as the standard interpretation did, these theories claim that the wave function is a real object that exists in the world. This raises a problem for both of these theories: the question of whether or not mathematical objects *should* be reified. The next section will introduce concepts from Aristotelian metaphysics that we will then use to respond to the problems found in quantum mechanics.

SECTION 3: ARISTOTELIAN METAPHYSICS

In his metaphysics, Aristotle divides being into two kinds: being in act and being in potency. A potency, or *potentia*, is simply a thing's potential to be other than how or what it is. For example, a piece of glass has the potential to shatter or it has the potential to melt into a fluid. The potential of something depends on what kind of thing it is, so glass has the potential to shatter or melt, but other kinds of things would not have the same kinds of potentials. Something rubber, for example, has the potential to

bounce, but glass lacks this potential because glass and rubber are different kinds of things. Potency stands in contrast to actuality, or *actus*, which refers to the way a thing *actually* is here and now. Continuing the above example, the piece of glass is actually clear, sharp, and of a particular shape here and now. If and when the glass does in fact melt into a fluid, we say that the potential of the glass to melt has been actualized. For Aristotle, this is what it is for something to change: something's potential is made actual. It is important to note that glass's potential to shatter, for example, is a *real* aspect of its being, even if that potential to shatter never gets actualized. A potential should not be confused with *mere* possibility. It is possible for a unicorn to exist, but it is not possible for a piece of glass to become a unicorn because it lacks that potential. A piece of glass's actuality limits the ways it can change. Aristotle used this act-potency distinction to show where other ancient philosophers, like Parmenides or Heraclitus, went wrong in their arguments about change.

Aristotle's position is one of hylomorphism, which holds that all material substances are composed of form and matter. An Aristotelian form is a structure that makes a thing what it is. Aristotelian matter, on the other hand, is the stuff out of which something is made. For Aristotle, a form corresponds to actuality whereas matter corresponds to potency. A form gives matter definite structure and matter individuates form. For example, the form of "humanness" belongs to multiple human beings and it is what makes them human as opposed to something else. What individuates one human being from another is their matter, the stuff they are made out of. Both matter and form are irreducible components of material objects, which just means that no material object can exist without both form and matter. Matter by itself is just prime matter, which is pure potency. Pure potency cannot exist on its own, though, because without something actual, a potential has nothing to be a potential of. Form by itself is just abstract structure and it cannot be a concrete thing without some matter to inform.

One consequence of Aristotle's hylomorphism is that it does not allow for everything in the macro world to be completely

reduced to "arrangements of particles." The particles in a substance do not exist as individual substances arranged as some pattern, but rather exist only as parts of a substance. A substance here means the "essence of a thing… what it is said to be in respect of itself" (*Metaphysics* Z.4, 1029b14). A good example is H_2O. The hydrogen and the oxygen do not exist as individual substances, but rather exist as *virtual* parts of the substance that is water. The water thereby acquires powers that neither hydrogen nor oxygen have in themselves though these unique powers of water could not exist without the particular combination of hydrogen and oxygen, as opposed to some other combination. If the macro world was reducible to being mere arrangements of microscopic particles, it would be difficult to account for why magnets, for example, have the power to attract metals in a way that water cannot. If all macroscopic substances are just different arrangements of microscopic particles, how does someone account for microscopic particles having identical powers, yet arranging them differently can produce vastly different powers at the macro level? A reductionist could push back by positing different kinds of powers for different particles instead, but the Aristotelian could in turn point out that this concedes that there are hylomorphic substances at the micro level of reality, and so everything really is not reducible to just arrangements of particles.

Additionally, Aristotelian hylomorphism entails a gradual spectrum of material beings with greater degrees of potentiality to greater degrees of actuality. Something has greater actuality if it is less able to change, if it has fewer potentials. Something has higher potency if it is more able to change, if it has more potentials (and as a result of this, it is less actual). A good metaphor for this is to compare a piece of clay with a rock. The clay is more malleable, more changeable, than the rock. In order for either the clay or the rock to change, though, they have to have their potentials made actual by something that is already actual. As Aquinas argues, "potency cannot raise itself to act; it must be raised to act by something that is in act" (*Summa contra Gentiles*, I.16.3). In other words, only something that is actual can actu-

alize a potential; a potential cannot actualize itself. For example, a human hand has sufficient actuality (or power) to mold the clay. A human hand does not, however, have sufficient actuality or power to mold a rock. Something need not always have greater actuality than another thing in every respect in order to produce a change in that being. In the next section, I will show how Aristotle's metaphysical concepts can offer a plausible solution to the problems posed by Quantum Mechanics.

SECTION 4: AN ARISTOTELIAN APPROACH TO QM

Taking Aristotle's ideas seriously dissolves problems in quantum mechanics because it provides us with a richer ontology of what is real. In a paper entitled, *Taking Heisenberg's Potentia Seriously* (2017), Ruth Kastner and her colleagues argue that Aristotle "accounts naturally for the counter-intuitive features of quantum mechanics such as nonlocality, entanglement, and instantaneous collapse." Aristotle's view reinterprets superpositions as being the potentials of a thing or state, not as actual states. To say then that a particle is "not in both, not in neither, and not in either state" with respect to being either spin up or spin down in the y direction is to say that prior to measurement, it is not *actually* in both, neither, or either state. In terms of its actuality, a particle can only be in one state, but in terms of its potentials, it has the potential to actualize into a variety of states. Superpositions seem contradictory only because contrary potentials can exist in the same object. A skeptic could object that this does not explain what superpositions are physically like, but an Aristotelian would reject this demand for a physical description. If superpositions are the potentials of a thing, then it is absurd to ask for a physical description, because that is the same as demanding a purely actual description of a potential. A potential state cannot be observed in principle because it is not *actually* there to be observed, yet once it is actualized, it can no longer be observed as a potential. You can observe the contrary effects of potentiality, but you can never observe potentiality itself. This seems to map on to the problem of not being able to experience a superposition.

For Aristotle, it would not make sense to appeal to consciousness as Wigner does, because the process of actualization does not require conscious things. Unlike either Bohm's theory or Many-Worlds interpretation, Aristotelian metaphysics does not require positing new entities to solve the problems of quantum mechanics. The act-potency distinction is something that permeates throughout all levels of reality already; it is not something that is made to *fit* onto the quantum data. To compete with the richness of Aristotelian metaphysics, both Bohm's theory and Many-Worlds had to reify the wave function. When Aristotelians appeal to potencies, it is not ad hoc or excessive but is natural, thus giving it an explanatory advantage over the other two interpretations.

Aristotle's metaphysics also gives an answer to the two problems of measurement and quantum entanglement. In terms of the measurement problem, Aristotelian metaphysics frames collapse as the moment when a "quantum measurement event entails the actualization of one of the potential outcomes inherent in a pure state" (Kastner 2017). In regards to quantum entanglement, Aristotelian metaphysics allows for the actualization of certain outcomes at measurement to affect the range of potential outcomes of some other particle: "actual events can instantaneously and acausally affect what is next possible" (Kastner 2017). For example, suppose you intended to visit Los Angeles, but unbeknownst to you, an earthquake sank that traffic-ridden city into the ocean. This actualized event changed the range of potential places that I (or anyone else) could visit without acting upon other persons. In other words, actuality cannot directly alter a distant actuality without interaction, but it can instantaneously and acausally change a distant range of potentials.

CONCLUSION

As a closing note, it is absolutely fascinating that Aristotle described something like superposition over a millennium ago: "The contradictory states proceed from one and the same capacity, the matter of the thing being the cause equally of its existence and of its non-existence. Hence contradictories would be present

together in actuality" (*Metaphysics*). He even says the potential is "both alike, or neither." Measurement causing collapse is therefore just a very special case of something actualizing the potency of another thing, an occurrence that happens in the world all of the time.

A return to Aristotelian metaphysics eliminates the dilemmas of QM and restores a commonsensical view of reality that was thought to be impossible. As Feser notes, "for a cause to be sufficient to explain its effect it is not necessary that it cause it. It need only make the effect intelligible" (*Scholastic Metaphysics*, p. 135). Something need not determine an effect in order to be intelligible as a cause; it need only provide conditions that would make it likely. As Heisenberg pointed out about the probabilistic nature of the atom, "One might perhaps call it an objective tendency or possibility, a "potentia" in the sense of Aristotelian philosophy." Hopefully this shows that Aristotelianism offers an eminently plausible account of QM that should be thoughtfully considered rather than outright dismissed as "outdated" or "irrelevant." It is more relevant today than it ever was and, if allowed to, it can revolutionize our understanding of modern science.

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PRIVACY: A LAST RESORT

Fernando Cierra

It may be that people have always valued privacy in some way, but since the 20th century, it has become institutionalized in such a way that it is regulated by the state, penetrated by the market, and relinquished by the individual. This institutional configuration was caused by technological advancements that led to one's informational data becoming easily accessible to the public, which precipitated an increased concern with protecting information. As such, privacy was legally separated into two distinct, broad, and overlapping types: informational privacy and bodily privacy. Informational privacy and bodily privacy will be analyzed from the viewpoints of W. A. Parent and Catherine MacKinnon respectively, since the latter does not interrogate the ways these notions of privacy are conceptually and materially interconnected. Though these distinctions did at one point help in creating conditions conducive to securing privacy, further technological advancements have made informational privacy untenable in practice. I will begin by giving a brief historical overview of privacy in Western society, and particularly in the U.S. In Section 1, I will outline Parent's conception of privacy, his reasons for valuing privacy, and how the new digital landscape problematizes part of his conception of privacy. There are admittedly other ways of conceiving of privacy than Parent's, but I decided to focus on his conceptualization because it is the one which seems to be predominantly appealed to and maintained in society. In Section 2, I will further problematize his conception of privacy by looking at how Catherine MacKinnon conceives of the state as using privacy to materially maintain unequal gender dynamics. In Section 3, I will demonstrate how resistance sometimes operates by transgressing informational privacy and how privacy for oppressed groups is an indication of intolerable conditions. In Section 4, I will outline a

notion of intimacy that implies the need for privacy and then artic-
ulate a notion of intimacy that does not appeal to privacy whilst
maintaining the very useful insights that that notion of intimacy
allows us to have. I hope to reorient our relationship to privacy
in a way that acknowledges its weaponization against oppressed
groups.

INTRODUCTION:
THE CURRENT STATE OF PRIVACY

One of the first articulations of individual privacy as we know it
today can be expressed by saying that "the protection afforded
to thoughts, sentiments, and emotions... is merely an instance of
the enforcement of the more *general right of the individual to be
let alone*" (Warren and Brandeis 1890, p. 209, emphasis mine).
Warren and Brandeis make clear that the need for articulating a
right to privacy has to do with, among other things, the press' "over-
stepping in every direction the obvious bounds of propriety and
decency" (p. 196). This "overstepping" has only recently become
possible due to the "[recent] inventions and business methods…
[of instantaneous] photographs and newspaper enterprise" (p.
195). Put a different way, the notion of individual privacy that is
appealed to, criticized, and transformed by legislators, lawyers,
and philosophers has its origin in a tension between easier access
to and documentation of information, a tension further agitated
and solidified by the miniaturization and proliferation of new
technological gadgetry. This overstepping was avoided for a
time with the development of individual privacy in jurisprudence
and as a normative value. Beginning in 2001, however, with the
creation of a large and ever growing intelligence apparatus and the
emergence, popularity, and ubiquity of smartphones soon after,
the conditions for individual privacy as it had been conceived and
configured were fundamentally destabilized.

