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Item Type	Article
Authors	Bartol, Jordan N.
Publisher	Saint Anselm College
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Download date	2026-11-05 20:05:16
Link to Item	http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12424/172893

Volume X, No. 1 Fall 2008

LYCEUM

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LYCEUM

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The New Natural Law Theory

Christopher Tollefsen

The New Natural Law (NNL) theory, sometimes also called the New Classical Natural Law theory, is the name given a particular revival and revision of Thomistic Natural Law theory, initiated in the 1960s by Germain Grisez. Grisez's initial collaborators included Joseph Boyle, John Finnis and Olaf Tollefsen. More recently, Robert P. George, Patrick Lee, Fr. Peter Ryan, S.J., Gerard Bradley, William E. May, Christian Brugger, and Christopher Tollefsen have done work on the NNL.

Articulation and defense of the theory began with the publication of Grisez's interpretative essay on St. Thomas's first principle of practical reason, in 1965.[1] Although that essay established some of the controversial theses of the new view, in particular, that the foundation of practical reason is in a foundational practical recognition of certain basic goods, and that no inference from theoretical truths concerning human nature is necessary or possible, Grisez was there attempting to provide an accurate interpretation of St. Thomas's thought. Subsequent work, while deeply indebted to St. Thomas, has not been primarily exegetical,[2] and in some particulars clearly conflicts with the positions of St. Thomas.

The distinctive, and often disputed, areas of contribution by the New Natural Lawyers include at least the following five, which will be the focus of the remainder of this article:

1. The foundations of moral thought and practical reason;
2. The casuistry of the New Natural Lawyers, especially as regards issues of taking life, procreation, and truth-telling;

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[1] Germain Grisez, "The First Principle of Practical Reason: A Commentary on the *Summa Theologiae*, 1-2 Question 94, Article 2," *Natural Law Forum* 10 (1965): 168-201.

[2] The main exception to this is John Finnis, *Aquinas: Moral, Political, and Legal Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

3. The nature of human action;
4. The nature of political authority and the political common good; and
5. The ultimate end of human beings.

1. Foundations of moral thought and practical reason

In his early works, Grisez articulated a number of theses that have been developed by the New Natural Lawyers in the subsequent four decades. Further foundational considerations were defended by Grisez, Finnis, and Boyle in several books and articles, and in essays written individually by the three thinkers.[3] The most important of the core theses are the following:

First, the New Natural Law view holds that practical reason, that is, is reason oriented towards action, grasps as self-evidently desirable a number of basic goods. These goods, which are described as constitutive aspects of genuine human flourishing, include life and health; knowledge and aesthetic experience; skilled work and play; friendship; marriage; harmony with God, and harmony among a person's judgments, choices, feelings, and behavior. As grasped by practical reason, the basic goods give foundational reasons for action to human agents. Moreover, they are recognized as good for all human agents; it is equally intelligible to act for the sake of the life of another as for one's own life.

Second, these goods, and most of their instantiations in action, are held to be incommensurable with one another. That is to say, there is no natural

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[3]See especially Grisez, op. cit.; John Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights* (Cambridge: The Clarendon Press, 1980; Germain Grisez, *The Way of the Lord Jesus, Volume I: Christian Moral Principles* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1983); Germain Grisez, Joseph Boyle, and John Finnis, "Practical Principles, Moral Truth, and Ultimate Ends," *American Journal of Jurisprudence* 32 (1987): 99-151; John Finnis, Joseph Boyle, and Germain Grisez, *Nuclear Deterrence, Morality and Realism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press,1987).

hierarchy *of goodness* such that one good may be said to offer all the good of another plus more. Rather, each of the goods is beneficial to human agents, and hence desirable, in a unique way; each offers something that the other goods do not. The same is generally true of particular instantiations of the goods: one way of working, playing, or pursuing knowledge, for example, may offer benefits that are not weighable by a common standard of goodness in relation to instantiations of the other goods, or even instantiations of the same good. This point about incommensurability has emerged as central to the defense of the possibility of free choice, especially in recent work by Boyle.[4]

Third, and in consequence of the first two points, the judgments of practical reason in recognizing the basic goods and directing agents to pursuit of those goods are not yet moral. Rather, practical reason's apprehension of and directedness to the goods is a condition for human actions, all of which, to be genuine actions, must be oriented to some good. Morality enters in only at the level of deliberation and choice as regards *which* goods, or which instantiations of goods, to pursue when faced with desirable options for choice. The New Natural Lawyers have offered various formulations of a first principle of morality, which captures a reasonable openness to all the goods across all persons. In Grisez's most recent work, he argues that human agents should always make a "contribution to integral communal well-being and flourishing, and they always can and should avoid intentionally impeding or detracting from integral communal fulfillment."[5] This formula replaces an earlier formula which prescribed that agents must will and act in ways open to "integral human

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[4] Joseph Boyle, "Free Choice, Incomparably Valuable Options and Incommensurable Categories of Good," *The American Journal of Jurisprudence* 47 (2002): 123-141; Joseph Boyle, "Free Choice, Incommensurable Goods and the Self-Refutation of Determinism," *The American Journal of Jurisprudence* 50 (205): 139-163; see also, for the defense of free choice, Joseph M. Boyle, Germain Grisez, and Olaf Tollefsen, *Free Choice: A Self-Referential Argument* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1976).

[5] Germain Grisez, "The True Ultimate End of Human Beings: The Kingdom, Not God Alone," *Theological Studies* 69 (2008): 38-61, p. 57.

fulfillment."[6] The differences between these will be discussed in the section on the ultimate end.

All three claims have been disputed. Against the first, some Thomist and Natural Law thinkers have insisted that "ought" *must* be derived from "is," and that theoretical knowledge of human nature is necessary for deriving moral norms.[7] Against the second, many have objected that there is a hierarchy of goods, with theoretical knowledge, or knowledge of or friendship with God at the top.[8] Those who object on either of these two grounds object thereby to the first principle of morality, as do proportionalists, who deny that it is always wrong intentionally to act against basic goods.[9] Others object to the claim that the first principle of practical reason is other than the first principle of morality.[10] Finally, among the New Natural Lawyers there is some disagreement as to whether or not practical reasonableness, understood as moral virtue, should be understood as a basic good.[11]

2. Casuistry and applied ethics

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[6] See Grisez, Boyle, and Finnis, op. cit.

[7] See, e.g., Ralph McInerney, "The Principles of Natural Law," *American Journal of Jurisprudence* 25 (1980): 1-15; Henry Veatch, "Natural Law and the 'Is-Ought' Question: Queries to Finnis and Grisez," in *Swimming Against the Current in Contemporary Philosophy* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1990), pp. 293-311.

[8] McInerney, op. cit.; Russell Hittinger, *A Critique of the New Natural Law Theory* (Notre Dame, IN: Univ. Notre Dame Press, 1987).

[9] See Richard McCormick, *Notes on Moral Theology: 1981 through 1984* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1984).

[10] McInerney, op. cit. Many of the objections mentioned are addressed in Robert P. George, *In Defense of Natural Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

[11] For the denial of the claim that moral virtue is a basic good, see Germain Grisez, "Natural Law, God, Religion, and Human Fulfilment," *American Journal of Jurisprudence* 46 (2001): 3-36.

The casuistry of the New Natural Law theory is in large part a function of a working out of the implications of the first principle of morality, a principle that requires openness to, pursuit of, and no intentional damage to, the basic goods across all persons. Beginning in the 1970s, Grisez, Boyle, and Finnis began to specify the first principle in terms of a set of "modes of responsibility." These modes direct agents to certain kinds of acts, and away from others, by taking into account the ways in which emotions and non-morally integrated feelings could distort an agent's openness to the goods, and to other persons' fulfillment in the goods. Thus, through hostility towards a good, on the one hand, or enthusiasm for some good, on the other, agents might be tempted to damage or destroy an instance of the goods. Or, through arbitrary preference of self, or those close to one, an agent might unfairly allow damages to be inflicted on another while pursuing a good himself.

These modes of responsibility can in turn be further specified with respect to particular kinds of actions.[12] The best known work of the New Natural Lawyers has focused on the specification of two of the modes mentioned above, both of which forbid intentional damage or destruction of a basic good, whether because of hostility, or because of enthusiasm for some good. In a 1970 essay, "Toward a Consistent Natural Law Ethics of Killing," Grisez started to work out the consequences of these principles, arguing that not only homicide, suicide, direct abortion, and euthanasia are always and everywhere wrong, but also that capital punishment and intentional killing in war are also morally forbidden.[13]

The New Natural Law approach to the morality of contraception is shaped by similar considerations. In contraception, they argue, a couple

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[12] Grisez, in Volume 1 of *The Way of Our Lord Jesus Christ* lists eight such modes. The list is slightly different in Germain Grisez, *The Way of The Lord Jesus Christ, Volume 3: Difficult Moral Questions* (Quincy, IL: Franciscan Press, 1997).

[13] Germain Grisez, "Toward a Consistent Natural Law Ethics of Killing," *American Journal of Jurisprudence* 15 (1970): 64-96.

considers the possibility of a baby, wishes not to have a baby, and chooses means to ensure that a baby is not brought about. The couple thus acts contrary to the good of human life in their choice to contracept. One feature of this view is that contraception is not, as so interpreted, a *sexual* sin or wrong: it is a separate choice from the choice to engage in sexual intercourse, and could be made by those with no intention to engage in such intercourse.[14] This view has drawn criticism from some who think contraception is by its nature a sexual sin.[15]

As evident in the examples given, the New Natural Law position holds that there are moral absolutes, that is, norms that specify certain acts as of a sort that are always and everywhere not to be done.[16] A further example of a moral absolute can be seen in the New Natural Law approach to lies and lying. Following both Augustine and Aquinas, the New Natural Lawyers hold that it is always wrong to lie. Lies are almost always a violation of justice and are always unloving to one's interlocutor, and they always violate the integrity and

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[14] Germain Grisez, Joseph Boyle, John Finnis, and William E. May, "Every Marital Act Ought To Be Open to New Life: Toward a Clearer Understanding," *The Thomist*, 52 (1988): 365-366.

[15] See Janet Smith, *Humanae Vitae: A Generation Later*, Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1991). Grisez et. al. deny neither that the contra-life wrong of contraception is typically practiced by those who intend to have sexual intercourse, nor that the use of contraception is typically a wrong against the good of marriage. But the tyrant who poisons his people's water with a contraceptive is not committing a sexual wrong as such.

[16] For a defense of moral absolutes, se John Finnis, *Moral Absolutes: Tradition, Revision, and Truth* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1991).

authenticity of the liar.[17] Recent criticism has attempted to show that in some circumstances these harms are outside the liar's intention.[18]

In more recent years, the New Natural Lawyers have developed an account of a specifically sexual morality around two claims: first, that marriage is one of the basic human goods, distinct from life or friendship; and second, that the human person is a rational animal, a living organism of the human species. (The latter claim is central as well to the casuistry in regards to abortion, embryo-destructive research, and euthanasia.) Both claims are implicated in a further claim, that in the good of marriage, couples form a union of persons not just morally or spiritually, but also bodily, in the act of marital intercourse. Because sexual intercourse actualizes a biological function that can only be actualized by the couple together, the couple are, in marital intercourse, literally "one flesh," and this one flesh union is the physical realization of the basic good of marriage.[19]

The New Natural Lawyers see general principles of sexual morality as flowing from these claims. Sexual intercourse between non-married couples does not realize the basic good of marriage (as they are not married); nor does it, in and of itself, actualize the good of friendship. So it merely appears to be instantiating a basic good. On the other hand, sexual acts that are not of the marital, i.e., reproductive, *type* fail to effect a one-flesh union between persons. In either case, (i.e., in choosing to pursue pleasure through one flesh union, or in

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[17] See Germain Grisez, *The Way of The Lord Jesus Christ, Volume 2: Living a Christian Life* (Quincy, IL: Franciscan Press, 1993); Finnis, 1998, op. cit.; and Joseph Boyle, "The Absolute Prohibition of Lying and the Origins of the Casuistry of Mental Reservation: Augustinian Arguments and Thomistic Developments," *American Journal of Jurisprudence* 44 (1999): 43-65.

[18] See Gary Chartier, "Toward a Consistent Natural-Law Ethics of False Assertion," *The American Journal of Jurisprudence* 43 (2006): 43-64; and, in rebuttal, Christopher Tollefsen, "Lying: The Integrity Approach," *American Journal of Jurisprudence* 52 (2007): 273-291.