The state effectively did away with privacy through its vast
and secretive information collection efforts. The U.S. alone spent
75 billion dollars on intelligence in 2010 funding intelligence and

spying operations both inside and outside national borders. Every bit of information which was once thought of as protected under a rubric of individual privacy is now everyday unmasked and documented by the state. The effective conditions for privacy are further destabilized by the voluntary and semi-voluntary waiving of one's privacy rights to social media giants like Facebook and the data collection one agrees to anytime one opens an app or checks a website. In these material conditions, we are no longer concerned with being left alone, at least when considering informational privacy.

SECTION 1: PARENT ON WHY TO VALUE PRIVACY

What is gained by the individual or society when we maintain "the condition of not having undocumented personal knowledge about one possessed by others?" (Parent 1983, p. 269). To answer this, Parent first defines informational privacy via a bifurcated definition of personal information. Parent takes personal information, facts about a person that a majority of society would not want widely known, to be either *documented* or *undocumented*. *Documented* information is made up of those facts belonging to the public record. Finding someone's documented information without explicit permission does not constitute an invasion of privacy. By contrast, finding someone's *undocumented* information, made up of those facts not transcribed in the public record, without explicit permission does constitute an invasion of privacy. Parent maintains that some information, like medical records, is not technically speaking documented information despite being written down, because it does not belong to the public record. This conception of privacy implies that people have, or at least should have, a certain level of agency in choosing how others perceive them. The distinction between documented and undocumented information allows one to maintain individual agency over disclosing personal information to others. Since, according to this framework, one has at least some personal facts unknown to others, an individual can *choose* to reveal or not reveal certain information about themselves. Only undocumented information is

considered private in this schema.

Through disclosure and nondisclosure of pieces of information, an individual uses their agency to mold the image people hold of them. Though Parent does not explicitly lay out normative principles for what makes certain images of someone valid, we can at least assume that an image an individual produces of themselves is valid given: (1) that it corresponds to or is in accordance with who they think they themselves are or wish to be, and (2) that any purposeful omissions are done in order to avoid some harm to the individual or others. Imagine you are out at some party, and through idle drunken small talk, someone reveals to you that they disdain gay people and implies that they desire to act violently towards someone who is gay. You entered the party thinking it would be fine to be yourself and that if anyone asked about your orientation, you would not have to omit the fact that you are gay. It would be completely acceptable at this point, however, for you as a gay person, fearing for your physical safety or perhaps merely emotionally distressed by the disdain, to withhold the fact from the people at the party that you are yourself gay. In addition to avoiding unsafe or exploitable situations, one may simply have a *feeling* or *desire* that others are not *entitled* to have some bit of information about them. Lastly, as long as we live in intolerant societies, we will continue to *desire privacy*; this last reason will be more closely examined shortly. It should be noted that though Parent gives three reasons for valuing privacy I only consider two seriously: (1) that we value privacy because it is something we desire as a result of living in intolerant societies, and (2) that we value privacy because we simply have a feeling that others are not entitled to have some information about us. I do not take Parent's claim that privacy is valued because it allows us to avoid unsafe situations seriously on its own, because if one did not live in an intolerant society, there is very little reason to think that one would have to avoid harm in the first place. Since the kinds of unsafe situations related to informational privacy arise from living in an intolerant society, valuing privacy because it allows us to avoid harm is directly linked to living in that intolerant society. In

any case for Parent, these reasons form the basis for why people value, and will continue to value, privacy.

These values are articulated as being derivable from liberal notions of freedom and individuality, since such notions "[express] *our conviction* that privacy should only be infringed under exigent circumstances and for the most compelling reasons" (p. 278, emphasis mine). This is especially clear when one considers state interventions on privacy, because liberal notions of the state dictate that the state should limit itself in order for citizens to have freedom from it. In addition, the state's regulatory efforts towards and intrusions into personal information, both documented and undocumented, are allowed to the extent that they secure the general welfare. This creates a situation in which the state, businesses, and individuals no longer *really* violate informational privacy because we (1) give consent to the liberal state to ensure security and (2) have ourselves and our personal information given away or documented in an open space. There are certainly limits to or criteria constituting legitimate state intrusion outside the public domain in liberal theories, but since modern states are so fundamentally influenced by capitalist interests, they fail in adequately responding to the concerns of its citizens. For instance, in the United States, corporations have a constitutionally protected right to free speech, which allows them to donate massive amounts of money to political campaigns, swaying elections, and ultimately whatever other interests are being responsively attended to. This sort of deep intermeshing between the state and business interests allows for the creation of a state whose social contract is based around its relationship between corporations and not the people. As such, in its current incarnation the liberal state is fulfilling its obligation to its 'citizens,' which are corporate entities, by operating such massive data collection operations. Because the state privileges corporate interests above citizen interests, it will continually fail in ensuring any of our interests when they antagonize large corporate interests. Data collection being a large corporate interest, since it is such a valued commodity, means that the state in a liberal form cannot and will

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not secure the people's interest in privacy. But because the liberal state also props up capitalism as the only viable economic form, it makes no sense to appeal to liberal values in order to maintain privacy. Furthermore, since individuals have allowed their information to be documented in public mediums or easily accessible locations, and since it is not just any trivial information but a vast amount of information which significantly molds images people hold of others, no actual violation of privacy is taking place. The information that the state collects is justified by an appeal to security, but when we ask "security for whom?" we can see that individuals are not whom the state has a duty to in its current form. So, the state is not violating the interests of its subjects.

What constitutes the demarcation between information that significantly molds one's public image and information that is trivial is vague. I would like to show, however, that this vagueness does not mean we cannot point to clear instances of 'trivial information' significantly molding a person's self-image, such that others cannot help but interpret a person with that information in mind. On any given day, Facebook processes more than 500 terabytes of data. This includes information gleaned from user activity both on and outside of their website. Using this information, information gathered from third parties, and information available in public records—credit card transactions, automobile ownership records, etc.—Facebook sells an ad service. The ad service's main appeal is having an unprecedented potential for direct targeting. Some of what Facebook directly collects or infers from this data ranges from whether one is a homeowner and what kind, whether one is an expectant parent, if someone has a new job, if someone is likely to engage politically, whether one has credit lines open and how many they have open, or if one is an expat and from which country. This is a very short list of the things which Facebook, and presumably most other large internet companies like Google, Snapchat, or Tinder, collect of you. All this information is then spread to and maintained at various data centers throughout the world. These data centers are physically protected by security systems and armed guards, and the informa-

tion is digitally encrypted. Despite all these protective measures, there is never a guarantee that the data will not be accessed by some actor, whether they are an individual hacker or a group of hackers working for some state. For instance, Yahoo admitted in 2016 to having been hacked in 2013 and 2014. The names, dates of birth, email addresses and passwords of its users were among the information gathered from at least 1 billion people. To make matters worse, most people do not follow good security protocols for protecting their information. A common online security practice is to use the same password for every website and to keep it unchanged for large stretches of time, thus allowing easy access to one's entire online presence.

This level of information collection and the ease with which it is carried out entails that all the information we store online, even if it is behind a password of some kind, can be considered effectively *documented*. Furthermore, because this information is always being linked up with other information to get a more exact portrait of you to be used by advertisers, thus affecting how large segments of society view and behave towards you, it significantly molds one's image. The significance of the image is that it is who people think you are, which predisposes them to behaving towards you in particular ways. In a very important social sense, you are your image. This new kind of documented information, our online personas, has come to be very influential in how businesses, the state, and individuals see us. When someone acquires this information and then interacts with an individual with that information in mind, it could be said that the information has significantly molded one's notion of that individual. Since most of this information is given up willingly, it cannot be protected under Parent's notion of undocumented information.

This means that one of the major reasons given by Parent as to why we should value privacy is no longer applicable. In addition to this, it also seems no longer tenable to pursue informational privacy in practice, unless one wishes to completely disconnect from the internet. This implies that our desire for privacy is waning, so much so that we in fact do not have the feeling or desire

that others should not know certain bits of information about us. When that reason is gone, it seems that the only other reason left for valuing privacy is because we want to avoid harmful situations that arise when one lives in an intolerant society. It is this reason that drives the reaction to this new documented world, one that usually takes the form of using the state to better ensure privacy conditions like Parent's or other conditions very close to Parent's. In the following I will outline why, even if it were not the case that our important information was documented, rebuilding informational privacy through the state may be particularly bad for oppressed people because it actually reinforces intolerance.

Section 2: MacKinnon, Privacy, and the State

In *Toward a Feminist Theory of the State* Catharine MacKinnon develops a new theory of the state which takes women as its primary actors and point of analysis. It differs in this respect from liberal theories of the state, which privilege a universal man, and Marxist theories of the state, which construe the state as both a mediating power and something mediated by class actors. The state for MacKinnon primarily acts through the law. This means that to understand the state from a feminist point of view requires one to understand the gendered form of the law. This ultimately leads one to the conclusion that the law is representational of a male viewpoint. Put another way, it means that one particular group of people—women—live in an intolerable society.

MacKinnon writes, "Formally, the state is male in that objectivity is its norm" (MacKinnon 1989, p. 162). MacKinnon finds that Anglo-American jurisprudence is underpinned by a desire to be an objective institution, which is to say that it wishes to act and be perceived as a *rational* institution. To act rationally in this case means to abstract particular subject positions and to act and analyze from a "point-of-viewlessness" (Ibid.). The law refuses to articulate itself around *particular* subjects. The law refuses to do so because the liberal-constitutional model of the Western

state values and pursues negative freedom. Negative freedom, or liberty, entails that one is free from being acted upon by the state and other individuals. This is opposed to a model of positive liberty that would value being free to act and would attempt to foster a society in which the individual has power over themselves and others. In practice, this would entail that the state would be far more proactive in maintaining living conditions, such as by guaranteeing healthcare or a living wage, so that people could have as much autonomy as possible. This duality does not operate in a totalizing manner in the actual world, however. Rather, the state acts disproportionately in securing negative freedom over positive freedom. MacKinnon argues that since the state ignores the fact that women have been subjugated *prior* to its founding, gendered hierarchies which existed before its creation remain materially constituted within society. In practice, the state's valuing of negative freedom over positive freedom allows males, who already enjoyed positive liberty prior to the creation of the state, to have control over not merely themselves but women as well.

One way in which this hierarchical relationship manifests itself can be understood through the notion of privacy. Privacy "*embodies* a tension between precluding public exposure or governmental intrusion on the one hand, and autonomy in the sense of protecting personal self-action on the other" (p. 187, emphasis mine). The state in its liberal form relieves this tension by marking a clear zone of privacy. It is assumed in this space that individuals in it are truly free to act. This zone is made up of the home and individual bodies; these are the lines which the state cannot cross in any manner. For the liberal state, to cross these lines, even in a positive manner to secure an individual's right to act, is to act against liberty. As MacKinnon points out, however, when this concerns women's bodies, privacy instead translates the rhetoric of individual rights as a means of subordinating those rights to specific male interest, such as by maintaining economic control over women's bodies. MacKinnon points to the appeal to privacy in American jurisprudence as a way to guarantee de jure access to abortion as an instance of this translation. Even though

the right to abortion is protected under a right to privacy over one's body, it is not any *particular* body which is given protection. It is instead strictly a gender neutral 'body' which is given access to privacy rights. Given that it is the female body which lacks access to privacy, this body neutral account fails to articulate abortion as a women's issue. It only articulates it as an issue of the abstract 'body,' which allows the state to circumvent access to abortions by women. By appealing to the state's aim to only guarantee negative liberty, all that is guaranteed is a right to make the choice. *Funding*, and therefore actual access, is not guaranteed.

Here we arrive at the crux of the issues. Though privacy is valued by someone like Parent in a liberal model of the state, that model does nothing to acknowledge the ways in which privacy is weaponized against particular bodies by the state and dominant groups. MacKinnon focuses exclusively on the female body, but one can easily extend her analysis to racialized bodies and/or queer bodies. What I more generally claim, however, is that the Western state's assumption that the abstract human body must necessarily be afforded privacy has usually only applied to particular bodies: rich, white, straight, and/or male ones. Given this, the ideal of privacy, as articulated by someone like Parent, does not operate on oppressed bodies in the same way that it does on oppressing bodies. For the dominant class, privacy is a "sword:" it secures one's ability to act on others and be self-determinate in private. For the oppressed class, however, privacy is at worst something weaponized against them and at best used as a "shield" in order to merely continue existing in an oppressive environment. Given the disproportionate way in which privacy is wielded as a weapon at a structural level, we cannot accept the way Parent positions the desire for privacy as arising due to intolerable societies, because sometimes it is privacy that produces an intolerable society.

SECTION 3: PRIVACY, RESISTANCE, AND DISPROPORTIONALITY

There are other ways of conceiving of privacy than how Parent

articulates it. I focused on his conceptualization, however, because it is the one which seems to be predominantly appealed to and maintained by the general public, the state, and businesses. I have attempted to show so far that as an ideal to strive towards, this conception of privacy fails in three big ways. The first is that the conditions we currently inhabit are such that the distinction between documented and undocumented information no longer applies to information in a meaningful way. The second is that even when it did, or if it did, it only was ever applicable to particular persons and not always to those who needed it most. The last is that privacy is often weaponized, particularly by the state, in order to oppress particular groups of people. In the following, I will draw out the ways in which privacy is sometimes directly transgressed as an act of resistance, and I will show what is assumed when someone who is oppressed appeals to privacy.

There is a certain type of resistance politics that can be understood in terms of visibility. Take the #metoo movement, which developed in the fall of 2017 after a wealthy white actress tweeted it out. The movement aimed, as a first step, to publicly document instances of sexual assault or harassment which had been previously kept undocumented. Put another way, the #metoo movement actively attacked and transgressed the privacy of certain people. This was necessary because the people, usually men, who assaulted those who were publicly coming forward used privacy as a way to protect themselves from any repercussions for their actions. In contrast, when privacy is appealed to by an oppressed group of people, it is never as easy or effective as it is for the dominating group. Men may freely act on women via an appeal to privacy, but women may only use privacy to protect their person. I do not mean to say this is not an important use of privacy, but I want to note how it is used disproportionately harmfully by the oppressing class. In this sense, privacy is not a universal good as usually presupposed. Furthermore, even when an oppressed group makes an appeal to privacy in order to protect their persons, it is not always guaranteed to work. Privacy for the oppressed is only effective insofar as *their oppressor accepts that claim to privacy.*

It should be noted that appeals to privacy are used primarily to maintain one's physical integrity or existence and that the importance of informational privacy is secondary to this. My claim that we should devalue privacy stems from the fact that privacy only works in favor of oppressed people if their oppressor *allows* them their privacy and if they have a certain level of power over their own bodies. One may reply to me that we need not devalue privacy, but we should instead better enforce it. This seems like a better suggestion, and strategically this may make sense at times. If we admit, however, that for the oppressed class privacy manifests as a weapon used against them at worst and a last line of defense against oppression at best, then it does not make sense to pursue it as an ideal for or actual solution to resolving oppressive conditions. Privacy, as MacKinnon points out, serves to maintain the already existing power dynamics and keep material conditions unchanged. The final reason given by Parent for valuing privacy then cannot stand, since instead of making conditions more tolerable, privacy is systematically used to oppress people and create/reproduce an intolerable society.

SECTION 4: INTIMACY AND TRUST

Instead of viewing ourselves as private objects, we can instead attempt to implement new standards for our bodies. Talia Bettcher develops a notion of interpersonal spatiality, arguing "that some encounters between people are intimate and some are not and that all sensory/discursive encounters can be characterized in terms of degrees of intimacy or lack thereof" (Bettcher Forthcoming, p. 6). Interpersonal spatiality is a system of boundaries constituted by culturally relative norms. For instance, I have a friend named Bob, and because we are somewhat close friends, I can tell Bob how my day went. Nevertheless, we are not *very close*. It would be inappropriate, morally speaking, for me to describe my genitals to him in the same way I would talk about the weather with him. In a different kind of relationship, however—such as in a romantic one with my partner—that sort of informational disclosure about my genitals may not be morally inappropriate, because we are

very close and, thus, our *boundaries* are different. For Bettcher, allowing one access through these boundaries is how intimacy is even possible; we would no longer have intimacy without them, since there would be nothing differentiating our intimate relationships from our non-intimate relationships. This view seems to present a problem for my view that privacy is not good for oppressed people, since this view implies that it is necessary for one to have both informational privacy and bodily privacy in order to construct the boundaries necessary for intimacy. In response to this, I want to present two alternative ways of conceiving of boundaries and intimacy, neither of which rely on the notion of privacy.

We can approach this by first acknowledging that the privacy necessary for the sort of intimacy described by Bettcher is already materially gone. When we are approaching the point of being able to visually replicate with perfect detail someone's physical person—that is, being able to perfectly replicate a sensory encounter with someone—even boundaries around physical privacy may soon be fully dissolved. Given that this may turn out to be true, I suggest we may still have intimacy through a *simulated* experience of it. I may have knowledge of one's personal and physical attributes, but I can still experience intimacy with them because *they can choose* to share themselves with me. This encounter with someone, in which they choose to disclose something to me even if I knew it beforehand, still produces a *feeling of intimacy*. This is because what constitutes the intimacy is this encounter with someone in a particular context, like that of a date. Imagine Rebecca meets Midori on a dating app, and they both look through the other's social media accounts. In it, they discover all the little quirks, likes, dislikes, and personal stories about the other. When they meet on their first date, they start discussing music, movies, and hobbies. The fact is they both *already know* what the other does and does not like, but they still perform this intimate dance. The experience of intimacy is brought about by this social dance. It is a simulated experience of intimacy, but it is nonetheless also *real*. Not having privacy does not mean that

this intimacy from traversing boundaries cannot be produced; it merely means that one already knows what is on the other side of those boundaries. Nonetheless, the *gesture* itself of traversal may still be performed to produce a kind of intimacy that allows for people to be close.

We may even go a step further and maintain intimacy without an appeal to privacy by articulating it around a notion of *trust* instead. Instead of understanding the boundaries we set as allowing or disallowing epistemological or sensory access to somebody, we may instead view boundaries as constructed by the degree of trust someone has in another individual. There can still be a mechanism of disclosure that occurs with trusting boundaries, but it is not dependent on whether one has knowledge of some fact: rather, it is dependent on how much one desires the other person to encounter them. This is different than outright simulation, because we are not attempting to capture a particular experience of intimacy in this framework. We are still engaging in a constructive endeavor whenever we engage with people and *desire to be intimate*.

Both of these approaches produce a different kind of intimacy, however they are no less valuable than each other as different ways to understand our close relationships. Furthermore, they are both compatible to some extent with Bettcher's notions of interpersonal spatiality and traversing boundaries, since there are still some kinds of boundaries being created and traversed.

CONCLUSION

A world without informational privacy *seems* quite scary to most people, but when we have examined how privacy has functioned as a tool for oppression, it shifts our appreciation for it. We begin to see how it is sometimes quite antithetical to living a good life where one is free to act. This perspective clarifies that the importance of informational privacy materially rests on avoiding harm to particular bodies or exerting power over other bodies. In a world where informational privacy is nonexistent, however, not only can we still maintain a full and rich life, but we can also build

more avenues of resistance against oppression.

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SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR: UNA CUENTA PARA EL MÚLTIPLO, AN ACCOUNT FOR THE MULTIPLE

Ana Arias

INTRODUCTION

Simone de Beauvoir's words, "He is the Subject, he is the Absolute—she is the Other" (Beauvoir 2009, p. 32), are profound. She pronounces the Subject and the Other as inseparable parts of an extraordinary ontological perspective on being. It simultaneously serves as a principle for feminist philosophy and as a challenge for work done by Latina feminists. Some, such as Maria Lugones with "world-traveling" and Gloría Anzaldúa with "in-betweenness," view the self in an entirely different fashion, one that came about through efforts in exploring Latina identity and inspired Mariana Ortega's concept of "the multiplicitous."[1] In "Phenomenological Encuentros: Existential Phenomenology and Latina American & US Latina Feminism," Ortega draws attention to the depiction of the Other by Latina feminists and feminists of color by stating the following:

> In my view, it is U.S. Latina feminists and other feminists of color who are truly committed to phenomenological investigations, given their analysis of the lived experience of multicultural, multiplicitous selves. But more needs to be done. Not only are we obliged to include the "other" about which so much theory is written, but also, we need to affirm that this so-called "other" is here in flesh and blood—in universities, conference hotels, restaurants, places of leisure. This so-called "other" is there—writing theory, teaching, cleaning houses, cooking, crossing borders. (Ortega 2006, p. 61)

In short, if "lived experience" is understood through "the multiplicitous," the Other must encompass every aspect of Latina identity, no matter how varied. For Stephanie River Berruz, Simone de Beauvoir's Other doesn't abide to "the multiplicitous." In "At the Crossroads: Latina Identity and Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*," Berruz argues that de Beauvoir's Hegelian Master/Slave analogy—using the relationship between African American slaves and White males to describe the relationship between "the Subject" and "the Other"—is stuck in a black-white paradigm. Under this paradigm, Berruz says that the Other, though the object of both racial and gendered oppression, is only understood through the "black-white binary."[2] Thus, if the analogy is central to the philosophical framework of *The Second Sex*, then Berruz suggests this black-white paradigm is a necessary feature to the concept of the Other, which makes the Other incapable of perceiving the Latina identity and unable to account for "the multiplicitous."

On the contrary, I think Berruz is missing a crucial component in her interpretation of the Other: the notion of a *being* that is separate from race and gender. The master/slave analogy describes the phenomenon of the Other as constructed via "The Eternal Feminine."[3] Inspired by the slaves' transcendence of slavery, de Beauvoir's methodology for the Other is to transcend such categories as race, gender, class, or age that would be deemed oppressive and essentializing. Thus, Berruz's interpretation of de Beauvoir's methodology creates an underlying issue in terms of "the multiplicitous:" Berruz contributes to the essentializing of Latina identity. In this paper, I will refute Berruz's argument against de Beauvoir's master/slave framework by demonstrating her interpretation of the Other as an essentializing move.