[19] See Grisez, 1993, op. cit.; John Finnis, "Law, Morality, and 'Sexual Orientation,'" *Notre Dame Journal of Law, Ethics and Public Policy*, 9 (1995): 11-39; John Finnis, "Is Natural Law Theory Compatible With Limited Government?" in *Natural Law, Liberalism, and Morality*, ed. Robert P. George (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997) 1-26.

pursuing it through some other sexual act) *without* instantiating the basic good of marriage, agents treat both their own bodies and those of their sexual partners as instruments to the satisfactions of the conscious self. In other words, they attempt a dualistic separation of the conscious self from the organic body. This dualistic separation is central to philosophical defenses of extra and non-marital sexuality; and to defenses of abortion, embryo destructive research, and euthanasia of those who do not yet possess, or are not yet, conscious selves.[20] The New Natural Law account of sexual morality has been particularly controversial.[21]

3. Theory of Action

Many of the particular claims in applied ethics made by the New Natural Lawyers are supported by considerations concerning the nature of human action, and indeed, an account of their casuistry is incomplete apart from a consideration of the nature of action. The New Natural Law's applied ethics specifies a set of moral norms that direct practical deliberations and choice in relation to basic goods. Among the norms are certain moral absolutes that single out types of deliberate behavior that damage or destroy instances of basic goods. Yet if the formula were not further specified, it would be unlivable: because the context of choice is that of incompatible options for action, all of which offer some good not available in the other option(s), *all* choices involve

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[20] See Patrick Lee, "The Human Body and Sexuality in the Teaching of Pope John Paul II," in *John Paul II's Contribution to Catholic Bioethics*, ed. Christopher Tollefsen (Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer, 2005), 107-120; Patrick Lee and Robert P. George, *Body-Self Dualism in Contemporary Ethics and Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Robert P. George and Christopher Tollefsen, *Embryo: A Defense of Human Life* (New York: Doubleday, 2008).

[21] See, e.g., Stephen Macedo, "Homosexuality and the Conservative Mind," *Georgetown Law Journal*, 84 (1995): 261-300; and in response, Robert P. George and Gerard V. Bradley, "Marriage and the Liberal Imagination," *Georgetown Law Review*, 84 (1995): 301-320.

at least that damage to goods which results from foregoing the choice of a good.[22] And because the world is structured according to morally neutral laws of causation, even an act aimed only at a genuine good can have consequences, in the near or far term, that are damaging to instances of basic goods. So moral absolutes must be specified in terms of the concept of intention: it is always wrong, not to *cause* damage, but *intentionally* to damage a basic good.

Accordingly, the New Natural Lawyers need an account both of what it means to intend something, and an account of the circumstances under which it is permissible to allow, or accept as a side effect, damage to a good that is not intended.

The account of intention can be expressed using the helpful notion of a proposal for action. In acting, agents seek to bring about some state of affairs in which a good or goods will be instantiated (agents thus envisage the state of affairs as offering a *benefit*). An agent's proposal for action is her proposal to do such and such in order to bring about that state of affairs. Included in the proposal is both the state of affairs sought – the end – and the instrumentalities by which she will bring about that end – the means. "Intention" for the New Natural Lawyers encompasses both the end (including the good-related benefit which is anticipated in that end) and the means by which the end will be brought about.[23]

A central point, however, for the New Natural Law account at this juncture is that intention is thus an agent-centered, or first-personal reality. It is from the point of view of the agent as seeking some good that a proposal is considered and adopted. What the agent intends is thus a matter of this proposal, and of nothing else: facts of the world, of causality, or of the

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[22] See Joseph Boyle, "Sanctity of Life and Suicide: Tensions and Developments within Common Morality," in *Suicide and Euthanasia*, ed. Baruch A. Brody (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1989), 221-250.

[23] See John Finnis, Germain Grisez, and Joseph Boyle, "'Direct' and 'Indirect:' A Reply to Critics of Our Action Theory," *The Thomist*, 65 (2001): 1-44; Finnis, 1998, op. cit.

proximity of one effect to another do not determine the agent's intention; and it is thus only by adopting the perspective of the acting person that an agent's action can be best understood.[24]

From this perspective, certain consequences that might, in a more "objective" or third-personal account of action appear intended, will not in fact be so. Thus Grisez, Boyle and Finnis have argued that craniotomy, in which a fetus's head is crushed to facilitate removal from the mother, need not involve an intention to kill the child.[25] The intention rather can be "to change the dimensions of the child's skull to facilitate removal." Less controversially, but utilizing the same understanding of action, refusal of life-saving treatment need not be suicidal if it is done to avoid the burdens of treatment, and the provision of death-hastening analgesics, on the one hand, and the use of lethal force in prevention against rape or attack, on the other, need not be homicidal, i.e., it need not involve an intention to kill.

The account of intention is further brought to bear in an area where the absolute prohibition of intentional killing might be thought to have consequences in conflict with traditional Catholic teaching. Pacifism is, in the opinion of many, not a defensible position within the Christian tradition, but if intentional killing is ruled out, then war might seem morally suspect. One traditional way of allowing the use of lethal force, not only in war, but also in the state's prosecution of justice, is to hold that the prohibition on intentional killing applies only to private citizens, and not to agents of the state. The New Natural Law view denies that this is the case; so justified killing in war must be outside the intention just as is justified killing in self-defense. Gerard Bradley has attempted to extend this analysis to the case of the killing of convicted

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[24] See, e.g., Christopher Tollefsen, "Direct and Indirect Action Revisited," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 74 (2001): 653-670; and Christopher Tollefsen, "Is a Purely First Person Account of Human Action Defensible?" *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 9 (2006): 441-460.

[25] Finnis, Grisez, and Boyle, 2001, op. cit.; Christian Brugger, "Action, Intention and Self-Determination," *Vera Lex: Journal of the International Natural Law Society* 6 (2005): 79-106.

criminals.[26] As Bradley and Brugger both point out, however, if the execution of criminals is to be justified as defense, and the criminal's death is not to be, when permissible, intended, then such executions should not be considered capital *punishment*.[27]

Moral norms forbidding certain intentions are negative: they exclude certain options. But, as Grisez points out, upright persons must actively pursue and promote the good; this requires the forming of upright commitments, as well as other more particular actions.[28] Such actions inevitably have side effects – consequences that are not intended – some of which are negative in their impact on fundamental goods. These consequences might be relatively direct – an agent's action might harm himself or some other agent – or they might bear on the *action* of another: one agent's actions for the sake of a good might assist some other agent in doing something morally wrong. Where such assistance is not intended (which would be always morally wrong) it is considered material cooperation (assistance that is intended to help is formal cooperation). The cooperation is thus itself a side effect. What norms, then, govern the acceptance of negative side effects?

What is at stake here is a consideration of the reasons *for* adopting some proposal, and acting in accordance with it, and the reasons *against* so acting, where those reasons do not include the sorts of intention-specified moral absolutes already discussed. The New Natural Lawyers argue, following traditional Catholic casuistry in some respects, that the reasons for acting must be proportionate to the reasons against acting.[29] A number of considerations

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[26] Gerard V. Bradley, "No Intentional Killing Whatsoever: The Case of Capital Punishment," in *Natural Law and Moral Inquiry: Ethics, Metaphysics, and Politics in the Work of Germain Grisez*, ed. Robert P. George (Georgetown: Georgetown University Press, 1998), 155-173.

[27] Bradley, 1998, op. cit.; Christian Brugger, *Capital Punishment and Roman Catholic Moral Tradition* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2003).

[28] Grisez, 1997, op. cit., p. 863.

[29] However, to identify the need for a 'proportionate" reason is not to accede to "proportionalism." Richard McCormick gives a succinct account of that theory: "Common to all so

must be taken into account to judge whether the reasons for and against are proportionate; thus, the judgment called for is a judgment of prudence, both in the case of side effects in general, and of material cooperation. Prudence must, however, take into account in a special way, fairness in the acceptance of side effects. If an agent's willingness to accept negative side effects is due primarily to the fact that those side effects will be suffered by another, and not the agent himself, then the agent is unfair in accepting those side effects. The Golden Rule expresses the relevant norm: Do unto others as you would be done by. An agent who would feel aggrieved were he in the position of the recipient of the burdens, rather than the benefits, might not be acting fairly.

In judgments concerning material cooperation, the prudent agent must consider the various bad effects, both of the wrongful act with which the agent is cooperating, and of the act of cooperation itself, and must also consider the strength of the reasons against materially cooperating. The prudent agent then makes a judgment in relation to the standard set by the first principle of morality, the standard of "integral communal fulfillment," and in particular as that standard has been brought to bear on an agent's life in the form of his or her vocational commitments, and the responsibilities and duties that have resulted from those commitments. A similar prudential judgment is called for in cases that do not involve cooperation. So, for example, a particular array of benefits and burdens resulting from a possible medical treatment might or might not be consistent with one's vocational commitments and responsibilities. These commitments and responsibilities thus provide the standard by which those

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called proportionalists . . . is the insistence that causing certain disvalues [i.e., evils] . . . in our conduct does not by that very fact make the action morally wrong . . . . These evils or disvalues are said to be premoral when considered abstractly, that is, in isolation from their morally relevant circumstances. But they are evils. . . The action in which they occur becomes morally wrong when, all things considered, there is not a proportionate reason in the act justifying the disvalue." Richard A. McCormick, "Killing the Patient", in *Considering Veritatis Splendor*, ed. John Wilkins (Pilgrim Press, 1994), 17. This approach effectively denies the existence of intrinsically evil acts, and hence moral absolutes. For criticism, see Grisez, 1983, op. cit., ad Finnis, 1991, op. cit.

benefits and burdens can be commensurated in judgment and decision. These considerations are a necessary part of the New Natural Law casuistry discussed above.

4. Political Authority and the Political Common Good

In 1979, Grisez and Boyle published *Life and Death with Liberty and Justice*; in 1980, Finnis published *Natural Law and Natural Rights*. Together the two books marked the beginnings of a "discussion of political theory" carried on between the three thinkers.[30] Grisez and Boyle describe their early part in this discussion as conceding "somewhat too much to political theories that are prevalent in the United States."[31] By this, they refer to an indebtedness to John Rawls's antiperfectionism. In *Life and Liberty* Boyle and Grisez allowed that it would be wrong for the state to incorporate substantive moral values, such as the good of life, into its governing principles, and hence into its conception of the common good of the state. In part this was motivated by a need to find a principled limit on the state's sovereignty over the lives, including the moral and religious lives, of its subjects.

Finnis' work in *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, by contrast, argued for a perfectionist account of the state: the basic goods of human persons were not to be ruled out of the practical considerations at the heart of political rule, as in Rawls's work. Yet Finnis too, like Grisez and Boyle, has been sensitive to the need for liberty in the state, and the limits of state sovereignty over individuals; all three oppose the view, encouraged by what Finnis calls a

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[30] As Grisez and Boyle note: Germain Grisez and Joseph Boyle, "Response to Our Critics and Our Collaborators," in *Natural Law and Moral Inquiry: Ethics, Metaphysics, and Politics in the Work of Germain Grisez*, ed. Robert P. George (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1998), 222. Robert P. George has also contributed to this discussion of political philosophy. See Robert P. George, *Making Men Moral* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1993); and Robert P. George, *In Defense of Natural Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

[31] Grisez and Boyle, 1998, op. cit., 222-223.

"quick" reading of Aquinas, according to which "government should command whatever leads people towards their ultimate (heavenly) end, forbid whatever deflects them from it, and coercively deter people from evil-doing and induce them to morally decent conduct."[32]

Accordingly, Grisez, Finnis and Boyle have converged on an account of political authority and the common good that, while rooted in the basic goods, nevertheless sees the state as a "community co-operating in the service of a common good which is instrumental, not itself basic."[33] Political authority is necessary because individuals, families, and groups, while sufficient in one sense for the pursuit of all the basic goods, including the goods of marriage and religion, are nevertheless thwarted in their pursuit of these goods by (a) lack of social coordination; (b) the hostility of outsiders; (c) the predatory behavior of some insiders; and (d) circumstances beyond the control of individuals that leave them in conditions of more than usual dependence but without the usual personal and social aids, as, for example, widows, orphans, the sick, and the disabled.

Political authority, and optimally, a political authority itself subject to law, is necessary to efficiently and fairly pursue these goals; but together, these goals comprise a set of conditions instrumentally necessary for individuals and groups to directly pursue the basic goods, individually and cooperatively. The political common good is thus described by Finnis as "the whole ensemble of material and other conditions, including forms of collaboration, that tend to favor, facilitate, and foster the realization by each individual [in that community] of his or her personal development."[34]

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[32] John Finnis, "Is Natural Law Theory Compatible With Limited Government?" in *Natural Law, Liberalism, and Morality*, ed. Robert P. George (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 7.

[33] Ibid., 5.

[34] Ibid.