In Section I, I will begin analyzing de Beauvoir's master/slave analogy and list the issues in Berruz's interpretation of it. In Section II, in opposition to Berruz's account, I will list feminist theorists who take de Beauvoir's framework to be beneficial for doing work on Latina identity. Finally, in Section III, I will provide an in-essentialist defense of identity, and I will thus call upon Latina feminists to reflect on both "the multiplicitous" and

the Other carefully. By doing so, I will conclude that de Beauvoir's ontological and in-essentialist beliefs are crucial when accounting for "the multiplicitous" and Latina identity.

SECTION I: BERRUZ'S CRITICISMS OF THE MASTER/SLAVE ANALOGY AND THE OTHER

Berruz suggests that de Beauvoir's concept of the Other has to be reconfigured in order to account for Latina identity. She argues, "in order to advance her claims about the oppression of women, Beauvoir makes use of the race/gender analogy that necessarily compares the plight of the American black (male) slave to the 'typical' female 'other'" (Berruz 2016, p. 320). In this way, Berruz says the comparison intends to illuminate the alterity inherent in the situation of the woman by comparing it to the situation of the slave. The framework ultimately restricts an understanding of identity, because race and racism in *The Second Sex* seem to function only as comparative tools for understanding the situation of woman. By doing so, Berruz claims, "*The Second Sex* presumes a separation between race and gender that cannot account for multiplicity. Furthermore, the framework functions alongside the black-white binary, which therefore makes it difficult to articulate the racialized dimensions of identity" (Berruz 2016, p. 320).

Berruz's claims are quite similar to Margaret Simons' claims in her article, "Racism and Feminism: A Schism in the Sisterhood." Like Berruz, Simons finds de Beauvoir relying on a complex series of comparisons between racism and woman's oppression. Simons reads de Beauvoir's framework in terms of the master/slave relationship described by Hegel in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. The dialectic describes a relationship between a slave and a master. The slave—a dependent and oppressed consciousness—will come to self-consciousness once it becomes independent. Soon, the master comes to realize his dependence on the slave, and the two establish a reciprocal relationship. De Beauvoir writes,

The master and slave are also linked by a reciprocal

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economic need that does not free the slave. That is, in the master/slave relation, the master does not *posit* the need he has for the other; he holds the power to satisfy this need and does not mediate it; the slave, on the other hand, out of dependence, hope, or fear, internalizes his need for the master; however equally compelling the need may be to them both, it always plays in favor of the oppressor over the oppressed. (Beauvoir 2009, p. 34)

Simons argues that the slave's dependence on the master is considered analogous to the relationship between woman and man; this detail remains as part of de Beauvoir's analysis of woman's historical situation. However, the reciprocity established between the woman's relationship to the man does not exactly operate through the Hegelian dialectic. The situation of women is comparable to the condition of the Hegelian Other in the following sense. Men identify themselves as the Subject, and they use their absolute transcendence to measure women and define them as inferior—as the Other. Inadequacies of women are then used to justify maintaining them as the inferior Other and treating them accordingly. Due to this, women are unable to identify their origin or shared history *as* women, which would allow them to re-establish themselves as Subjects. The man shares no dependent attachment to the woman in the process of defining himself as Subject, but the woman is necessarily dependent on the man when defined as Other. In this dependence, the woman lacks the concrete means for attaining her autonomy—she identifies herself in terms of the differences set up by the oppressors (i.e., as white or black women, as working-class or middle class women, or as Christian or Jewish women, etc.) rather than in terms of other women point blank. Based on Levi-Strauss's analysis in *Elementary Structures of Kinship*, de Beauvoir argues that women have never had the power in any society and that they have never been able to contribute to the shaping of culture through productive labor, something that has historically defined man's experience. However, Simons finds this analogy as an insufficient description

of the oppression of women.

> The master and slave, engaged in human activities, are thus, in de Beauvoir's view, essentially similar and yet radically dissimilar to woman, who is confined to a lower, animal like life. And the male/female relationship thus forms a more radical opposition, in de Beauvoir's view, than does the master/slave relationship, although women are offered privileges, denied to slaves, which mitigate the oppressiveness of their subordinate position. (Simons 2001, p. 386)

Simons considers the comparison between slavery and woman's oppression to be a prominent issue. She claims de Beauvoir ignores the existence of ethnocentrism by not acknowledging the mitigation of oppression a woman as Other might acquire through certain privileges and the slave's failure to acquire any said privileges. In this case, de Beauvoir's explanation of slavery is an inadequate one, because without acknowledging ethnocentrism, her framework fails to account for the factors that divide women of different races. Simons' claim is similar to Berruz's claim about the master/slave analogy and Latina identity.

Berruz's understanding of the master/slave analogy is an intersectional approach to race and gender oppression. She finds one particular issue with the language in one of de Beauvoir's footnotes. De Beauvoir says, "We will examine this evolution in the Western world. The history of the woman in the East, in India, and in China, was one of the long and immutable slavery. From the middle ages to today we will center this study on France, where the situation is typical" (Beauvoir 2009, p. 89). Berruz claims that the usage of "typical" in the footnote restricts the scope of the Other to Euro-Western women, which indicates a disinterest with "not-typical" women. Berruz denotes "not-typical" women as women of color, suggesting that the master/slave analogy is both working under a black-white binary and cannot perceive "the multiplicitous."

Both Simons' and Berruz's arguments express a common

criticism against *The Second Sex*. However, a problem with this type of criticism is that it doesn't address the ontology of the Other in Beauvoir's framework. Further, Berruz's criticism fails to address de Beauvoir's account of the Subject. She doesn't state the significance of the constitution of the Other; she doesn't account for the fact that transcendence requires the Other to define itself as a Subject. In addition to the analogy, de Beauvoir maintains that human existence is made up of an ambiguous relationship between transcendence and immanence. Yet, men have had the privilege throughout history to express their transcendence, whereas women are coerced into giving in to immanence:

> She is determined and differentiated in relation to man, while he is not in relation to her; she is the inessential in front of the essential. He is the Subject; he is the Absolute. She is the Other. (Beauvoir 2009, p. 32)

Here, I want to address how de Beauvoir's account bears on "the multiplicitous" by illustrating her work critiquing the notion of the Eternal Feminine, a notion that lends itself to immanence. We should not ignore Beauvoir's commitment to absolute ontological freedom: *being* is free. This freedom is what allows the Other to move towards transcendence, as it allows one the freedom to identify differently than how they are. De Beauvoir intends to say that every individual, regardless of their social classification, should be encouraged to freely define themselves and to take on the responsibility that comes with this freedom. This requires us to focus on the existent situated individual within the ambiguity of existence.[4] The Other must find the meaning of being in the world by establishing its own freedom. Berruz's intersectional approach not only misinterprets de Beauvoir's methodology, it also has an underlying problem in dealing with "the multiplicitous:" it restricts the individual freedom present in Beauvoir's conception of the Other by essentializing the Other.

Instead of using an intersectional approach, Elizabeth Spelman's discussion of the inessential woman allows us to better understand both the Other and the master/slave analogy. If we

consider the analogy to be central to the framework in *The Second Sex* as Berruz intended, we must still then understand *how* de Beauvoir uses such an analogy. Spelman finds de Beauvoir to be notable in insisting that women aspire to a meaningful existence; so, merely analyzing *The Second Sex* in terms of race and class does not suffice. Spelman states,

> De Beauvoir is a great thinker of great perspicacity, so to explain the discrepancy simply in terms of a kind of race and class privilege that makes it easy for her to think of her own experience as representative of the experience of others is not enough. We need to ask what it might be in the language or methodology or theory employed by de Beauvoir that enables her to disguise from herself the assertion of privilege she so keenly saw in women of her own position. (Spelman 1988, p. 58)

If we are to analyze de Beauvoir's master/slave analogy, we have to do so in a way that makes clear her methodology and language.

By interpreting de Beauvoir's notions of the Other and the master/slave analogy through an intersectional framework, Berruz can say that Latina identity is imperceptible to and excluded from this notion of the Other. For Spelman, this would not do. While Berruz may see de Beauvoir's assessment of the lives of women as restricted to Euro-Western women, we need to also be able to talk about women's lives according to woman's situation. Spelman warns us about the risks that de Beauvoir's framework carries in overgeneralizing women's experiences. Claims made about women may be true about *one* group of women in some time and place, but it is misleading to take these claims to be about *all* women in *all* times and places. This observation of difference in women's situations suggests that de Beauvoir's general theoretical account of woman's situation has certain limitations, but these are not the same limitations that Berruz suggests. Berruz fails to address overgeneralization as a risk in Beauvoir's framework by focusing too narrowly on the master/slave analogy and interpreting it as simply a direct analogy to racial and gendered oppression.

Rather, the master/slave analogy demonstrates the importance of recognizing the role of social institutions that have historically shaped what it means for us to live as Other. For example, de Beauvoir reminds us that the Other is a fundamental category of human thought. Every group defines an Other group in relation to itself in order to define itself. Even though women with race and class privileges are defined as Other by white or affluent men, the same women can still define women of color and/or poor women as Other in relation to themselves. Being defined as Other does not preclude one from defining *another* person or group as Other. Recall Simons' interpretation of the master/slave analogy, where she argues that the analogy *does* ignore ethnocentrism. It seems, however, that given the above example, de Beauvoir in her framework accounts for the fact that upper class, white, Euro-Western women—including someone like herself—can be complicit in ethnocentrism and classism. To recognize race and class privilege is to identify the immanence of the Other in all its multiplicity. De Beauvoir shows that we have a responsibility in being free: to transcend beyond this sort of immanence must entail that we transcend with one another from different oppressive situations so that we can freely define what it means to be our selves and "multiple selves."

SECTION II: "THE MULTIPLICITOUS" AND SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR'S OTHER

We now understand the significance of *being* with regards to the notions of the Other, self, transcendence, and immanence. We must now try to understand what significance the Other has for "the multiplicitous." We begin with Mariana Ortega's book, *In-between: Latina Feminist Phenomenology, Multiplicity, and The Self*. Inspired by Lugones' concept of "world-traveling" and Anzaldúa's concept of "in-betweenness," and by adopting aspects of Heideggerian phenomenology, Ortega's concept of "the multiplicitous" intends to describe the Latina experience: it attends to issues of intersectionality and discloses the gendered-

racialized (mestizaje/mulataje)[5] aspects of Latina(o)s' lives. She does not intend to suggest that Latina feminists' discussions of selfhood and "the multiplicitous" have to only fit in Heidegger's or de Beauvoir's frameworks; Rather, she wants to broaden the conceptual scope of "the multiplicitous" in order to enable various Latina theorists to share their theoretical differences as "multiple selves." But "the multiplicitous" isn't the only model that can do this. Some theorists share their differences under the influence of de Beauvoir: Graciela Hierro and María Luisa Femenías are two such examples the works of which Ortega mentions.

In "Phenomenological Encuentros: Existential Phenomenology and Latin American & U.S. Latina Feminism," Ortega notes the significance of Simone de Beauvoir for work on Latina identity in Latin America, noting Graciela Hierro's work. Inspired by de Beauvoir's work on the Other, Hierro has made a life-long commitment to study the condition of woman. She takes "la experiencia vivida," or lived experience, as her point of departure and takes Beauvoir's "being for-other" to be central to the woman's condition. She states, "It is important to clarify that the point of departure of my thinking is lived experience and the moral views that it prompts. In my view, the main category applicable to the feminine condition is the one expounded by Simone de Beauvoir in *The Second Sex*, being for-other" (Ortega 2006, p. 56). Hierro's analysis of cultural factors—for example, understandings of biological difference and the mystification of feminine identity—as well as factors of the basic formation of norms like masculine subjugation demonstrates how women are dominated, considered inferior, and relegated to their reproductive and domestic roles in Latin America. Rather than simply talking about the Other, Hierro instead describes the action of educating women on the cultural factors of women's oppression as "being-for-others." Thus, Hierro's relationship with de Beauvoir consists in a vital elaboration on the lived experience of both the Other and "the multiplicitous."

Another theorist noted by Ortega is María Luisa Femenías, who also introduced Latin American feminists to de Beauvoir's work on the Other. She writes about women's issues and theo-

retical discussions of gender and subjectivity in her text, "Sobre sujeto y género. Lecturas feministas desde Beauvoir a Butler."[6] Femenías analyzes the role the Other plays in feminist theories and provides an interpretation of de Beauvoir's framework in her own concept of "las hijas de Beauvoir." The "daughters" of Beauvoir fall into two categories: (1) the ones who defend identity and subjectivity and, thus, seek legitimacy in masculine culture; and (2) postmodern feminists who reject this process of legitimization. Between these two groups, Femenías concludes that "identity or difference" is a false antithesis and argues instead for "difference in identity." Therefore, Femenías finds that theories that appeal to "difference" are still tied to norms and values that are universalizable, and thus, there is a relation of inseparability between identity and difference that cannot be overlooked if we are thinking of these terms as instruments for action and change in women's conditions rather than as abstract principles.

Overall, Hierro and Femenías elaborated on de Beauvoir's work in ways that also develop the Latina identity, continuing de Beauvoir's legacy as a positive reinforcement to "the multiplicitous." So, why would this concern Berruz's analysis of *The Second Sex*? Why would this matter now if we have gotten this far in understanding de Beauvoir's master/slave analogy? There is a universalizing language underlying Berruz's analysis of de Beauvoir's concepts. Due to how the model of "the multiplicitous" involves intersectionality and asserting gendered and racialized aspects of Latina experience, Berruz's analysis of the master/slave analogy insinuates a universal Latina identity. Universalizing the Latina identity is universalizing "the multiplicitous," which identifies a single Latina experience and voice rather than many Latina experiences and voices. I consider this universalizing of identity as a feature of "the multiplicitous" as elaborated on by Berruz.

Section III:
The In-essentialist Simone De Beauvoir and The Essentializing Multiplicitous Identity

Earlier in the discussion, I mentioned Spelman analyzing de Beauvoir's framework in terms of her language and methodology. In Section I., we saw how ontological freedom and transcendence are significant for the Other. In Section II., we discussed two other Latina feminists' adoption of de Beauvoir in their philosophical studies, and we evaluated Berruz's concept of "the multiplicitous." That being said, Berruz's approach to the Other involves using "the multiplicitous" as a model for Latina identity, experience, and Otherness. How the model uses intersectionality, asserting both gender and race as aspects of Latina experience, can essentialize Latina identity. Intersectionality can describe women of color as standing in both categories of race and gender together such that their experiences are not merely those of racial oppression or gender oppression alone. Berruz, Latina phenomenological feminists, and others all use this notion of intersectionality to account for "the multiplicitous." However, de Beauvoir wants to understand the *being* of the Other without reference to social categories. So, does "the multiplicitous" use of intersectionality make *being* imperceptible? To an in-essentialist, such as Angela Harris in "Race and Essentialism in Legal Theory," this way of identifying "the multiplicitous" falls into both "gender and racial essentialism." Gender essentialism is the notion that some "essential" woman's experience can be isolated and described independent of race, class, sexual orientation, etc. Racial essentialism is the belief that there is a monolithic and essential racial experience—for example, the Latina Experience™. I see "the multiplicitous" as falling into both "gender and racial essentialism" in describing the Other and Latina identity. Harris describes these essentialisms in two examples: the story *Funes the Memorious* and the constitutional declaration "We the People."

In *Funes the Memorious*, the story begins with the narrator retelling the unfortunate tale of Funes. On his initial visit with

Funes, Funes reflects to the narrator on different lived experiences: experiences from when he lived as an ordinary young man to experiences of becoming paralyzed from a horse riding accident. Funes had many memories that stemmed from this horrific event; however, the memories required a whole day to reconstruct. Thus, Funes invented his own numbering systems to help recall each memory. Once describing in detail each numbering system and its terms to the narrator, the narrator was perplexed. Each term would be coherent in one numbering system but incoherent in another numbering system. Instead of being receptive to the narrator's confusion regarding the numbering systems, Funes refused to understand his perplexity and left. The moral of the story is that the narrator's understanding of Funes' experiences is infinitely more unique than Funes' understanding to his own experiences. For Funes, his language is merely a unique and private system of classification. Describing multiple experiences cannot create and reinforce a community if each experience uniquely serves a particular system of classification. Applying this to feminist theories, if one creates a system based off of their own "lived experience" that is incomprehensible to someone who lives a different "lived experience," then a model like "the multiplicitous" is no different from Funes' system of classification. "The multiplicitous" is using intersectionality as a part of its system, which serves to misunderstand multiple experiences as a singular experience. If each intersectional experience is uniquely lived, then how can it be possible to comprehend each of them? One can't immediately relate to another by asserting race and gender as a part of the general Latina experience. The assertion would amount to collapsing different Latina experiences into a single Latina experience, and thus, it falls into gender essentialism.

The second example describes the monolithic voice in the Declaration of Independence ("We the People"). Harris suggests we can view the voice saying "We the People" to be the unanimous, singular voice of "thirteen united states" and of their "people." This voice addresses a universal audience that is located neither in space nor time, a voice that purports to know about the "course of

human events." Since the country expanding to 50 states, "We the People" encompasses "an entire and united nation," and in doing so, the constitution collapses all the different people of the country into a universal, uniform group. "We the People" is now a singular identity that represents all the people in the U.S., including the reader, as an act of self-constitution. The issue is that "We the People" originally consisted in constructing the American identity of only the white male population of the first thirteen states, excluding others (women, people of color, and/or women of color) from entering this universal domain. Right now, "The People" is supposed to encompass all Americans and the reader to identify as a singular identity, which consequently silences different groups of people. "The multiplicitous" can function in the same way for Latina women that "We the People" does for all of those living in the U.S. When the general category of Latina women encompasses multiple different Latin races, it can't be used to define all different Latina experiences. "The multiplicitous" singularly claims all Latinas to experience their Latina identity in the same way. Thus, this approach would fall into racial essentialism.

Harris finds both of these examples—the story of Funes and the declaration "We the People"—to depend on silencing others. In these examples, the metaphorical "voice" implies a single universalizing voice that is commonly expressed in "gender and racial essentialism." To be fully subversive, Harris suggests that feminist methodology should challenge the universalizing voice present in our theories, since this voice reduces the complexity in the lives of people who experience multiple forms of oppression. This voice is still present in theories that are 'only interested in race,' 'only interested in gender,' or 'only interested in the intersection of race and gender.' Such theories require us to choose pieces of ourselves to present as our whole lived experiences, rather than describing our whole lived experience in terms of all social and historical circumstances as de Beauvoir did.

Berruz's approach to de Beauvoir's framework falls into "gender and racial essentialism," and we should take issue with this. If we are to use the concept of "the multiplicitous"

in describing our experiences, we must avoid Berruz's usage of it and reevaluate its meaning. We must avoid forcing multiple women with different intersectional experiences into a single, unitary identity. In de Beauvoir's terminology, Latina identity would be an essentializing racial category. "The multiplicitous" must account for the absolute ontological freedom of being.

Conclusion

"The multiplicitous" still holds much value for further discussions on "multiple selves." I only wish to suggest that Latina feminists that use "the multiplicitous" should carefully examine their own attitudes towards other feminist theories. We cannot assume that the notion of "the multiplicitous" does not have flaws of its own, and thus, we should remain cognizant. I want to push other Latinas to further discuss "the multiplicitous," intersectionality, and Simone de Beauvoir in the way that I have approached it. That is to say, when we revisit each of these topics, we must simultaneously try to improve on the work of Simone de Beauvoir and on the concepts of the self and "the multiplicitous" in every way possible. I leave this paper with gratitude for all theoretical work on the Self, and I call for further development of accounts of the multiple.

Notes

1. "Playfulness, 'World'-Traveling, and Loving Perception" by Maria Lugones develops the important notion of world-traveling to describe the epistemic shift that takes place as she "travels" from one "world" to the next. "World" does not denote the traditional sum of all things that exist; it denotes an actual society or a particular construction of society given its dominant or non-dominant modes. In "Phenomenological Encuentros: Existential Phenomenology and Latina American & US Latina Feminism," Ortega notes that Lugones is deeply aware of the multiplicity of her lived experience and includes this experience of multiplicity in her theory. "Borderlands/ La Frontera" by Gloría Anzaldúa develops an exposition of what it means to live "in-between" the U.S. and the Mexican world. Anzaldúa describes how she lives amidst the many contradictions that a Mexican American, queer woman faces living in the U.S. She develops the mestiza as a central figure for understanding a new kind of self with an ambiguous, fluid identity. The mestiza experiences a sense of constant displacement and "in-betweenness"

and modes of meaning-making. This has influenced many Latina feminist theorists to account for identity as "in-between" or as multiple selves. *In-between: Latina Feminist Phenomenology, Multiplicity, and the Self* by Mariana Ortega uses both Lugones' and Anzaldúa's concepts to introduce a theory of Latina identity as "the multiplicitous". She also adopts Heidegger's phenomenology on "Dasein" or "being" to account for the lived experiences in the Latin American community (US, Latin America, The Caribbean, etc.).

2. Berruz adopts the black-white binary from Linda Alcoff's article on "Latino/as, Asian Americans, and the Black-White Binary;" this binary governs racial classifications and racial politics in the U.S. It takes race in the U.S. to consist of only two racial groups, Black and White, with others understood in relation to one of these categories. Thus, in this case, Simone de Beauvoir's analysis *can* be understood as describing an identity that consists only between black and white categories, while other identities are to be understood in relation to one of these identities or neither.

3. See the introduction in de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*. "The Eternal Feminine" is exemplified in Plato. Beginning with the premise that sex is an accidental quality, Plato finds women and men to be equally qualified to become members of the guardian class. The condition for women's admission, however, is that they must train and live like men. This is Simone de Beauvoir's way of describing the discriminatory sexual difference that remains today.

4. See *The Ambiguity of Ethics* by Simone de Beauvoir. "Ambiguity of existence," a term de Beauvoir adopts from Husserl, is crucial to her account of intentionality. In this paper, I am only using the notion of absolute ontological freedom from de Beauvoir's book. De Beauvoir's notion of ethical freedom is a necessary but not sufficient condition for ethical action. Freedom must be used properly: in practicing freedom, we must take into consideration the ties that bind each of us to one another, and we must call on each other, in each other's own freedoms, to join us in bringing certain values, projects, and conditions into being.