In putting forth this account of political authority and the common good, Finnis has criticized the idea, mentioned above, that the common good includes the complete well-being, including the moral well-being, of the state's citizens. In contrasting this Aristotelian idea with what he takes to be the true Thomistic view, Finnis has drawn criticism from some Thomists, who read St. Thomas as more similar to Aristotle than does Finnis. He has also generated some debate internal to the New Natural Law theory concerning the proper limits of political authority.[35]

Finnis holds that recognition of the instrumental nature of the state means that, as George summarizes his position, "law and the state exceed their just authority – thus violating a principle of justice – when they go beyond the protection of the public moral environment and criminalize 'even secret and truly consensual adult acts of vice.'"[36] But, says George in response, "it does not follow, or so it seems to me, from the instrumental nature of the political common good that moral paternalism, where it can be effective, is beyond the scope of that good."[37] And so George, unlike Finnis, holds that the legitimate limits on legislation where morality is concerned are prudential, not principled.

5. The Ultimate End of Human Beings

As Grisez notes, "Thomas Aquinas held that the true ultimate end for all human beings is God alone, attained by the beatific vision."[38] Grisez's argument with Aquinas on this point has resulted in a reframing of the first principle of morality.

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[35] See the discussion in Robert P. George, *The Clash of Orthodoxies: Law, Religion, and Morality in Crisis* (Wilmington, DE: ISI Books, 2001), 91-109.

[36] George, 2001, op. cit., p. 107, quoting Finnis, 1996, op. cit., p. 8.

[37] George, 2001, op. cit, p. 109.

[38] Grisez, 2008, op. cit., p. 38.

St. Thomas argues to the above claim about the beatific vision from the claims that only the beatific vision could be absolutely fulfilling to human beings and that the final, or ultimate, end of human beings must be absolutely fulfilling. It follows from these two claims that the beatific vision is the ultimate end. However, the second of these claims implies, as Thomas shows, that only a perfect good can be taken as one's final end; and this in turn implies that an agent can will only one final end at one time (since willing a second would imply that the first was in some respect imperfect). But, argues Grisez, this claim is false: someone living in God's love who nevertheless commits a venial sin has two ultimate ends, one God, the other the end intended in the venial sin.[39] So the claims that imply that agents can intend only one end – that the ultimate end must be absolutely fulfilling, and that only what is regarded as a perfect good can be willed as a final end – are false; thus St. Thomas' argument about the beatific vision is unsound.

By contrast, Grisez's views on our ultimate end are shaped by his understanding of what we are directed to by the principles of practical reason: the indiscriminate "well-being and flourishing of ourselves and everyone else;" we thus "reasonably take as our ultimate end an inclusive community of human persons along with other intelligent creatures and God – insofar as we know other intelligent creatures and God and can somehow cooperate with them and/or act for their good."[40]

Our ultimate end is not, therefore, the beatific vision, but a state of affairs that includes all persons with whom or for whose sake we can act, including God, with whose creative activity we cooperate in pursuing basic goods. Grisez calls this state of affairs "integral communal fulfillment." By revelation we can know that we are promised the immortality necessary to

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[39] See also Peter F. Ryan, S.J., "Must the Acting Person Have a Single Ultimate End?" *Gregorianum* 82: (2001): 325-256.

[40] Grisez, 2008, op. cit., p. 55.

achieve this state of affairs, which adequate reflection reveals to be dynamic and increasing in perfection, rather than static and "complete," or unimproveable.

This new account of the ultimate end is meant to replace an earlier account of the ultimate end and the first principle which, in a sense, divided what the new account unifies. In an earlier essay, Grisez had argued that the ultimate end of human beings was a state of affairs: a cooperative relationship with God.[41] And Grisez, Finnis, and Boyle in a different essay had argued that an ideal – integral human fulfillment – specified the morally good will by way of the first principle of morality.[42]

On the new account, by contrast, there is still a state of affairs posited as the ultimate end, but it is much broader: integral communal fulfillment, understood as including a relationship between all persons capable of cooperation, human, angelic, and divine. Grisez argues that this state of affairs, which he identifies as the kingdom of heaven, is itself the object of intention of all upright persons (although not all upright persons have as complete or adequate an understanding of this end as have those possessed of Christian revelation). So the first principle of morality is now linked together with the ultimate end and prescribes the intending of that end by all upright persons.

What, then, of the beatific vision? This issue lies outside the boundaries, strictly speaking, of any natural law account; but Grisez has argued that by revelation, human agents can come to know that through baptism they may be reborn as adopted members of God's family, children of the Father. As members of the divine family, they are promised a sharing in the divine life, a sharing that is entirely a gift, and not, strictly speaking, a *human* good, since it is not a fulfillment of human nature as such. Nevertheless, because of their divinized nature, this sharing in the divine life will really be fulfilling. Grisez

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[41] Grisez, 2001, op. cit.

[42] Grisez, Boyle, and Finnis, 1987, op. cit.

notes that by their "faith and hope, which fulfill them with respect to harmony with God, [the baptized] accept that gift and anticipate enjoying it."[43]

Grisez's (2001) discussion of the final end drew much attention and criticism in the symposium of which it was a part, in the *American Journal of Jurisprudence*. His further developments (in 2008) of the view will undoubtedly be of continuing interest.

University of South Carolina
Columbia, South Carolina

[43] Grisez, 2008, op. cit., p. 60.

The Real-Ideal Divide

Jan Kyrre Berg Olsen

1. Realism

The philosophy of Immanuel Kant introduced a change in the philosophical and scientific attitude towards mind and its relation to reality.[1] Thus, we can talk about "realism" *befor*e and *after* Kant.

Generally speaking, the most essential and characteristic feature of realism is the notion of a *mind-independent* existence, which means that individual or a species of things have an existence that is "in-itself". Realism is a metaphysical position; it is a stance taken of individual mind-endowed human beings towards the world in perception. On the other hand, to *deny* that something is mind-independent is yet another, however different, metaphysical stance that is called anti-realism or idealism. However, philosophical discourse discloses the fact that we, as philosophers and scientists, tend to choose different specifications for what is to count as "independent of mind" and also in which way this "mind-independent" entity is supposed to exist. There are many metaphysical issues over which realism and idealism have been argued. For example, we have the question about the existence of moral values. Or we have the problem of the existence of souls and minds. More interestingly is whether the past can be said to have been real, or, on the other hand, if the future is real. We tend, nevertheless, to take different specifications for granted and therefore we have a tremendously large variety of senses in which the word "realism" is being used. In order to get a general feeling of the modern sense of

[1] See for instance Vasilis Politis' "Introduction to Immanuel Kant", 1996, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Everyman. This is not to say that Kant was a realist, it is just to point to a change in what realism is about and which Kant's distinction about the "thing in itself" and the "thing as it is for me" clearly indicates.

philosophical realism, we have to briefly take a look at the "before" and "after" of Kant.

Medieval scholastic realism had two poles: an *extreme* or exaggerated version and a much more *moderate* one. These two poles of realism were opposed to "nominalism" and "conceptualism". Scholastic realists in general did not see "mind-independence" as any essential feature of their positions. In fact the "mind-independence" aspect did not present itself as any feature at all in the debate; it is only in modern philosophy that the aspect of mind-independence becomes an issue. It is the focus upon the aspect of "mind-independence" that marks of the shift from "medieval" realism to our modern versions. Scholastic realists emphasized the intimacy between mind and reality rather than focusing on the issue of having to deal with different "substances".

The transition to the modern sense of realism came, however, with the philosophy of Kant. Kant saw idealism as the opposing view to realism. For Kant realism was divided into *transcendental* and *empirical* variants. Like the empirical realists, Kant was of the opinion that we know about the existence of things and objects in the world. These are things that appear in space and time. The transcendental realist would go further by stating that the existence we claim to know is wholly independent of our perception and predication. Kant would probably disagree with this view since his view was primarily interpreted as stating that knowledge is about things in the world dependent upon perception. However, this knowledge would rest upon nothing else but appearances. This is not knowledge proper.

Thus, we can say that Kant affirms the reality of universal concepts as something "mind-bound", that concepts are real only within the human mind. We can also distinguish between our universal concepts and sensations. Thus, we have sensations of a particular and floating world and schemata of universals to create order for our sensations. It is the *a priori* forms of our minds that can be held responsible for generating universal representations. Experience can not yield any basis for our universal concepts, like for instance time and space. Time and space are therefore schemata that arise from our mental organization.

Following Kant, realism has become a multifaceted intellectual phenomenon which gathers around a few core-beliefs like the most important one: *the existence of a world independent of our mental acts*. Now the problem is not so much that there exists a world independent of our minds. The problem consists of how to establish contact with the world so that we can create knowledge about it; knowledge that contains the "essence" of this world as it is in-itself. For many scientists and philosophers this is important since knowledge about the world should not be tainted with subjectivity.

Among the most influential realist doctrines we find "Metaphysical realism" and "Scientific realism" that somehow have a connection with the doctrine of "Temporal realism".

2. Metaphysical Realism

The general attitude towards realism presents realism as the view that material things, other humans, trees, stones, mountains and so forth, exist externally to ourselves and therefore also independently of our sense experience and knowledge. There is no problem of accepting this definition; however, it does present us with a problem as it may imply that we (humans) are on the *outside* looking *in* on reality. It is this possibility of a "separation" of human experienced reality and a reality that exist "in-itself", that is, the separation of *man* and *reality* that the metaphysical realist takes to its most extreme articulation.[2]

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[2] The following account of metaphysical realism rests on the following thinkers and works: Hilary Putnam, 1990, *Realism with a Human Face*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. H. Putnam, 1987, *The Many Faces of Realism*, La Salle, IL: Open Court. H. Putnam, 1983, *Realism and Reason*, Cambridge University Press. N. Rescher, 2002, "An Idealistic Realism: Presuppositional Realism and Justifacatory Idealism" in R. Gale (ed.), The Blackwell Guide to Metaphysics, Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 242-62. Nancy Cartwright, 1983, *How the Laws of Physics Lie*, Clarendon Press. Karl Popper, 1983, *Realism and the Aim of Science*, Routledge.

The Real-Ideal Divide

The metaphysical realist believes that man cannot trust his or her senses or other forms of experience in order to conceive of what is really real. The metaphysical realist likes to think that there exists an absolute disjunction between mind and matter. Similarly we find that the difference in definition between the subjective and objective domains of the world is based upon this lack of trust or belief in our experience together with the assumption that the ideas of the mind are subjective and therefore not real. Thus, the metaphysical realist also believes that it is possible to preserve in theory a definitive borderline between concepts, ideas, symbols *and* "things", "processes" and "relations between entities" in physical reality so that it can distinguish in an absolute manner between epistemology and ontology. The problem, as I see it, is that the essential ingredient in the metaphysical realist view is that *real* reality lies outside the *reach* of human perception and experience. The metaphysical realist is thus decapitating individual subjective experience from the body of knowledge, making the *relation* between "knowledge of the world" and "the world in-itself", *mysterious*. There is a big crevasse between the moderate realist and the metaphysical realist views. The moderate realist states that the world must be something which is prior to our actual experience of it. Metaphysical realism on the other hand goes much further and states that there is a reality which will never be disclosed by experience or by our cognition. The usual explanation for the claim that we will never disclose the really real by our experience and cognition is given in form of the myth that there is "something" in between reality and us as experiencing subjects. This "something" is what makes it impossible for us to perceive true properties. Therefore, there has to be some other and necessary means which enable us to disclose "true" reality. Therefore, the most pregnant problem will be, for the metaphysical realist, to explain the linkage between human knowledge, which must correspond to reality *and* "reality-as-it-is-in-itself".

The reason given by the metaphysical realist, in order to account for a knowledge that can transcend our experience and normal everyday cognitions, is to claim superiority for a subjectivity-transcending faculty within subjectivity,

namely for a "higher" intellectual faculty that can rise above the coarseness and relativity of experience. The problems arising with this view are, of course, the "internal" dualism imposed on the human mind which divides mind into two *different* domains that, presumably, have nothing to do with each other. The thing is that one may believe that "higher faculty thought" is not part of the ordering taking place in the experiencing of the actual world since it is not believed to be determined by sense experience. It is thought that this "higher faculty" operates independently of experience. It is a kind of faculty that functions pretty much like any disinterested calculating device opening up for the hidden but fundamental reality by abstraction or subtraction.[3]

The essential and shared belief found in these two viewpoints is that we can isolate what is real from what is mind-dependent. This is extremely difficult, especially if we are dealing with our notion of *time*. It seems problematic as there is a confusion of objective time with true, ontological time. I will discuss this later on, but for now it must suffice to comment upon the fact that it is hard to see how one can determine any truth about the "ontological" nature of time – whether it is by abstraction or by subtraction – in this manner. We do not – and cannot – "abstract" or "subtract" any real properties of time from our experience – any more than we are able to "isolate" temporal properties, which are properties that are part of our experience as *not real*. It is hard to see how we can – if at all – "detach" from our subjectivity in the sense of having a mind that comprises consciousness and experiences of both ourselves and the external world, thus placing ourselves very much in this world that we experience. Let us grant that we can "detach" to some extent from what we know is just a product of our own temperament. Nevertheless, every

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[3] For an understanding of the "subtraction" viewpoint see Huw Price, 1996, *Time's Arrow and Archimedes' Point*, Oxford University Press, p. 267. See also my paper "Temporalitet og realisme", *Norsk filosofisk tidsskrift*, nr. 1-2, 2001, årgang 36, pp. 62-82, for a critique of this viewpoint.