5. "Mestizaje" refers to European and Indigenous descent. "Mulataje" refers to African and European descent.

6. "About Subject and Gender: Feminist Lectures since Beauvoir to Butler."

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THE PROBLEM OF ADJUSTMENT IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF MENTAL ILLNESS

Sakib Ibne Shahriar

A number of philosophers engaging with the subject of mental illness have tried answering the following questions: "What type of thing is a mental illness? What is its nature? Which experiences and behaviors are constitutive of mental illnesses, and which are constitutive either of 'normal' human suffering or of healthy mental functioning?" These questions are deemed important for the practice of psychiatry, as mental health professionals should be able to accurately demarcate between mental illnesses, instances of suffering, and healthy mental functioning. There are certain implicit assumptions, however, behind asking such questions and aligning one's practical goals with those of psychiatry. One assumes that distinguishing between healthy and unhealthy psychological states is a legitimate ethical move, that some experiences and behaviors are or should be considered healthier in principle than others, that the question of mental health can be approached in isolation from questions about society, and that the practice of psychiatry is already a well-grounded, acceptable practice. I am not saying that all these assumptions are illegitimate in principle; I am only noting that their legitimacy is not immediately given, and that there is conceptual room to engage these assumptions critically.

Nevertheless, there is a more important problem I want to address that is obscured in talk about the nature of mental illness: the problem of adjustment. When an individual is classified as having a mental illness or a series of mental illnesses, should the individual be required to adjust themselves and restore their mental health, or should parts of their social environment or social milieu be adjusted in order to better meet the individual's needs? On top of that, how does one evaluate whether individual

or social adjustment is more beneficial or desirable? For whom is individual or social adjustment beneficial? Say that someone has been having depressive episodes for the past year, and if they were to inform a psychologist or counselor, they would be diagnosed with some depressive disorder. This depressed person notices that much of their depression comes from them having to balance the stresses of college, family obligations, and work. After informing a psychologist, this person is told that they should start taking medications, or go to some form of therapy, in order to 'ease their depressive symptoms' and function better in the world. How does one evaluate this individual's situation? Should the individual be changing their own psychology, or better yet, is such a change beneficial for the individual overall? If one has critical concerns about the university space, nuclear family relations, or waged-labor, how can one go about saying that it is the social milieu, and not the individual, that should change in an effort to better meet the individual's psychological needs? To address everything mentioned thus far is outside the scope of this paper, but I do want to suggest a preliminary answer to the problem of adjustment.

A philosophy of mental illness must address this problem of adjustment. After first elaborating on Panagiotis Oulis' objective-normative account of mental disorder, I will show that when one only tries answering the problem of the nature of mental illness, one cannot talk about the complexities of diagnosis, adjustment, and the social milieu with any degree of nuance or strength. I will use Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's conception of what philosophy is in order to evaluate and add more conceptual components to Oulis' philosophy, thus strengthening it philosophically and as a possible answer to the problem of adjustment. I will ultimately show how Oulis' revised philosophy is useful for ethical evaluation and social criticism.

* * *

Oulis builds an objective-normative account of mental disorder, where a mental disorder consists in an objectively harmful mental dysfunction in an individual's brain processes that can impair their

capacities to satisfy certain universal psychological needs (Oulis 2012, pp. 351-352). Before discussing this definition any further, I want to address Oulis' own usage of the compound term "objective-normative" in describing his account. He posits his account of mental disorder in opposition to socially-laden accounts of mental disorder that are currently popular in the philosophy of mental illness. However, in at least one definition of objective, something that is socially-laden is just as real as something not socially-laden.[1] Though gender is arguably something socially constituted, it is still something *real* in the most colloquial sense of that term. As it will become clear, what Oulis means when he uses the term "objective" is closer to something naturalistic, non-social, and non-historical. Furthermore, any normative component in his account will emerge out of what he posits as natural processes—thus, his usage of the compound term "objective-normative." In what follows, I will elaborate on what he means by each of the concepts in his account and on the mutual connections between them.

Oulis begins with the notion of mental functions as the functions of a complex brain system underlying an individual's psychology (p. 347). These mental functions should be understood as something similar to mental faculties in a broad sense; regardless of the actual physical details of a complex brain system, one should understand the exercising of faculties such as those of memory, thought, or language as mental functions of a complex brain system. The mental functions of a brain system afford the individual certain capacities to meet universal psychological needs. Capacities are understood as emerging out of mental functions and providing the means for need satisfaction; some preliminary capacities to meet needs that Oulis mentions include "conscious experience, bodily/spatial self-location, historical/temporal self-location, [and] general self/world comprehension," among others (p. 349). Oulis cites self-determination theory, an ongoing research program in scientific psychology, in order to talk about the notion of universal psychological needs. It is posited in this theory that individuals strive to meet their needs of "compe-

tence, relatedness, and autonomy" in the process of building a unified sense of self in the world (p. 348). Oulis openly admits that this research program is still a controversial one, and he primarily introduces it into his system to bring attention to the possibility of there being actual universal psychological needs that are empirically substantiated one way or another. This dependence on empirical data might be a sore spot for Oulis' philosophy; however, I will elaborate on that later. One should note even now how closely intertwined and inseparable the notions of mental functions, capacities to meet needs, and universal psychological needs are: none of these notions can be discussed meaningfully in isolation from the others.

An individual must be able to meet their universal psychological needs as part of the systemic goals of their brain and nervous system. This is to further say that whatever allows an individual to meet those needs and goals has an objective, positive biotic value for them (pp. 347-348). If one of my mental functions allows me to regulate my emotions, and if emotion regulation is a systemic goal of the brain and nervous system, then that mental function has a positive biotic value and is objectively valuable for me. This value is both objective (naturalistic) and normative, as it emerges out of the proper functioning of a natural, biological system; it also positions those functions and processes that contribute to the attainment of systemic goals as more valuable than those dysfunctions and processes that harm or in any way impair the attainment of those systemic goals. Given that part of an individual's overall systemic goals include meeting their universal psychological needs, it is objectively valuable for an individual to be able to meet those needs, and it is objectively harmful for an individual to be impaired in their capacity to meet those needs.

With these concepts in place, it is worth repeating Oulis' conception of mental disorder. A disruption in one's brain processes can bring about the failure of some mental function(s). The failure of some mental function(s) can impair an individual's capacities to meet certain universal needs. This impairment is objectively harmful for them, as the individual fails to meet certain needs and

to fulfill their individual systemic goals. Furthermore, the impairment is observable in one's psychological signs and symptoms (p. 351). This specific type of mental dysfunction is what Oulis calls a mental disorder.

* * *

At present, there are two related issues with this concept of mental disorder. First, the status of Oulis' references to scientific psychological research programs in his philosophical system is unclear. Second, it does not seem that the concepts making up this concept of mental disorder (i.e. mental functions, capacities, needs, objective values) are wholly consistent without having a concept of a social milieu closely connected to them. I will address each of these in turn, and I will further show how they are deeply related. Addressing both of these issues will lead directly into discussing the problem of adjustment.

As noted earlier, Oulis mentions that the research program on universal psychological needs he cites is controversial. However, the reason he mentions the research program at all is to note that there is an empirical possibility of there being empirically discoverable universal psychological needs. Closer to the end of his paper, he provides a "science-based strategy for the effective identification of mental disorders" (p. 353):

> First, specify, with the help of *systemic neuroscience* and *psychology*, the basic mental functions and the complex brain systems carrying them out… Second, evaluate, with the additional help of *scientific psychology* and *anthropology*, their contribution to the acquisition and/or maintenance of basic human psychological capacities to satisfy basic human psychological needs *as specified by these disciplines*. Third, map carefully, with the help of *descriptive psychopathology*, putative patient symptoms and signs onto the various basic human mental functions and their associated psychological capacities as specified by *psychology* and *systemic neuroscience*. Fourth, assess

the magnitude of the impairment of the mental functions and their associated capacities to meet basic psychological needs. (Ibid., emphases added)

I highlight such a *long* passage to show how Oulis' conceptual system cannot get off the ground without plugging up to at least *some* scientific research program. In particular, it seems that the concepts of mental dys/function, capacity, needs, and objective value do not condense into the concept of mental disorder unless they connect to scientific research on *what* constitutes specific objective values, universal human needs, the capacities to meet those needs, and mental dys/functions. If the empirical content of these component concepts is unspecified, and all that is left in Oulis' account is the logical connections between them, then these concepts cannot constitute a concept of mental disorder. At best, without further recourse to some scientific research program, these concepts can be used to talk about procedures of need satisfaction: one can use these concepts to see whether or not an individual can attain their systemic needs in some environment or milieu. This is not an inherent issue with Oulis' usage of concepts;[2] however, my contention is that this required coupling to empirical research weakens Oulis' philosophical system.

To expound on this claim and to make it clearer, I have to briefly address Deleuze and Guattari's notion of philosophy in *What is Philosophy?*. I cannot cover all the details of their discussion here, but I will emphasize enough of the details of their philosophy to illustrate my claim. This will seem like a detour relative to the main discussion, but one will notice that Deleuze and Guattari's discussion has already strongly influenced my elaboration of Oulis' philosophy.

A philosophy is made up of concepts, and concepts are made up of component parts that are also themselves concepts (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, p. 19). These component concepts are inseparable and distinct at once from each other. To see this, consider the concept of mental disorder itself that has been discussed so far in this paper: it has component concepts (need, function, capacity,

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value), and though none of these concepts are the same as one another, none of the concepts can be meaningfully spoken about in Oulis' account without reference to the other concepts. Put the issue of references to scientific research programs aside for a moment. One can start describing Oulis' concept of mental health with the concept of need: needs are what individuals can meet due to certain capacities afforded to them by their mental functions, and it is objectively valuable to meet those needs. One can start with the concept of mental function: individuals have mental functions that give them the objectively valuable capacity to meet their needs. Both of these sentences are trying to show the inseparability and the heterogeneity of the component parts of a concept.

This simultaneous inseparability and heterogeneity of the component parts make up the concept's endoconsistency, or internal consistency—this is to say that the component parts of a concept and their mutual internal relations are what define that concept (pp. 19-20). In this sense, a concept is self-referential, as it only posits itself, it itself is made up of concepts, and it does not directly refer to or represent an empirical state of affairs (p. 22). Whether or not Oulis' concept of mental disorder is internally consistent and self-referential is part of what my issue is with Oulis' formulation of the concept of mental disorder with references to scientific research programs. Furthermore, the relation of this concept made up of component parts to other concepts made up of other component parts in the same philosophy define the concept's exoconsistency, or external consistency (p. 20). When I earlier asserted that the concepts in Oulis' philosophical system do not seem wholly consistent without having a concept of a social milieu closely connected to them, I was bringing attention to an issue of external consistency between concepts in Oulis' philosophy. Now that the above notion of a concept and the relevant terms have been briefly introduced,[3] I will return to addressing the previously mentioned issues I have with Oulis' philosophy.

To repeat my earlier claim, my contention is that the required coupling of concepts to empirical research weakens Oulis' philosophical system. Although the component concepts of

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mental disorder in his account are distinct yet inseparable, they cannot get off the ground without direct reference to empirical data. The concept is not something self-referential in his account; rather, the concept is a container of sorts for empirical data and scientific propositions. There is nothing wrong in principle about working with scientific propositions, but it seems desirable for a philosophy not to have its ontology depend on empirical data in this way. I am not saying here that philosophy is somehow not derived from empirical data or experience. In at least one sense, all philosophy is built on empirical data in some way. Moreover, one can use philosophy as a guide to organizing their experiences. I am also not saying that philosophy should or does not have any relationship to the empirical world. Philosophy is a practice that takes place in the world, and as such, one must be clear about what it is, what it does, and what it can do in the world (Conway 2010, p. 58). By setting up his philosophical system to only work in conjunction with a scientific research program, Oulis makes some mistakes. He reduces the task of philosophy to accurately representing the world from outside it. He does not address that scientific psychology is something practiced in the world rather than something 'above' the world that represents it. Without addressing this, he cannot evaluate the political consequences that propositions in scientific psychology may entail for individuals in the world. Furthermore, he cannot use his own philosophy for social criticism, nor can his philosophy encourage any change in the world; he can only use it to represent what mental disorders would be in the world *given* that some scientific research program defines mental functions, capacities, and universal needs.

As I noted earlier, Oulis cannot condense his concepts of function, capacity, need, and value into the concept of mental disorder without having it plugged up to a scientific research program. There is a greater political issue at play here. It is disputed that the experiences and behaviors currently considered mental disorders are disorders at all.[4] Historically, this has been discussed with regards to drapetomania, kleptomania, and homosexuality, among other 'conditions.' However, the dispute addresses much

more than only these historical examples. Consider the first hypothetical I introduced in this paper: an individual is depressed, and they realize they are depressed because of the stresses they face from school, family, and work. Who is to say that this individual's depression is the result of a mental dysfunction? One can just as well say that this individual's depression is a reasonable, healthy response to distressing conditions; many psychologists and philosophers both historically and currently have made this exact point. I am not asking the reader to accept the claim that even distressing experiences and behaviors are healthy individual responses in principle. However, given that this claim is usually posed against scientific research on mental illness and coupled with a critique of that scientific research, it seems that a philosophical system trying to address mental illness in any way should be able to account for the possibility that no experiences or behaviors are pathological or the result of a dysfunction. In case this turns out to be the case about experiences and behaviors and in case something like this can be addressed at all through a scientific research program, Oulis' philosophical system cannot stand as long as he is trying to give an answer to the problem of the nature of mental illness. At best, his component concepts can be used to talk about an individual's satisfaction of certain needs.

This discussion leads into the second issue with Oulis' philosophical system concerning the external consistency between concepts in his system. Without the connection to a research program, Oulis' component concepts of function, capacity, need, and value can only condense into a concept of the individual. The individual has certain functions, and these functions afford the individual certain objectively valuable capacities to meet certain needs. However, *this* concept cannot stand on its own without some other concept to support it—namely, the concept of a social milieu in which the individual satisfies their needs. The concept of the individual cannot alone say how an individual meets their needs; it can only say that an individual *does* meet certain needs. An individual may have the capacity to convert certain organic materials into nutrition, but this capacity itself is not what satis-

fies an individual's need for nutrition. An individual meets their need for nutrition by acquiring food within their milieu, whether that means that they go to a grocery store or that they go to a self-managed garden. Similarly, if an individual has certain psychological needs, it does not make sense to say that the individual's capacity to meet those needs is what *meets* the need; rather, the individual interacts in some way with something in their social milieu to satisfy some need.

Oulis acknowledges the environment in words at a few points in the paper, but he never elaborates on this relationship between the individual and the milieu. He notes that the manifestation of an individual's capacities depends on "enabling environmental conditions or circumstances" (Oulis 2012, p. 353). However, he also notes that the environmental conditions "have to be carefully controlled for in studies aimed at assessing [psychological capacities] with appropriate… analysis" (Ibid.). When his system is plugged into some scientific research program on functions and needs, the environment is a series of variables that one has to control for when trying to 'objectively' study an individual. Science would be able to dictate what an individual's functions, capacities, and needs are. Thus, if an individual displayed certain dysfunctions that were not deemed to be part of regular psychological functioning, one could say that those dysfunctions make up some mental disorder without making any reference to the environment in which an individual's experiences and behaviors occur. Without that scientific padding, a reference to a strong concept of the social environment or milieu becomes inescapable for someone who wants Oulis' component concepts to keep working. It is in this sense that the two issues I have with Oulis' philosophy are deeply related: I cannot address the first issue of reference to a research program without having to simultaneously address the second issue of introducing a concept of the social milieu.

* * *

Oulis' philosophical system remains consistent when the concept

of the individual is connected to a concept of the social milieu. The individual satisfies their needs in a given social milieu. The individual may be impaired in their capacity to satisfy their needs in the social milieu. Someone may not be able to adequately satisfy their need for nutrition if they do not have the money to go to a store and buy food. With this revised system, one can give a preliminary answer to the problem of adjustment.

Given that an individual can satisfy their needs well or poorly in a social milieu, one can talk about evaluating situations of adjustment. Let me finally return to the example I introduced when I first elaborated on the problem of adjustment. An individual is depressed. An individual notices they are depressed because of various stresses in their social milieu (academic pressure, familial obligations, having a job). The stress creating an individual's depression may impair the individual's capacity to satisfy certain needs. One can conceive of learning as a psychological need that individuals have, and this individual's distress may hamper their efforts at learning in their classes. One can conceive of having positive relationships with others as a psychological need, and this individual's distress may keep them from spending meaningful time with their close friends. Now, the individual goes to a psychologist and is diagnosed with major depressive disorder. They are prescribed certain medications and signed up for talk therapy in order to adjust 'better' to their social milieu. How does one go about evaluating this situation?[5]

It might be beneficial to some degree for the individual to adjust to the demands of their social milieu. Medication and therapy can allow them to cope better with the demands and stresses of academia, family, and work. However, this evaluation weights the impact of the social milieu on the individual less than the requirement of the individual to adjust to the social milieu. Someone may look closely at labor and the economy in society, and they may come to the conclusion that individuals are exploited and subjugated due to the current society's economic organization. Their evaluation of the depressive individual's situation will be different. Although the individual must adjust to some degree

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to keep up with work-related stresses in their social milieu, they would still be adjusting to the demands of an economic system that dominates and subjugates them. The evaluation has changed: it is harmful in the long run for the individual to adjust to the demands of capitalism, as they are only dulling the stresses produced by capitalism instead of being able to address the source. If the reader can allow me some Marxist jargon, the individual adjusting their own psychology would be in the interest of capital and capitalists; it would be beneficial for their boss, who would presumably want a well-adjusted worker. This new evaluation better hones in on the possibly harmful, impairing effects of the social milieu. One could pair this evaluation with a critique of capitalism, leading one to assert that the capitalist system at play in the social milieu must change in order to ensure that individuals can better meet their needs.

Oulis' revised concepts of the individual and the social milieu allow one to talk about and evaluate situations where either the individual or the social milieu must adjust in order for the individual to better meet their needs. Not only can one talk about an individual's capacity or incapacity to satisfy their needs, one can talk about whether and for whom the individual's psychological adjustment is beneficial. Oulis' concepts have been strengthened in two ways. Using Deleuze and Guattari's notions of philosophy and concept, Oulis' concepts have been made both internally and externally consistent. Furthermore, I have made Oulis' philosophical system self-positing and self-referential by removing any inappropriate connections to non-philosophical components. In doing so, Oulis' concepts have also been strengthened ethically and politically, as they can now be used to evaluate both the social milieu and an individual's experiences and behaviors as they occur within that social milieu.

Notes

1. Furthermore, this is assuming that such a clear-cut distinction between being socially-laden or not socially-laden can be made at all. There is also an open question of whether such a conceptual distinction can be meaningful and useful.

2. Note, however, that now there is a possibility of Oulis' concept of mental disorder evaporating.

3. Again, what I provide here is nowhere near a full exposition of Deleuze and Guattari's full account of philosophy. Conway notes that in *What is Philosophy?*, there "is both an accessible account of the different practices [of philosophy, science, and art], and a challenging, but more original, one" (2010, p. 55). I definitely could not discuss their more challenging account of philosophy, but I could not fully address the more accessible account either. I have only discussed enough of the account to be able to adequately put my own thoughts into words. Anyone interested in an account of what philosophy is, how it is different from other practices, and what it can do in the world should consider reading Deleuze and Guattari's book on it.

4. For anyone interested in this discussion, I suggest starting with The Midland Psychology Group's "Draft Manifesto for a Social Materialist Psychology of Distress" (2012).

5. Discussing what follows goes beyond the scope of this paper; however, this question of evaluation is not something new. In his writings on instincts and institutions, Deleuze addresses a similar question of evaluation. One cannot just ask whether an institution, an original means of needs satisfaction, is useful; "one must still ask the question: useful for whom?" (Deleuze 2004, p. 20). Whether or not Oulis' revised conceptual system in this paper and Deleuze's concept of the institution can do the same work is still an open question. However, I will not deny that Deleuze's concept of the institution greatly influenced my engagement with Oulis' concepts and my thoughts about the problem of adjustment.

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REGARDING THE APPLICATION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF CHARITY

Jeovany Aguilar

We engage in the active practice of interpretation whenever we read a text with an aim to deepen our understanding of it. When interpreting, we must always ask ourselves if our interpretation of a sentence or passage in the text is the best one we can possibly develop. This question becomes especially relevant when we encounter a sentence or passage that lends itself to multiple interpretations. How do we decide which interpretation we should adopt? On what basis can we claim that a particular interpretation of a sentence or passage best reflects an adequate understanding of the text? We find a ready-made answer to these questions already circulating in philosophy: the *principle of charity*. Given the widespread influence this principle has in building interpretations of texts, we should be motivated to develop a conceptual analysis of it. This analysis will describe the strengths and weaknesses of using the principle to produce interpretations, and it will also try to sharpen those strengths and mute those weaknesses.

The principle of charity functions as a normative standard for choosing the best interpretation amongst a set of possible interpretations. According to the principle, the best interpretation will be the one most compatible with an interpreter's pre-established beliefs. As a result, an interpreter incorporating this principle is tasked with maximizing the agreement between their already-held beliefs and their new interpretation of a text. Given this understanding of the principle, I want to argue that incorporating the principle of charity in the interpretation of philosophical texts has less than desirable outcomes, which I will lay out in the paper. In addition to critiquing the principle, I will propose an alternative to it that will help us avoid the issues it introduces, and I will provide methodological support for this alternative.

After understanding the principle of charity, our first goal is to understand how using it can interfere with the interpretation of philosophical texts. Achieving this goal requires an exploration of the reasons why someone would use the principle in interpretation at all. Our choice to employ the principle in the process of interpretation entails the belief that it can help us identify the best interpretation of a given sentence or passage. We need to trace the origin of this belief to see whether it holds up to scrutiny: is there a prima facie justification for it? The conclusion we want to draw from this portion of our discussion is that the value of using the principle of charity for interpretation fluctuates.