"detachment" is due to our subjectivity and thus is to be found within subjectivity as such.[4]

There is some kind of relationship between certain ideas. There is a mysterious relation between the metaphysical belief in a higher and detached intellectual faculty and the belief in the "existence" of a fixed borderline between "fact" and "knowledge about fact", that is, between ontology and epistemology.

But as we might be aware of, it is sometimes difficult to separate between what is *real* in itself and what we *know* to be real. However, a "borderline" between fact and knowledge of fact emphasizes that knowledge of reality should be true, that our knowledge of things correspond to what things really are independent of any perceiving subject, that is, "objectively". But since it is difficult to verify or falsify beyond the reach of scientifically extended *observation* one cannot empty the possibilities that might be hidden for us, for our experience and observation, because we cannot see to the bottom of reality. This means that we have to allow into the domain of knowledge aspects that cannot – at least not at the moment – be verified, but also to allow aspects which probably never can be verified because they are idealizations and assumptions necessary for the intelligibility of the theory. These speculative aspects are justified by other means than observation or procedures like verification or falsification. However, to give these speculative aspects justification, that is, the right to remain as necessary parts of the theory would mean that we have to justify them as possibilities by a detached viewpoint and thus give the justification itself an appearance of being objective. This is factual since the opposite, that is, to give the speculative aspects a real objective justification, would mean to go beyond the reach of human experiencing and scientific observation. Thus, we end up with the fact that we can, as far as these

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[4] See "Temporalitet og realisme". I have also treated this question in Jan-K. Berg Olsen, "Some Neglected Aspects in Connection with the Objectification of Time" in V. F. Hendricks & J. Ryberg (eds.), 2001, *Readings in Philosophy & Science Studies*, Vol. I, Roskilde University.

speculative elements are concerned, never go beyond our concepts, that is, to something that should be more fundamentally real than these concepts are themselves.

Hence, we have concepts and ideas, idealizations, rather speculative hypothesis and assumptions that we nevertheless cannot do without in our labor to construct a theoretical picture of reality. We cannot theorize about the world only by appealing to subject-independent "facts", as these "facts" may be in-themselves. We have to assume something about them. Therefore, knowledge about the world will have to include elements and aspects that are necessary for the intelligibility of the theory. These aspects and elements are themselves not *factual* in the peculiar sense that the metaphysical realist demands, that is, as subject-independent realities. This means that the "borderline" of the metaphysical realist becomes rather blurred in actuality, and that is further blurred by the *separation of experiencing from thinking*. Since a separation of human experience, that is, as a method of accessing "reality" as it is "in-itself" is rejected, an appeal to higher faculty thinking cannot save realism. The "thing-in-itself" will still be out of reach since it will still be independent of human knowledge; it is per definition *inaccessible*.

Thus, we can spot a further contradiction within metaphysical realism. Not only do we have a cleavage between experiencing and thinking as we have a cleavage between a world that we can experience (appearances) and reality (fundamental or microscopic), because the contradiction goes even further. The contradiction is to be found in the core of realism, namely as a contradiction between the view realists have of knowledge as insight, which is a necessary product of a higher intellectual faculty and its outright skepticism about human knowledge *per se*. This is clearly shown in the belief that our concepts (since there is a borderline between knowledge and ontology) cannot tell us anything which is really true about reality, as it is in-itself. In other words, there is the fact that metaphysical realism believes that we can have objective knowledge about the world seems contradictory. Nevertheless, metaphysical realism seems to be *nominalistic*. Metaphysical realism is nominalism since it claims that we

never can disclose "reality as it is in-itself"; because concepts are "mind-things" and therefore cannot be similar-in-content to anything independent of mind. I believe the conflicting ideas of realism and nominalism to be elements of the ideal basis which constitute theories like "coarse-graining" and "the mind-dependence theory of time". This schism is found, among other things, in the fact that the necessity of applying the human subjectivity as an inter-connected whole is inescapable in the process of putting together the bits and pieces that make up our knowledge of the world. We always end up with our more or less true concepts. The metaphysical realist cannot justify or perhaps he believes that he is not allowed to justify, what makes the concepts true by appealing to *experience*. Instead he must appeal to something *beyond* experience, *something believed not to have a human origin*. In this view, the content of human consciousness becomes a mystical representation of something that is denied accessibility to us through our usual means of orientation in our surrounding life-world. Thus, there has to be limitations to the human intellect, that is, there are circumstances that tell us that the properties and features of real things outrun our cognitive reach. Essential and crucial aspects of reality are placed outside the reach of human subjectivity. Hence, realism speaks for a position that emphasizes mind-independence as a true feature of the real.

For the more *moderate* scientific realist the claim for realism is found in the substantive knowledge of the sciences. The problems that scientific realism generally is struggling with are those concentrated around the explication of the ontological status of scientific entities. Such entities can be atoms or the neuron. Connected to this explanatory work is also the problem of discriminating between properties along the explanation of what kind of properties belong to these entities in the first place. Lastly we find that the problem of transforming these theoretical entities into ontological *real* objects also include some kind of explanation of the *temporal* development of the states of the entities and their interactions with other entities. The *metaphysical realist*, on the other hand, finds the basis for realism in the assumption that we cannot achieve complete knowledge of the real, that our means of achieving knowledge

are limited to such an extent that we can only talk about a partial access to reality. The metaphysical scientific realist explains knowledge. This includes scientific knowledge by *emphasizing our shortcomings* when it comes to knowing the real in whatever form it may be.

Nevertheless, it should be clear that whether one is a metaphysical realist or not one would still have the insight that enables one to agree upon experience and thought as not always corresponding with each other. The metaphysical realist has created a cleavage out of this subjective insight. It is the "cleavage" itself that becomes important to this form of realism. However, the definition of what secures the access to the real content of the world is ambiguous. For the realist reality will always remain "in-itself" and this is, of course, different from most descriptions of what we believe reality to be. In this sense reality as it is in-itself will always remain what it is in-itself and as such it will be the secure fundament with which we as scientists and philosophers refer to and thus control and explain our attempts. However, is the realist correct in believing this?

The whole issue of understanding the relationship between thought, experience and perception is complicated. *We* (humans) will always *experience* reality in the same manner, this is to say, we will always *see* trees as trees, and we will always *hear* birdsong as birdsong and so forth. But the categories by which we determine and describe what we experience do not always have to remain the same whether they are within the individual or within some specific branch of knowledge. What remains the same to experience or sense perception may appear to be different in thoughtful contemplation. This is better understood if we understand that experience has at least two or three levels, that is, from what is perceived as concretely to the abstract. In this sense we can understand that it is not what is sensed which differs as a sense-object in experience, but what becomes in its more abstract form by appearing differently according to changing categories by which we explain and describe the sense-object in knowledge. Time in *experience* is a disclosure of its specific "nature", as it is "in-itself". However, this is not obvious, at least in the context of realism.

To most people time appears perhaps to be the same since we all can use tensed language when we talk with each other and thus are able to understand each other. The question of what time is changes according to different philosophical positions. This means that the understanding of the object in question becomes idealized and theory-dependent in different ways according to difference in philosophy. The position that I am mostly opposed to is the form of metaphysical realism, which in the discussion about the nature of time, is better known as "temporal realism".

3. Temporal Realism

Of the greatest concern to the temporal realist is the necessity of justifying the claim that there exists *a tenseless world* with *no transitory properties* and, preferably, *no objective distinctions between* "*now*", "*past*" or "*future*". Accordingly will the temporal realist argue that all tensed talk are nothing but mere subjective utterances that have no bearing upon the objective determination of the facts located within reality but independent of the perceiving subject. This means that an objective account of the independent real occurrences, that is, the facts can only come about by the use of a tenseless language, like when we apply the distinctions "earlier than", "later than" or "simultaneous with" to describe the order of the tenseless events. One should therefore attempt to reduce all tensed reporting of occurrences, which are assumed to "be" tenselessly in the subject-independent reality, to tenseless language since "every utterance of any tensed sentence has tenseless truth conditions".[5] However, the terms "now", "future" and "past", and the

[5] See Jan Faye, 1989, *The Reality of the Future*, Odense University Press, p. 90.

relationship between these terms, still have a particularly stubbornness. As we will see, they are hard to get rid of even for the realist.

What are the core beliefs of the temporal realist? First and foremost that reality itself has no innate distinctions between "now", "past" or "future". They are all subjective distinctions. We are in a sense talking of a "being", which does not come to be or cease to be. The distinction between now, future and past is irrelevant to the objective account of facts that has to be true whether it is in the past, now or in the future. The metaphysical realist of time does not like or want to take the questions about fatalism or determinism seriously. This means that most temporal realists claim that the future is "open". The future is real beyond the present or actual state of affairs. That we cannot verify the future state *now* has to do with the way we perceive the world, that is, with the narrow and restricting or limiting outlook our senses and consciousness allows us to have of the world around us.

Also the temporal realist distinguishes between ontology and epistemology, or perhaps it would be more correct to call it *logic* instead of epistemology since the realist asserts that future states or events are *logically* determined.[6] This is, according to Faye, something the realist holds to be *necessarily* true.[7] However, this would indicate that the borderline between reality and theory becomes blurred. If something is stated about the future *at this moment* and then becomes verified *when* it occurs, then it is true. But can we say that it is true if it is true when it has not occurred yet? Logically it is. It is logical to say that a fact will be a fact whether it has occurred in the *past* at *t*0, *now* at *t*1, or in a *future* state at *t*n. Future and past events are all logically determined at any time.[8] The consequence of the removal of the veil between theory and reality is indicated by the assumption that if it is logical it might very well be real. In fact this only states something about the logical "nature" of

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[6] Ibid., p. 93.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Ibid., p. 95.

facts, that is, of logical identity that in the metaphysical doctrine of *deterministic universality* must be true at *all* times. This is an ontology of time where the characteristics of experienced temporality are replaced by a "time stretch" that has the characterizing features of being something that "is" and that can be measured. "Being" is that which is spatially stretched out in time, a time that comprises all there *is*, and "measure" is at what "time" it occurs on the time axis. Time is simply defined differently from that experienced temporality we normally presuppose in our everyday life. Therefore, if "facts" *are* universal time cannot lapse as a transient, irreversible, asymmetric and heterogeneous ongoing "transformation" of the world.

That the future is *real* is to say that the future is *logically* determined. This means, according to Faye, that objective tenses do not exist.[9] That time is divided into different meanings or determinations, as past, present and future depends solely on the existence of a perceiving mind. This, again, is to say that "perceiving minds" are to be considered as obstacles of true insights of reality. Of course, this leads us to the realist point of view that the *present* constitutes no *objective reality*. It is the subject-independent that is "true" and "real". The temporal realist cannot see anything in the world that would indicate to us how we should divide the world into past, present and future. The obvious thing would be to understand human beings as part of reality, but the realist cannot accept this since he rejects that man can access true reality (believed to be beyond experience) through experience.

The confusion of whether one is dealing with descriptions of an epistemological character or a metaphysical statement is again blurred because the knowledge referred too is about the world which exists independently of man. This is a world that is imagined to consist of events which constitute an objective temporal order without sentient beings. Thus the argument brings in the faculty of *imagination* as some kind of "God's eye point of view". This illustrates that we can imagine what the world and its temporal order would look

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[9] Ibid., p. 115.

like if it lacked human beings to constitute the present, that is, as "particular events occurring tenselessly at different times".[10] Likewise, the realist claims that it is hard to imagine what change and becoming might be or consist of if man was absent in the world. The demand is furthermore that change and becoming are the same as "particular events occurring tenselessly at different times". The application of the word "occurrences" is, for instance, as opposed to "becoming" or "change", not further explained. Anyway, the ontological statements are not easy to hide in a description that argues that reduction of tenses and the application of tenseless language would serve us better if we needed to *represent* time, that is, as a constructed relational time-order.

4. Idealism and Misconceptions

It is a widespread belief among realists that idealism is to mean the same as *subjective* idealism. Furthermore, it is believed that idealism is the *opposite* of realism; that it is *irreconcilable* with realism. In the first case idealism is held to be stressing that the world, reality, things etc. are mind-dependent; that ideas and concepts have priority over matter both ontologically and epistemologically speaking. Ontologically speaking is idealism held to be the view that the world is a *product* of our own mind, that is, of our conceptualizations and/or ideas. This means that nothing *really* exists which is not dependent on the mind. Hence, physical things are either *mental* or *mind-dependent* or *could be perceived under certain circumstances*. Such "identification" of idealism as *subjective* idealism may, perhaps, be credited the influence stemming from interpretations of the philosophies of George Berkeley and Immanuel Kant.[11] In

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[10] Ibid.

[11] What I try to say here is that we cannot blame Berkeley or Kant for our way of understanding them even if we may not agree. In the case of Berkeley there are many recent attempts to understand him in a broader context than the "usual" one of solipsism and subjectivism. For an excellent paper on this see: Signe Lykke Aggerbeck, "Realismen i Berkeley's idealisme", in A. Ousager (ed.), 1994, *Erfaring; Tænkning; Ånd*, Forlaget *Philosophia*, Århus, s.121-142.

Kant's sense this could mean that human thought and experience always will be determined or conditioned of, and thus limited, to its own reason and its own concepts.

In the second case we often find statements such as in R. J. Hirst, that:

> Realism is thus opposed to idealism, which holds that no such material objects exist apart from our knowledge or consciousness of them, the whole universe thus being dependent on the mind or in some sense mental.[12]

The main problem is not that it is realism and idealism that is opposed to each other but realism and solipsism. The metaphysical realist Karl Popper[13] likewise rejects idealism because he identifies it with the "transcendentalism" of Kant and "subjectivism" understood as solipsism. He writes that:

> The subjectivist theory of knowledge fails… [because] it naively assumes that all knowledge is subjective – that we cannot speak of knowledge without a knower, a knowing subject.[14]

For Popper this was enough to convince him that idealism is wrong since *scientific* knowledge is not the personal knowledge of the "knower".[15] Popper therefore rejected the idealistic theory of knowledge because he identified it as "the subjectivist theory of knowledge".[16] The weightiest reason for Popper to reject idealism is that knowledge cannot be knowledge if this is something which only goes on in our minds, or as Popper writes:

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[12] R. J. Hirst, "Realism", in P. Edwards (ed.), 1967, *Encyclopedia of Philosophy 1-8*, vol. 7, New York– London, p. 77.

[13] See K. Popper, 1983, *Realism and the Aim of Science*, Routledge, pp. 80-88.

[14] Ibid., p. 92.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid.

> On this subjective basis, no objective theory can be built: the world becomes the totality of my ideas, of my dreams."[17]

Since realism and idealism both are metaphysical theories the theory of idealism as "subjectivism" could not be refuted, although the reasons offered by Popper seem good enough for almost anyone to reject this theory. The best epistemological argument in favor of subjectivism states that *all I know* are my own experiences and ideas. As I will argue later on, idealism is still not necessarily identical to solipsism or subjectivism. As a preliminary to my "synthesis" certain aspects should be emphasized to the understanding of the relationship between the world and mind.

To *know* something of the *world* demands the presence of *experience*, *understanding* and *judgment*.[18] This also signifies that knowledge of the world demands that there is some degree of information-exchange between the three fundamental cognitive factors. In this context, that is, of an individual who interacts with his or her surrounding world, we cannot talk about the individual creating the world, nor that he or she "experiences" that he/she "creates" the world. What we do is that we somehow participate in establishing the identity and certainty of what goes on in the world as "knowledge". To use the language of phenomenology, we "*constitute*" the world.

Understanding is very much a "creation". Understanding is an activity, namely of creativity that assembles, affirms or rejects bits and pieces of probable possibilities from experience and perception into the most probable, the most verified. Thus, we are not talking of a creation of the world but of a creation of knowledge of the world. Thus, reality is "understood", it is "knowledge": to be "real" is to participate in the understanding of reality. "Reality" signifies nothing other than to be known through creative

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[17] Ibid., p. 82.

[18] See H. A. Meynell, "Metaphysical Lessons of Idealism", P. A. Bogaard & G. Treash (eds.), 1993, *Metaphysics as Foundations*, pp. 73-96.

understanding. However, this does not fuse the "real and ideal". "Reality" is to be *known* through *experience*, *understanding* and *judgment*.[19]

It is the dividing line, the absolute border between subject and knowledge of object, between object and subject-independent knowledge that becomes confused or blurred in realistic epistemology. This is due to some confusion about *nature*, that is, the *meaning* of the concept of "objectivity".[20] In one aspect we can apply the term "objectivity" as descriptive of the way the realistically inclined behaviorists understand humans "objectively". Humans are, in this particular realistic framework, treated as if they had nothing of those qualities, or abilities, or capacities that we normally would say belonged to man, namely that of thinking, feeling and understanding. Another way of "objective" viewing is to *imagine* what things would be like if there were no humans to watch. We will strive to understand things as they really are and for this reason we can place imaginary brackets around our bias and preconceptions. The objectification of reality, of whether reality is human or non-human, becomes queer once we vulgarize this second sense of "in-itself". We vulgarize by over-emphasizing the meaning found in the "behavioral-realistic" notion of "disengagement". The disengagement we feel sometimes is functional or instrumental from a personal point of view. It is perhaps intended to enable ourselves to *control* our personal emotions regarding our environment and is thus not the "objective" as we first believed since the disengagement most likely carries deep within itself an intention or motive for its application.

The main problem of realism is the uncritical belief in the ability of disengagement; of having the ability to have a "look" from an absolute "God's eye point of view" for *all* kinds of things, and thus to be able to spot the real that is hidden within. The "vulgarization" is the notion that one has really "disengaged" and that one has achieved "disenchantment". That one can

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[19] Ibid.

[20] Although this topic of "objectivity" is treated in a later chapter, some preliminary comments are necessary at this point.

disengage in one's act of thinking about the world, which also "means" an objective disengagement from one's own subjectivity, may leave the spectator with a belief of having achieved a "pure impression" of the world as it *really* is. Reality and subjectivity are something that shall be kept apart because subjectivity is defined as the opposite of objectivity. The epistemological distinction between the subject and the world is taken for granted as a distinction which is also real, i.e. a distinction which exists in reality.

5. Synthesis

The opposition of realism and idealism is also an opposition of outlook or attitudes towards science. More precisely is the opposition between naïve realists and naïve formalists. Both positions search for an explanation of nature, both positions have a need to justify their science as a legitimate explanation of the real, that is, it is more correctly to speak of a justification of a stance which is ontological or metaphysical. The surprising thing here is that idealism and realism, in the shape as naïve realism and naïve formalism, have merged into some kind of synthesis. However, this synthesis differs from the one I propose. The peculiar synthesis of formalism and realism becomes evident if we take a look at what differentiates the kind of explanation that these positions offer.[21] The consequence is that unjustified claims are produced concerning the ontology of some entity in question. The alliance between realism and formalism is seen in the efforts to defend a "conceptual primacy to space rather than to time."[22] Both positions, and this is why we reject this kind of "synthesis", argue that time, as we *know*, it is an illusion.

The formalism in question explains nature by referring to eternal forms in nature, forms which ultimately are mathematical or geometrical. According to

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[21] See the paper by Mogens Wegener, "Conflicting Ideas of Relativity".

[22] Ibid.

Mogens Wegener, this seems to be "vulgar Platonism".[23] On the other hand we have naïve realism with the notion that nature has "something" in-itself, a "something" that is "matter-in-motion", something non-sensible. What muddles the distinction between these positions is that formalists often use the jargon of the realists.[24] This is seen, for instance, by the way truths shall be independent of experience just like mathematical and logical truths are thought to be. As a consequence space-time geometry is presented as a structure which is immanent in nature itself.[25] Thus, a limit has been transgressed, namely by science itself since statements on ontology have no easy resting place within science; science should abstain from claims about exclusive status for its hypothesis about "fundamentals" as explanations of the essence of nature. Nevertheless, idealizing is hard to get by in science. All "fundamental", "ultimate", "supreme" *reality* is essentially ideal in nature. All idealization is a reshaping of experience. With idealization we strive to give contemplated reconstructions to the qualities of conscious experience. These reconstructions replace the original content of experience and fills in what it lack in actuality, the reason is that experience mainly consists of disagreeable contingencies. What is imagined in this idealizing activity, as a reshaping of experience, seems to be those "things" that are absent in reality; this is an imagination which is reflective and thus directed and guided by a desire that only a metaphysical commitment can initiate. Platonic forms are survivors in formalism because the notion of ideational being has been reshaped by idealization to meet the demands of modern science in those respects where actual experience is disagreeable. What formalism and realism primarily agree on is that experience is contingent, fleeting, momentary and transient, in short: unreliable as a source of knowledge.

Change is instability and when something is insatiable there must be something incomplete about it. There seems to be absence and deficiency. True

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[23] Ibid.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Ibid.

reality is changeless; it is Being that always remains itself in fixed rest. For "time" this indicates that in nature emphasis is put on the *nomothetic* features, whereas the generative features are neglected. Although, when we experience time, we have an experience which includes both being and becoming in an unproblematic unity[26]. This unity is dispersed with in the theoretical operation of idealization which is either formalistic or realistic. "Fundamental reality" is changeless and total; its oneness is harmony, it equals symmetry and symmetry is perfection. There are therefore correspondence between levels of reality and degrees of truth: the more fundamental or complete the reality is the more true seems the knowledge that it refers to. To escape the metaphysics, the blatant hypothetical nature of these assumptions, the realist proposes that "it is not the origin of ideas which should interest epistemologists, but the truth of theories…"[27] To know something is to neglect origin and discover whatever is permanent. To neglect the origin of ideas, of say, the origin of our idea about time, is to judge between theories in order to find the best and/or true theory is to believe that one can detach or sustain the cause of impartial, thorough-going and disinterested reflection. This is the traditional philosophy of scientism and naturalism and it is maintained as realism or formalism.

In contrast to this there is another way of viewing a synthesis that sees in the human cognition a practical approach to the world, which constitutes the fundament for a science that is operative and practical and that ultimately yields objective knowledge.

This means that scientific objects and structures are not put up as something that is metaphysically contrasted to the daily experience of man, and which would constitute a realm approachable only by a naturalistic and

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[26] See J. T. Fraser, 1990, *Of Time, Passion, and Knowledge*, Princeton University Press, P. 45.

[27] K. Popper, 1983, *Realism and the Aim of Science*, PP. 81-82.

scientistic rationality.[28] We claim with Hilary Putnam that the metaphysical realist thesis is impossible.[29] Putnam writes:

> What I am saying, then, is that elements of what we call 'language' or 'mind' penetrate so deeply into what we call 'reality' that the very project of representing ourselves as being 'mappers' on something 'language-independent' is fatally compromised from the start.[30]

This point towards a kind of synthesis of the ideal and the real, which signifies a change in the character and function of the ideal "realm", which we shape for ourselves in the process of understanding. Now the ideal becomes a viewpoint of things that is not God's eye point view of things but a standpoint from which we can examine existing occurrences.[31] This is a suggestive ideality; possibilities can be seen as capable of being realized in nature. There is no longer any "superior reality" that somehow "exists" apart from the world.[32] This "ideal" has more to do with actual facts than with imaginations. The aim, therefore, must be to come around the problem of how mind and world, subject and object, that are "separate" and "independent", can, in the words of Dewey, "come into such a relationship to each other as to make true knowledge possible."[33]

The "fusion" of the real and the ideal does not imply that one has to view the world as dependent upon my perception. It does not imply that the world does not exist independently of my mind. What it says is that all *knowledge* about the real world is dependent upon someone's mind, upon

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[28] See John Dewey, 1948, *Reconstruction in Philosophy*, Beacon Press, 103-131.
[29] H. Putnam, 1990, *Realism with a Human Face*, Harvard University Press.
[30] Ibid., p. 28.
[31] See Dewey, 1948:122.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid., p. 123.

someone's perception of the world and its real contents. Real things are in our conception, that is, *as we conceive them*, coated with mind-supplied elements and aspects. This means that there are two necessary conditions that meet, namely, that we have the ability to characterize the world and that the world and its "things" are characterizable, that is to say, that the world which is characterizable in the first place is a result of mind intervening.[34]

A theory, which describes reality, is a theory which is based upon reality-descriptive concepts. Again these concepts must be based upon the faculties that we have available to access the world together with what the world may contain. This means that reality, as we know it, through our reality-descriptive concepts, must be based upon perception, "inner" and "outer" experience[35] and thinking. It is on this fundament, together with the world itself, that we can have an understanding, whether it is scientific or common, of what can be said to exist ontologically.

Things we see, hear or touch are at the same time things in themselves and ideas or immediate conceptualizations. If I sit in my garden and look at a tree I see a tree in front of me, but if I close my eyes it becomes clear that I do not need to see the tree to have an idea about it of being present to my mind. I am still aware of the tree without actually seeing it. This "idea" that I perceive of with my eyes closed is an "immediate concept", one of those many "concepts" on which my sense of reality rests. Thus, my idea of the tree is a recalling of the presentation not a re-presentation of the tree. Re-presentation demands a higher level of abstraction and idealization referring to other strata of experience where mere recalling is supplied with memory. This means that re-presentation appears at later stages when the immediate idea, the thing we see,

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[34] In this sense I agree with Nicolas Rescher's "conceptual idealism". See N. Rescher, 2002, "An Idealistic Realism", in R. Gale (ed.), 2002, The Blackwell Guide to Metaphysics, Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 242-62.