To say that this value fluctuates is to notice the following issue. There are certain texts such that applying the principle for interpreting those texts seems to reliably identify the best interpretation for sentences and passages in the texts. On the other hand, this positive value of the usage of the principle does not hold when the principle is applied to the interpretation of philosophical texts. In this context, using the principle of charity can leave the interpreter liable to not being able to produce the best interpretation for passages in a philosophical text. Given this, a discussion of the content of philosophical texts can help highlight limitations of the principle of charity. An alternative to the principle of charity will then need to be introduced to help overcome the limitations in using the principle to deal with philosophical content. Thus, the second goal of our discussion will be to adequately support this alternative to the principle.

It is crucial that we identify the origin of the belief that the principle of charity helps determine the best interpretation of a sentence or passage in a text if we want to evaluate whether such a belief is justified. Tracking the origin of this belief leads us to an encounter with Donald Davidson and his philosophy. Although Davidson did not coin the phrase "principle of charity," we can recognize him as the originator of *a* principle of charity that is the most similar to the general one we find in circulation in present times. We need a general sketch of Davidson's philosophy so that we can come up with answers to two questions relevant to our

discussion. First, for what purpose was the principle of charity developed, and second, how did it satisfy that purpose? The answers to these questions will help us set up a contrast between Davidson's original intended use of the principle of charity and the current, more common use of the principle.

In the chapter "Radical Interpretation" from his book *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation*, Davidson asks us to consider the following:

> Kurt utters the words 'Es regnet' and under the right conditions we know that he has said that it is raining. Having identified his utterance as intentional and linguistic, we are able to go on to interpret his words: we can say what his words, on that occasion, meant. What could we know that would enable us to do this? How could we come to know it? (Davidson 2001, p. 125)

Davidson's quote is meant to draw attention to the fact that when we identify a speaker's utterances as linguistic and intentional in nature, we can only then set for ourselves the task of interpreting the meaning of their utterances. This task might be complicated if the speaker's utterances are in a language foreign to an interpreter, however, we should still find it reasonable to believe that satisfying certain sufficient conditions will allow someone to properly interpret the speaker. For example, the process of interpretation might proceed by making use of a book that contains translations of words in the speaker's language to words in the interpreter's language. There are other ways the process of interpretation can proceed and additional steps it might require; the point is that the recognition of a speaker's utterances as linguistic and intentional in nature establishes the possibility of interpretation, or the possibility of discovering the meaning a speaker wishes to convey.

At this point, Davidson elaborates that we can identify a speaker's utterances as linguistic and intentional when we adopt the principle of charity. This is to adopt a set of assumptions with which we attribute certain properties to a speaker. The first of these properties is consistency. We assume consistency between

a speaker and an interpreter when we hold that most of the beliefs held by the speaker and the interpreter overlap. We can make sense of this assumption when we consider the class of empirical beliefs. For example, it would strike us as odd if two random people did not share the belief that the sky is blue or that objects fall downward. This overlap between an interpreter and a speaker's beliefs also implies the overall agreement of truth values of empirically derived propositions that each believe. Another property we assume of a speaker is that their utterances are intended to convey the meaning of beliefs they actually hold. This means the utterances of a speaker can convey meaning as well as beliefs, which can both be illuminated in the process of interpretation. Without prior acceptance of these assumptions, the process of interpretation never gets off the ground, as we would lack any basis for attributing beliefs and meanings to a speaker and their utterances respectively.

Given our brief examination of the role of Davidson's principle of charity in interpretation, we are now properly equipped to contrast his use of the principle with how others use it elsewhere. For Davidson, the principle has a deliberate and precise purpose specific to his conception of the process of interpretation, as the introduction of the principle within his framework enables the possibility for the process occurring. Despite the appearance of similarity between the form of the principle found in Davidson's philosophy and the form of the principle as used elsewhere, we find that it does not play the same role in interpretation in general that it did for him. The primary purpose for employing the principle outside of Davidson's philosophy is to restrict the creation of misinterpretations of the arguments, viewpoints, or actions of another person. In these cases, there is no claim that we should use the principle because it is necessary for interpretation; instead, its use is tied to the contingent belief that the principle can push us to represent the views of other people in the most reasonable way possible. In other words, when presented with a set of possible interpretations, we should attribute to another person the interpretation we agree with the most. In this way, we avoid the attribution

of patently false viewpoints to other people.

Since we find a shift in the use of the principle for interpretation, we should then understand that we need to justify its usage in relation to this new use. We must do so because its new use renders Davidson's original reasons for introducing the principle irrelevant. Davidson's principle was a product of his philosophical framework, and justifications for the principle were based on its function within that framework. Therefore, we need to try and lay out a justification for the principle independent from Davidson's own considerations. We can start doing this by considering a type of situation where someone misrepresents another person's views. We recognize this situation as one where someone is using straw man argumentation: they use a rhetorical strategy to present another person's argument in the worst possible light in order to overcome it. In other words, a straw man argument is established by choosing the worst possible interpretation for another person's viewpoint. We see straw man argumentation often in political discourse, where someone will interpret the someone's position on the opposing side of a debate in such a way that the position strikes us as false simply based on how it is presented.

Acceptance of the principle of charity can restrict these occurrences of misrepresentation by obligating us to maximize the reasonableness of an argument when setting out to interpret it. This practice runs directly counter to the goal of a straw man argument, and so, the practices of using the principle of charity and using straw man argumentation cannot coexist. Even if the principle of charity is not adopted by a person engaging in straw man argumentation, its adoption by other people still enables those other people to charge that person as being uncharitable in their treatment of another's viewpoint. As a result, the uncharitable interpreter leaves themselves vulnerable to having their interpretations categorically rejected by others. This is a desirable outcome, as the restriction of straw man arguments due to widespread adoption of the principle might raise the standard of political discourse and discourse elsewhere. Regardless, there is enough work done now to see that there is at least one prima facie

justification for usage of the principle that allows it to stand on its own merits: the restriction of straw man arguments.

We might wonder in what other ways the application of the principle of charity can be successful; for the purposes of our present discussion, however, it is only important that we establish that it can be successful even when divorced from Davidson's framework. Our next objective is to show under what conditions the principle fails as a guide to interpretation. We can best highlight these conditions by considering that despite aiming to use the principle to prevent misinterpreting and misrepresenting another person's views, we might still end up doing just that when we interpret philosophical content using this principle. Therefore, we should expand on what makes the character of philosophical content incompatible with the usage of the principle.

Two philosophers who note how the principle of charity can be responsible for misinterpretations or bad interpretations of a philosophy are Yitzhak Y. Melamed and Slavoj Žižek. In "Charitable Interpretations and the Political Domestication of Spinoza, or, Benedict in the Land of the Secular Imagination," Melamed states that, "We very frequently distort the view of past philosophers in order to reach the conclusions we prefer. We just call it 'Charitable Interpretation'" (Melamed 2013, p. 259). Žižek launches a more implicit yet just as vehement critique of the principle in "In Defense of Hegel's Madness," where he states, "However, I want to argue against such 'domestication' of Hegel and defend Hegel's 'madness': Hegel's statements *have* to shock us, and this excess cannot be explained away through interpretation since the truth they deliver hinges on that" (Žižek 2015, p. 785). The common thread in both philosophers' critiques of the use of the principle of charity is an appeal to the preservation of a philosophy's provocative elements in the process of interpretation. The principle of charity fails to preserve the provocative elements of a philosophy in interpretation, and as a result, it leads us to engage in acts of "domestication" of a philosophy. So, these philosophers call on us to refrain from employing the principle when interpreting philosophical content.

Why does the application of the principle of charity in the philosophical context constitute an act of domestication? We should recall that the principle is supposed to guide us in choosing the best possible interpretation amongst a set of possible interpretations of a text, where the best interpretation is the one that maximizes agreement between an interpreter's pre-established beliefs and their chosen interpretation of a text. This practice runs counter to the goal of positively engaging with philosophy if in our engagement with philosophy we value arguments that challenge our preexisting beliefs. Melamed supports such a notion of engagement in philosophy when he says:

> We should engage in the study of good past philosophers, *not in spite, but because* of the fact that frequently past philosophers argue for views that are significantly different from ours. We should consciously challenge ourselves in a dialogue with philosophers whose views are both (a) *well argued*, and (b) *different from ours*. (Melamed 2013, p. 274)

Part of the value of a philosophy is its ability to challenge our pre-established beliefs with well-reasoned arguments. Applying the principle of charity diminishes this value, because the priority is placed on producing an interpretation of a philosophy that adheres to our pre-established beliefs as much as possible. As such, when we use the principle in interpretation, we do not try to preserve the elements of a philosophy that might challenge our beliefs—we try to smooth them away. This is what it means to domesticate a philosophy: the attempt to reduce its provocative elements to beliefs we already hold.

Having encountered the limitation of using the principle of charity in interpreting philosophical content, we can now proceed to a potential solution to overcome this limitation. We saw that the limitation of the principle involves its role in the domestication of a philosophy, which carries a negative moral charge. Thus, to overcome the limitation of this principle, we will require an interpretive method that preserves the provocative elements of

a philosophy in the process of interpretation. We can find such a method in Louis Althusser's section on Montesquieu in *Politics and History: Montesquieu, Rousseau, Marx*. Throughout this section, Althusser wants to provide support for the following assertion regarding Montesquieu's philosophy:

> He knows it. He knows he is bringing new ideas, that he is offering a work without precedent, and if his last words are a salute to the land finally conquered, his first is to warn that he set out alone and had no teachers; nor did his thought have a mother. (Althusser 2007, p. 14)

This assertion demonstrates Althusser's commitment to producing an interpretation of Montesquieu's philosophy that preserves its original and provocative elements. The method by which Althusser does so can be identified by how he tackles interpretative challenges related to the interpretation of sentences or passages in Montesquieu's philosophy. Specifically, when Althusser encounters multiple possible interpretations for a sentence or passage, he does not default to the interpretation that most adheres to his pre-established beliefs; he puts in effort in developing each one of these interpretations to the best of his ability. Deciding which interpretation gets designated as the "best" one, if at all, comes after exercising this effort.

The principle of charity attempts to guide us in choosing the best interpretation for a sentence of passage given a set of possible interpretations. We have reviewed how what counts as the "best" interpretation when using the principle does not adequately apply when interpreting philosophical content. Althusser's philosophy is useful in determining how we should modify our notion of the "best" possible interpretation for sentences or passages found within a philosophical text. We should first change our standard for our choice of interpretation. Instead of choosing the interpretation amongst a set of possible interpretations that most closely adheres to our pre-established beliefs, we should instead choose the interpretations of sentences or passages that maximize the internal consistency of a philosophical text. Choosing a particular

interpretation for a sentence or passage in a philosophical text will depend on how well it combines with interpretations of other sections in the text. Although we might encounter sections of a text that remain incompatible with any of our interpretations of the rest of the text despite our best efforts, it is important that we do the most we can to interpret a text as a unified whole. We find support for this attitude if we accept that philosophers do not produce texts where they intentionally establish contradictory claims. For this reason, using a superior notion of the principle of charity when interpreting philosophical content would task us with substituting the obligation to maximize agreement between a philosophical text and our beliefs with the obligation to develop as much as possible interpretations of these texts that present them as unified wholes.

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