[35] "Outer" refers to our sense perceptions, while "inner" refers to what we in fact experience when we experience. This is a fuller experience than a mere sense perception since it would include "space" and "time" as strictly defined "frameworks" of the experience.

has become a link in the process of understanding larger portions of the world through the aid of abstractions and idealizations, through generalizations. However, these things we "see" when we use our eyes and which do not disappear when I close them, are dependent on perception and mind. Thus, we are able to connect to things in the world and to stay connected without actually perceiving them. We can "connect" and this can only take part as a conscious act of the individual mind. Perceived things cannot exist as a thing in contra-distinction to the concept or idea of the thing. Things must be identifiable and the world consists of certain kinds of things. Thus, there is nothing behind the world which we access through our senses, experiences, thoughts, theories, practices and sciences. There is "nothing" behind the world which we *have* access to. That there is "nothing" behind the world we access simply indicates that our understanding cannot venture beyond our concepts. Our concepts are the limit. There may exist something beyond the reach of our understanding but that we cannot know since it is beyond our reach.

However, human individuality presupposes some difference in subjective experience about the world. We do not all experience the same things; we do not all have the same "background" so that we can all judge about the same things in the same way. Thus, when we depart from our immediate experience we have to describe things according to our learning, and/or interests, and/or commitments of whatever shape or form. Our own "outlook" on the world and our theoretical or metaphysical interests determine to a great extent the theoretical approach. It also determines our descriptive and classificatory schemata with which we choose to explain the world. The more objective a metaphysical realistic theory claims to be, the less in touch it will be with the source that fuels this image with some sense of "reality". A theory that makes an infusion of ideality into reality as the fundamental starting-ground for its idealizations has preserved the real content of the world, which we can access cognitively. This means that there is a connection between the abstractions and things in the world that we can identify. To identify something and to be able to be identified are two necessary conditions for knowledge. And

to identify something is human cognition interacting with that "something" being identified.[36] This means that the world *exists* independently of my mind but my knowledge about the world does not exist independently of my mind. Neither does my knowledge exist independently of the world. Thus, I am not a solipsist. I am not a skeptic person either, since I believe that the world around me is manifesting itself directly to me as the content of my experience. The world is manifested in my "outer" as well as "inner" experience since I believe that man as a matter of fact *is* reality and cannot have been made of a different stuff than the rest of the world.

I do not reject the existence of physical objects. What I reject is "ontological dualism" and "materialistic reductionism" claiming to be true statements about reality. Instead these positions are founded upon philosophical notions often connected to metaphysical realism, notions that contain beliefs which have been and still are instrumental in the intellectual movement towards a separation of *man and the world* into different reality-strata. This is to say, a) "man", that is, into negative subjectivity in the sense of focusing on appearances and illusions. And b) "world" as matter, or as "fundamentals", to which everything that otherwise is "appearing" can be reduced, or explained objectively. "Matter" in itself; for instance, can support neither qualities nor quantities without the mind.

By the way we blend notions from both idealism and realism, we must have, as a property of our theoretical foundation, a distinction between conceptual "mind-involvingness" and "explicit mind-invokingness".[37]
The question of determining the nature of time, "mind-invokingness" would indicate to *characterize* experienced temporality, *as an* "*illusion*" would be explicitly "mind-invoking". According to Rescher, illusions typify the kinds of

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[36] See Rescher, 2002:242-62.
[37] Ibid.

issues which are of relevance to the thought-processes of beings with a mind: to have illusions there must be "mind-equipped beings" to have these illusions.[38]

In contrast to this we have physical time that mainly rests upon the understanding that there is no time that lapses; that time can be reversed; that time is a structure as symmetrical as that being which the laws of physics represent. In this realist understanding of physical science and its time concept, the time that the physicist operates with seem entirely non-mental: It can be applied as a measure derived from the necessary causal order of the world and is, as such, "time" as an object of physics.

Nevertheless, I believe that there could never be "physical" time in a world without minds. Physical time is an artifact of a certain purposive (i.e. communicative) sort equipped with a parameter on which moment-determined-events are extracted. Such purposive artifacts all invoke goal directed processes of a type that can exist only where minds are.[39] For time to be "physical", only certain aspects of what we normally understand as time is kept and turned into what we know as the "time axis" or the "time parameter". In its limited version this "time" is a fabrication that has been given discriminative points of regularity from which dates can be determined and events given a moment in the unfolding process of real-world time. Thus time has been given a specified purpose, an epistemological purpose.

Moment determinations as well as moment discrimination are inherently the sort of things produced and employed by mind-endowed beings. In sum, to explain adequately what "physical" time *is* we must refer to moment determinations and thereby in turn, ultimately to temporal experience. The point is that to explicate what is involved in characterizing *time* as "physical time" we must eventually refer to minds and their capabilities; accepting that "physical

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[38] Ibid.

[39] Ibid. Although Rescher does not talk about *time* in this particular context I believe we can apply the context at hand to understand the scientific purpose of wanting to have a *certain kind* of time.

time" is by its very nature something for people to read of from their watches. Time in physics is thus only an artifact created for a certain sort of "intelligence-involving purpose".[40] While clocks – unlike illusions – are not mental items, their conceptualization and characterization must nevertheless in the final analysis be cast in "mind-involving" terms of reference. And I believe that this sort of thing may very well be true of all real things in general, since to be characterizable as a real object is to be knowable in principle by intelligent, mind-endowed human beings.

The prospect of perception, experience, understanding, identification, and judgment is crucial for objectivity. To be an object means that it somehow should have an identity, in which it can be separated individually from other phenomena. Hence, all of the above processes are explicitly and fundamentally mind involving processes. Each process is intentional or attention directing. It is the sort of thing that only we humans, to our knowledge, can do. The extreme statement based on temporal realism, that temporal experience is an illusion since we are ignorant of what real time really is, is to relate time to minds in a certain kind of way. Besides of disclosing certain specific purposes and commitments, it discloses the fact that it cannot avoid characterizing time in conceptually mind-referring terms.

Københavns Universitet
Copenhagen, Denmark

[40] Ibid. I believe that Rescher's terminology can be interpreted in this way.

What Does Academic Skepticism Presuppose? Arcesilaus, Carneades, and the Argument with Stoic Epistemology

David Johnson

Although some have seen the skepticism of Arcesilaus and Carneades, the two foremost representatives of Academic philosophy, as being merely dialectical in nature, there is evidence that both philosophers held views definitive of their skepticism, views which are a direct consequence of a critique of Stoic epistemology and of a defense against the Stoic argument from *apraxia*. Moreover, both the critique and defense are articulated within the framework provided by Stoic epistemology. There is a strong case, then, to be made for the claim that Academic skepticism cannot stand alone, that it necessarily requires the terms, concepts and assumptions of Stoicism as an antecedent condition. In making this case I will treat the views of Arcesilaus and Carneades separately, since there are some important differences between them.

In order to see the way in which Arcesilaus presupposes dogmatic philosophy, we first have to address the question of whether the skepticism of Arcesilaus was merely dialectical, or whether he held definitive skeptical views of his own.[1] If Arcesilaus was a dialectician who limited himself to arguing against the views of others without proposing any of his own, then his skepticism would only presuppose the existence of opponents holding dogmatic views. Although his dialectical method could not subsist on its own, then, there is no reason why it should necessarily require as dialectical fuel the particular form of dogmatism found in Stoic philosophy. If, on the other hand, as I want to maintain, Arcesilaus held the three interrelated views that nothing can be known, that all people ought to suspend judgment, and that one can use the *eulogon*, or reasonable, as a practical criterion to guide action, then these views would be parasitic on Stoic philosophy in particular. The first two views

[1] See R. J. Hankinson, *The Sceptics*, (London: Routledge, 1995), 77 for a fuller discussion of this issue.

presuppose Stoic philosophy because they are the consequence of a critique of Stoic epistemology. The third view presupposes Stoicism first, because it seems to have been developed as a response to the Stoic charge of *apraxia*, and second, because this defense is articulated using the terminology of, and within the framework provided by, Stoic epistemology.

The evidence that Arcesilaus was simply a dialectician is thin. According to Numenius

> He [Arcesilaus] did not have it in him ever to express one and the same position, nor, for that matter, did he think such a thing worthy of a shrewd man. And that is why he was called "a clever sophist, cutthroat of novices." […] He would not allow that he or anyone else was in a position to know anything […] but he would say whatever came into his head and then immediately reversing himself he would knock down that view in more ways than he had used to set it up.[2]

But, as R.J. Hankinson notes, Numenius is a hostile source.[3] Moreover, Arcesilaus is described here as holding the view that nothing can be known, something that would be in tension with the interpretation of him as simply an eristic philosopher. And although Diogenes Laertius also presents Arcesilaus as a dialectician, Arcesilaus is described once again as holding a view, in this case the view that one ought to suspend judgment—a claim he repeats elsewhere (*DL,* 4.32) and one that is echoed by Sextus (*Outlines of Pyrrhonism***,** 1.232). He describes Arcesilaus as

> the first to suspend [making] assertions because of the contradictions among arguments. He was also the first to argue

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[2] Eusebius, *Preparatio Evangelica,* trans. Brad Inwood and L.P. Gerson in *Hellenistic Philosophy* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997) [henceforth *HP*] bk. xiv, ch. vi, 730c-d.

[3] Hankinson, 77.

> both sides of a question and the first to change the doctrine handed down by Plato, that is, to make it more eristic by the use of question and answer…[4]

Cicero, on the other hand, asserts that Arcesilaus was no mere dialectician and that it was necessary for the wise man to hold views:

> …Arcesilaus did not fight with Zeno for the sake of quarrelling but really wanted to discover the truth. None of his predecessors ever formally claimed […] that it was possible for a man to hold no opinions, while it was not only possible but even necessary for a wise man to do so. Arcesilaus thought that this view was true, and respectable and worthy of a wise man.[5]

Moreover, he informs us that Arcesilaus held the view that that one should suspend judgment as a consequence of his holding the view that nothing could be known:

> So, Arcesilaus denied that there was anything that could be known […] he judged everything to reside in darkness and that nothing could be discerned or understood. For these reasons, one should neither profess nor affirm nor give approval with assent to anything...[6]

I want to agree with Cicero that Arcesilaus was not an eristic philosopher, but that he held the two positive, interrelated views that one should suspend judgment because nothing can be known. These views are the consequence of Arcesilaus' critique of Stoic epistemology, an epistemology that

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[4] Diogenes Laertius, *HP*, 4.28.
[5] Cicero, *Academica*, *HP*, 2.76-77.
[6] Cicero, *Acad.*, *HP*, 1.45.

rests on an empirical theory of perception. According to this theory, perception takes place when a perceiver's organs of sense perception come into contact with the object of perception through a presentation, which is an impression that an object makes on the soul (*M* 7.228) that is indicative of both itself and the object which produces it (*M* 7.161). This is an empirical theory of perception that defines perceiving as being affected materially in the soul by the object perceived.

The Stoic theory of knowledge builds on this model of perception by first making a qualitative distinction between accurate and inaccurate impressions, which they term graspable and non-graspable presentations, respectively. A graspable presentation is a stimulus or impression coming from an existing object outside of the subject that is a reliable representation of the object because it is "stamped and molded in accordance with the existing object". A non-graspable presentation either does not come from an existing object, or is not clear and distinct (D.L., 7.46, *Acad.*, 1.40). When a graspable presentation has been received and approved by the subject, i.e., assented to, then it has been grasped. A grasped presentation, because is accurate and reliable and leaves out nothing about the object that can be grasped through sensible perception, is the criterion of knowledge, but it not yet knowledge itself. Rather, a grasped presentation lies between knowledge and ignorance; it is one step on the way to knowledge. Zeno illustrated this point with the simile of a hand. A presentation is like an open hand, assent is like a half-closed hand, grasping is like a closed fist, and knowledge is like a hand over a closed fist. Knowledge is a *firmly* grasped presentation that cannot be shaken or reversed by argument (*Acad.*, 1.41-42).

Arcesilaus' response to this theory of knowledge was to claim that there is no such thing as a graspable presentation—and thus, no criterion of knowledge (*Acad.* 2.77). Since there is no criterion of knowledge, nothing can be known. And if nothing can be known, we must suspend judgment. These conclusions are presented in two separate arguments. The first argument can be found in Cicero, *Acad.* 2.40:

What Does Academic Skepticism Presuppose?

1) Some presentations are true, some are false
2) False presentations cannot be grasped
3) There is no true presentation such that there cannot be a false one of the same quality
4) No presentation can be grasped if there is no criterion for distinguishing between true and false presentations
5) Therefore, there are no graspable presentations

The entire argument turns on the third premise. The point of this premise is that whatever one might say about the reliability of a graspable presentation—that it compels assent because it has a vivacity or "a distinctive kind of clear statement to make about the objects of presentation" (*Acad.* 1.41) that is, as Charlotte Stough phrases it, "of such a nature as to have originated necessarily in that object of which it is in fact the exact replica,"[7] there are many presentations that come from non-existing objects that also meet these criteria, such as hallucinations, dreams, illusions, and impressions that are caused by our limited sensory powers rather than by the object itself.[8] The implications of this argument for the Stoic theory of knowledge are made clear in a second argument, found in Sextus, *M*, 7.156-57:

1) Everything is ungraspable because there is no criterion of knowledge
2) If the wise man assents to anything, he will assent to the ungraspable
3) Assent to the ungraspable is opinion
4) The wise man does not opine, so the wise man will not assent to anything

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[7] Charlotte Stough, *Greek Skepticism*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), 39.

[8] Stough, 43-44.

5) Refusal to give assent is the suspension of judgment
6) Therefore, the wise man suspends judgment

One might argue at this point that the skeptic has only demonstrated that the Stoic is forced, by his own principles, to conclude that nothing can be known, and hence that he is trapped by his own epistemology into suspending judgment about everything, rather than that nothing can be known in a more global sense, and that everyone ought to suspend judgment. If this were the case, then one might still be able to argue that Arcesilaus was a dialectician who, through a *reductio ad absurdum*, forced the Stoic philosopher into accepting unpalatable conclusions, conclusions that Arcesilaus himself need not have accepted. However, as Charlotte Stough points out, Academics accept the Stoic account of perception as the soul being affected or altered by impressions made by external objects.[9] Since this theory of perception is, as I noted earlier, the basis for Stoic epistemology, this limits the skeptic to an empirical psychology as the only possible epistemological framework within which to given an account of how a human being comes to know something. Therefore, Arcesilaus' critique of Stoic epistemology is implicitly a critique of the possibility of knowledge in general, and the conclusions he reaches must have been intended to have a wider application than merely to the philosophy of Stoicism.

After showing that nothing can be known and that as a result we must suspend judgment, Arcesilaus seems to have been attacked by the Stoics as putting forward views that make it impossible to act, since, on their view, action requires knowledge:

> …There must be a principle which wisdom follows when it begins to do something and this principle must be according to nature. For otherwise impulse […] by which we are driven to act and

[9] Stough, 41.

> pursue what is presented, cannot be stimulated. But that which stimulates must first be presented [to the agent] and it must be believed; and this cannot happen if what is presented cannot be distinguished from what is false. For how can the mind be moved to an impulse if there is no judgment as to whether what is presented in according to nature or contrary to it? Similarly, if the mind does not realize what is appropriate to it, it will never do anything at all, will never be driven to anything, will never be stimulated. But if it is ever to be moved, what occurs to the agent must be presented as being true.[10]

For those who hold to such a theory of action, the view that we must suspend judgment because nothing can be known was vulnerable to the argument from *apraxia*:

> …Not even those who concerned themselves a great deal with this matter […] were able to shake the doctrine of suspension of judgment on all questions. But at last the Stoics brought against it like a Gorgon's head the "argument from inaction" and then gave up.[11]

The Stoic charge that the skeptic is not able to act is additional evidence that Academic skepticism was more than simply dialectical in nature, as it presupposes that the skeptics themselves did indeed hold the view, as I am claiming, that since nothing can be known, one must suspend judgment. Arcesilaus' response to the Stoic attack was to propose 'reasonableness' as a practical criterion for the conduct of life. Those who adhere to the reasonable will be able to act correctly and attain happiness (*M* 7.158). The skeptics

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[10] Cicero, *Acad*., *HP*, 2.24-25.

[11] Plutarch, *Against Colotes*, *HP*, 1122a-b.

overcame the problem of how one can follow what is reasonable or plausible while still suspending judgment by making a distinction between assent, which would entail that one had ceased suspending judgment, and impulse, which enables a person to act without holding a view about whether a particular presentation is true. They maintained that a presentation awakens an impulse, which "moves man to act with respect to what is appropriate for him."[12] An impulse is a movement of the soul caused by a presentation, a process compared to the tipping of a scale. This solution to the problem presupposes Stoic philosophy because it is a response to a Stoic attack; it also presupposes Stoicism insofar as the specific content of that response—i.e., a description of the relationship between the three movements in the soul of presentation, impulse, and assent—relies on the terms and assumptions of Stoic epistemology.

The case of Carneades is essentially a variation on the way in which Arcesilaus presupposes Stoic philosophy. Carneades, too, was no mere a dialectician; he also held the view that nothing can be known (*Acad.* 2.59, 78, 148) because "there is no true presentation such that there could not be a false one just like it."[13] As in the case of Arcesilaus, we can attribute this view to Carneades because (in addition to the textual evidence cited above which indicates that he held this view) he, like everyone, will be forced to hold the view that nothing can be known as the result of a critique of an epistemology assumed to be the only possible account of knowledge, an assumption Carneades must make, since he shares the Stoic theory of perception. As with Arcesilaus, Carneades' claim that nothing can be known presupposes Stoicism because it results from a critique of Stoic epistemology.

Since Carneades held that nothing could be known, when "asked for some criterion for the conduct of life and for the attainment of happiness," he was "virtually compelled to take a position for himself on the topic" (*M*, 7.166). This looks very much like the old Stoic charge that the skeptic will not be able

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[12] Plutarch, *Against Colotes*, 1122c.

[13] Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Mathematicians*, *HP*, 7.154.

to act. Although Carneades also responded to this charge by maintaining with Arcesilaus that knowledge is not necessary for action, he differed from Arcesilaus in explaining what exactly *was* necessary. Whereas Arcesilaus had argued that assent to presentations was not needed to act, because the reasonable or plausible would enable a person who has suspended judgment to live by eliciting the impulse to action, Carneades thinks that we will need to assent to the plausible presentation or *pithanon* in order for it to guide action. I think it is important to note that *pithanon* seems likely to be a criterion for action rather than for knowledge, or for both knowledge and action, since Carneades holds that everything is non-apprehensive or ungraspable, so it is not clear how the *pithanon* could be a criterion of knowledge. For this reason I don't think that one can say that Carneades was presenting a positive doctrine or theory of knowledge to replace the Stoic theory. Instead, his doctrine of the *pithanon* should be seen as a direct response to a Stoic attack.

Carneades relies on the most basic concepts and assumptions of Stoic epistemology in constructing a counter to the Stoic argument from *apraxia*. He accepts the idea that the truth of a presentation consists in its correspondence with the object. What he rejects is the possibility that one can inspect the object and its presentation in such a way as to determine whether there is a correspondence between the object and the presentation. All that can be known is whether the presentation *appears* to the subject having the presentation that it is true (*M*, 7.167-69), such a presentation he calls an apparently true presentation. An apparently true presentation that is not obscure and seems very intensely to be apparently true is called a plausible presentation, or *pithanon* (*M*, 7.171-73). Carneades thinks that we only need to suspend judgment about the truth of a presentation, but not about its apparent truth (Numenius in *Prep. Ev.*, bk. xiv, ch. vii-viii, 736d); he maintains that we can give qualified assent to what is plausible. Academic assent to a plausible presentation is weaker than Stoic assent to a graspable presentation, since we can never know if the

apparently true presentation is actually true, we cannot give unqualified assent to it—there is always the possibility that we may be wrong.[14] Nevertheless, the plausible presentation justifies our giving qualified assent and so can serve as a criterion for action (*Acad*., 2.99).

The strength of our assent or conviction will vary with the plausibility of the presentation,[15] since the plausibility of a presentation can vary in its degree of plausibility. The first way a presentation can vary in it plausibility is in the way that it is given to us, that is, in the extent to which it appears to be a true and adequate representation of the object to the subject. Some plausible presentations, due to the intensity of their apparent truthfulness, strike a person as more plausible than others (*M*, 7.173). The second way that a presentation can vary in its plausibility is as the result of the application of criteria to determine the degree of plausibility. A presentation becomes more plausible if it is discovered to cohere with other presentations that are given along with it. Sextus observes that just as doctors do not judge someone to be feverish without a combination of symptoms, we can better judge the plausibility of a single presentation by examining the combination of presentations with which it appears, since presentations are never isolated. For example, the presentation of a person will increase in plausibility if that person's attributes and external circumstances are also found to match or be in harmony with the presentation (*M*, 7.176-9). A presentation achieves the highest degree of plausibility if it both coheres with other presentations and is subjected to, and passes, thorough scrutiny. A thoroughly tested presentation is one in which a combination of presentations is rigorously scrutinized in terms of the context in which it appears. This includes an examination of factors such as who is judging the presentation and the conditions that might influence the judgment of this person, the medium in which the judgment takes place, and the manner in which the judgment is made (*M*, 7.182-3). Finally, the extent to which one will attempt to

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[14] See Stough, 58.

[15] This is how Stough, 58, puts the matter.

establish assent or conviction will depend on the seriousness of the matter at hand, and on whether circumstances permit one to employ all of the criteria listed above to determine the degree of assent or conviction (*M*, 7.184-5).

Carneades' concept of the *pithanon* presupposes Stoicism in the same general way that Arcesilaus' argument for impulse did. The *pithanon* is also a response to an (implicit) Stoic attack from *apraxia*, and the content of that response depends on the ideas and language of Stoic epistemology; we saw that Carneades used the structure of a representationalist epistemology in showing that a plausible belief is like knowledge in being a presentation, though it does not actually qualify as knowledge because it is a presentation without the truth content.

I hope I have shown that Academic skepticism, for all of its nuance and power, depends in crucial ways on the philosophical assumptions, terms, and claims of Stoicism and that it is impossible to imagine a self-standing version of Academic skepticism that did not presuppose the philosophical constructs of Stoicism. An interesting consideration, then, is what, if anything, remains of Academic skepticism if one does not accept the representationalist assumptions of Stoic epistemology—though one doubts that it was possible conceptually or imaginatively for Hellenistic philosophers to even raise this question.

Pennsylvania State University
University Park, Pennsylvania

Is Intercultural Critique Possible?
An Examination of Recognition Theory

Jordan N. Bartol

It is difficult, living in the modern west, to conceive of approaches to social justice that do not focus entirely on economic forces. Many of us are familiar with theories of social justice that strive for the just distribution of money, goods and resources. As Nancy Fraser (2001) explains, such approaches have "supplied the paradigm case for most theorizing about social justice for the past 150 years" (p. 21). There is, however, an alternative approach to social justice that departs from the largely economic focus of distribution theories: recognition theory. Recognition theory centres on adequate acknowledgement of the many unique groups that comprise the global village.[1] The most notable recognition theory scholar is Axel Honneth. Honneth took recognition theory from a tool in Hegel's early work and launched it to a prominent position in the cannon of philosophy. Honneth has recently penned a response to two of his contemporaries – Arto Laitenen and Antti Kauppinen – in which he provides a valuable discussion of the role recognition theory can play in social critique. In doing so, however, he attempts to broaden the scope of his theory making it applicable to cross-cultural critiques. It is my contention that although recognition theory works well for internal critique, Honneth's attempts to locate a universal ground for critical social theory may prove problematic upon application to scenarios of intercultural criticism.

Recognition Theory

Deriving from Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, the basic tenant of recognition theory is that individuals require independent validation of the subjective

[1] Nancy Fraser believes the different approaches of these two camps to be reconcilable. For more, see: Fraser (2001).

conceptions they form of themselves.[2] This validation is achieved through a process of mutual recognition. For example, if I deem myself to be autonomous, I seek to have that characteristic validated by another subject. That validation may come from either tacit acknowledgment – acting toward me in a way that indicates an acceptance of my autonomy – or explicit declaration on behalf of the other party.

When examining issues of social justice, recognition theory is generally applied to whole groups, rather than the individual members *of* those groups. In assessing a situation, we need only examine the recognitive demands of the group and the degree to which those demands are met. Each group has a unique set of qualities it deems worthy of recognition and these evaluative qualities are historically contingent. There is nothing objective about the particular qualities that a particular group thinks ought to be recognized or valued. For Honneth (2002), appeals to norms governing recognitive activity are neither transhistorically nor transculturally valid, neither "immutable [nor] objective" (pp. 503).

One modern example of this phenomenon is the value of individual franchise. For citizens of western democracies, to deny an individual the ability to vote or participate in government is to deny a basic human right. In our culture, it seems obvious that all people ought to have some degree of political participation. For Nancy Fraser, this right – which she called 'participatory parity' – comprised the cardinal right of humanity around which all recognitive activity ought to centre. However, in ancient Athenian society, it seemed equally self-evident that only adult male citizens should participate in government. Only upon completion of military training did an Athenian possess the political knowledge requisite for participation in political life. Since only adult males were suited for military training and because foreigners and slaves

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[2] For another interesting early interpretation of recognition theory, see G. H. Mead's (1934) sociological interpretation of Hegel's work *Mind Self and Society*.

were not committed to the polis, it followed logically that only adult male citizens should participate in government.

To citizens of the modern west, the Athenian extension of franchise might seem crude; but it made sense to the Athenians in the context within which it was created. This is because values do not occur in a vacuum and they are not created independent of the humans who use them. Values are products of a certain people in a certain place at a certain time.

The Intersubjective Construction of Norms

The collection of variables on which values are contingent is referred to as a lifeworld. The example above indicates the differences between our lifeworld and the ancient Athenian lifeworld. We are all born into a specific lifeworld and we gradually come to learn how our own lifeworld operates. In contrast with our raw, natural inclinations, the socially constructed lifeworld is "a kind of 'second nature' into which subjects are socialized" (Honneth, 2002, pp. 508). It is through this socialization that we grasp the values and norms around which our lifeworld functions.

The socialization process of which we are speaking often happens without much effort. We learn the norms of our society simply through the navigation of daily life. Borrowing from Robert Brandom, both Kauppinen and Honneth claim that value norms take the form of "generalized behavioural expectations that we follow … implicitly" (Honneth, 2002, pp. 514). In other words, the value norms to which we adhere are manifest in our daily interactions. The process of learning to act *norm*ally in society is the process of learning these norms.

To use the word 'learn' here may be somewhat misleading. This is a very different sort of learning since we do not learn these value norms the same way we acquire theoretical knowledge. Unlike the learning of math or physics, we do not have a specific norm-teacher and we do not (often) articulate the material being learned. Rather, our classroom is the community, our teacher the

members of that community and our tests and exams happen everyday as we manoeuvre through daily routines, actions and interactions. We evidence our knowledge through proper – or normal – social practice. The value norms we learn are thus unarticulated yet manifest in daily practice. Take, for instance, the meeting of a new person. If I were to meet a new colleague of mine, I would most likely shake her hand, introduce myself to her and offer to help her find her way around. I certainly would not ignore her, fail to introduce myself or use profane sexual language. To use Brandom's (1994) terminology, by appropriately navigating this interaction I make clear my "practical mastery" over the norms that govern the situation (p. 89). Even this mundane daily interaction evidences some basic values we hold with regard to other people: They are deserving of some level of respect, they deserve to know the people with whom they work and they deserve to be treated politely, regardless of gender.

Classifying this type of knowledge can be difficult. Since our knowledge of value norms is rarely explicitly articulated, some might argue that we do not 'know' the norms at all. Following Brandom's lead, Honneth disagrees, asserting that this knowledge is 'knowing-how' rather than a 'knowing-that' (Honneth, 2002, pp. 515). This knowledge is evident in our practical mastery over the norms. Knowledge of these norms is made clear only in contrast to demonstrations that evidence a lack of norm knowledge. In other words, we only become conscious of these norms when the expected behavioural pattern is broken. Often the violation of a norm is not frequent enough to make it wholly explicit but the violation will nonetheless make us conscious of its existence.[3] Were I to have ignored my colleague or been rude to her, this may have aroused some anger from my peers, but few would venture to articulate the complex, context dependant value-norm I had broken

[3] When the violation of a norm is *too* frequent, the norm no longer persists as the norm is no longer the dominant expected social behaviour. In these instances, the violation may become the norm given its frequency and a dearth of the now former norm.

(Kauppinen, 2002, pp. 487). Yet this seemingly intuitive experience of norm-violation is fundamental to internal critique based on misrecognition. If we are to examine social issues using the recognition model, we must be clear as to what expected norm was violated. Examining social problems via recognition forces articulation of the implicit value violated.

As a matter of clarity, the emotional experience of misrecognition does not necessarily accompany actual misrecognition. Emotions are not always reliable indicators of failed recognition (Kauppinen, 2002, pp. 488). As Kauppinen (2002) instructs, felt misrecognition should merely indicate that we must reconstruct the norms we perceive to have been violated and bring them into an evaluative space (pp. 487-8).

Understood in this light, negative moral experiences are often an indication that some implicit social value norm may have been violated and deserves investigation. Suppose I had said to my colleague: 'a women's place is at home, not in the workplace'. The moral injury she would inevitably suffer would evidence the violation of some fundamental norm – viz. that women ought to be recognized as valuable members of the workplace to the same degree as their male counterparts. If anything positive can come out of these negative moral experiences, it is a forced reflection on the imbedded social norm(s) violated. It is here that we begin to see the full power of recognition theory in internal social critique. The application of recognition theory forces the reconstruction of implicit moral norms violated. If we are to demonstrate that a token of misrecognition is deserving of correction, we must make explicit the tacitly held norm it has violated.

Articulating implicit norms is paramount for social critique. An effective critique will illustrate an incongruence between norms implicitly adhered to and actions that violate those norms. The most effective and frequent use of this type of recognition claim comes from children. Consider the following example to help illuminate the rhetorical power of this type of critique:

Suppose Sally's parents refuse to let her move away to college on the grounds that she is too young. Sally might argue that her parents allowed both of her brothers to move away to college at her age. She may argue further that she is in no different a situation than her brothers were at her age. Sally would effectively be arguing that she ought to be recognized as deserving of coverage under the aforementioned norm. Having thus illustrated a norm implicit in her parents' past actions and petitioned for adherence to that norm in this situation, Sally's critique would likely succeed – provided her parents respond well to rational argument.

Internal critiques generally take the form of analogical arguments. The claimant must illustrate that the norm to which s/he is appealing is generally held then illustrate that the norm is not being applied in a given situation when it is nevertheless warranted. A critique that exposes a contradiction within a social system is likely to be far more efficacious than a critique appealing to external norms. Appeals to external norms – like justice, fairness or piety – are generally dismissed as vacuous or antiquated, whereas norms that demonstrated to be tacitly held are not so easily repudiated.

Recognition as a Fundamental Human Need

Some have objected to Honneth's theory on the grounds that the norms of a given lifeworld are rarely consistent and often contain norms that contradict the norms that govern recognition. Continuing with the example of my colleague: suppose that I do not live in this lifeworld; rather, I live in lifeworld-*x*. In lifeworld-*x*, like this world, my colleague experiences moral injury upon hearing my rude remark; but unlike this world, citizens of lifeworld-*x* also demonstrate tacit adherence to the norm: 'workers with high-seniority can treat workers with little or no seniority however they please.' There is no principled way of adjudicating between the implicit norms of recognition and the implicit norm of seniority. The norms of recognition work against the norm of seniority and the norm of seniority works against the norms of recognition. This has led some to

wonder why the norms of recognition ought to take priority over other norms (Kauppinen, 2002, pp. 493). On this line of thought, recognition is itself an intersubjectively defined and maintained norm implicit in our lifeworld. As such, recognition appears to have no ontological superiority to other moral concerns and must compete with other lifeworld-contingent norms.

According to Honneth, the moral injuries suffered from failed recognition are far greater than any competing moral concerns and that we ought to give recognition norms priority over other concerns.[4] For Honneth (2002), recognition is not simply a sign of the times, it is indicative of a fundamental human need: self-realization or autonomy (pp. 515). He makes no attempts to mask this bold assertion, explaining: "I do indeed assume that we should understand autonomy or self-realization as the overarching *telos* of our human form of life" (2002, pp. 516). In order to achieve full autonomy or maximize self-realization, we require recognition. To be precise, Honneth (2002) does not want to say that recognition is a pre-requisite for self-realization; rather, they develop together (pp. 516). In order for the process of self-realization to be maximally effective, we require a relation-to-self that can only be provided by mutual recognition. That is, mutual recognition supplies us with a sufficiently robust account of our self to facilitate attempts at the full realization of that self.

Honneth's claim thus far is that recognition serves as a valuable means by which we may extract the norms implicit in society for use in social critique. Given his previous work – in which he argued for the fundamental human need for recognition as a mediator of self-realization – we may take provisionally that the norms of recognition deserve priority over other norms in any given lifeworld. Honneth's account thus provides a compelling case for recognition theory in internal critique. His theory runs into problems, however, when he tries to use the universal goal of self-realization as a ground in inter-lifeworld critique.

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[4] For Honneth's full defence of this claim, see: (Honneth, 1995) esp. ch. 6 & (Fraser & Honneth, 2003)

Is Intercultural Critique Possible?

Self-realization is a universal ground for Honneth (2002), since it is a qualitative necessity for any and all life (pp. 492). In any culture, at any time and for any people, self-realization is required to live a good life. However, as Kauppinen points out, the goal of self-realization may well be widely held while nevertheless not being wholly universal. Instead, Kauppinen suggests, the goal of self-realization may be a product of *our* lifeworld. Honneth disagrees with this claim, arguing that while the specific type of self-realization we have come to expect in this lifeworld is contingent, all lifeworlds seek some type of self-realization. In each lifeworld, there lies an implicit conception that specifies or indicates precisely of what autonomy or self-realization would consist. In this lifeworld, for instance, we understand self-realization and autonomy to require, primarily, access to government and social programs like education and healthcare.

If correct, Honneth's solution may point to a universal ground which links varying lifeworld norms; but this will not translate into actual effective inter-lifeworld critique. For, as Honneth (2002) acknowledges, the specific token of autonomy and self-realization maintained by each lifeworld is contingent and thus *not* a basis for effective cross-boundary criticism (pp. 517). Suppose we were to attempt to criticise the exclusion of women from government in early Canadian society. Although 19th century Canada, like present day Canada, adhered to the implicit goal of self-realization, the two lifeworlds fundamentally disagree as to of what self-realization ought to consist and *to whom it must apply*. A criticism appealing to the notion of self-realization would fail to be useful because it would necessary appeal to the brand of self-realization to which modern Canada culture applies but to which 19th century Canada did not. The differing tokenings of self-realization make it a poor choice for effective inter-lifeworld critique.

Transhistorical Validity at the Expense of Transcultural Validity

In order to maintain the trans*historical* validity of social criticism, Honneth (2002) concedes that he must assume the norms of a given lifeworld possess "normative superiority" over the norms by which they were preceded (pp. 517). He maintains that moral norms develop in a way that evidences an overall trend of progress. On this account, our current norms are a further development of older norms and are normatively superior to them. Less evolved norms can thus be criticised using our current norms because our norms are implicitly contained within the other, developmentally prior norms being criticised.

Honneth admits that this notion of inherent progress is, as of yet, underdeveloped. He (2002) has thus far claimed that that each of the new and the ever-expanding value norms implicit in society "must be viewed as a progressive step in the historical process of cultural transformation" (pp. 511). As society (or a lifeworld) develops new norms, we must view this process as normative progression, not merely as a changing of the tides. This is only a brief sketch of what Honneth hopes will develop into a more robust account of progress. Because Honneth's formulation of the concept of progress is still under development, I will refrain from criticising his justification of this principle and instead focus on the implications of using a notion of progress to justify inter-lifeworld critique.

I am more than willing to grant that, presupposing Honneth's theory of progress, social critique can maintain transhistorical validity. If we are to understand diachronically primary norms as less-developed versions of our current norms or as in some way containing the current norms, critique of a lifeworld that adheres to the earlier norms may well be both justified and efficacious. For example, it is generally agreed upon that the practice of slave ownership in the American South was wrong. Slavery indefinitely impeded the self-realization of millions of African Americans and Aboriginal peoples for hundreds of years. Invoking the notion of progress, we can say that the implicit norms governing personhood and personal/legal recognition had not yet evolved or progressed to include all persons – as, presumably, that notion includes today. We can make this argument of transhistorical validity because the old

norms in question can be historically shown to have developed into our current norms – arguably, the passing of the 13th Amendment represents the gradual evolution or expansion of the value of African Americans as deserving of personal and legal recognition. Using the notion of progress, we can advance effective, non-relativistic critiques of older normative systems. In this situation, it is easy to determine which set of norms is prior and which is latter because the difference between the two lifeworlds in question is time.

The problem arises, however, when it is more difficult to determine which of a set of competing set of norms is prior and which is latter. We encounter this problem when making intercultural criticisms during the same time period. Generally, when moral criticism is directed at a culture or group external to the criticiser, the charge of cultural relativism is brought forth. If G1 is to criticize G2, there must be some common ground between G1 and G2 on the basis of which G1 can make its criticism, lest G1 be charged with ethical relativism. Using Honneth's conception of progress, we would have to argue that the G1 norm to which we are appealing is implicit, in some way, in G2's norm-set. On this account, the norm of G1 is more progressive or further evolved than that of G2. This presupposes, however, that we can independently determine which of the two groups – G1 or G2 – has more evolved norms. It is my contention that this is a faulty supposition.

To illustrate this problem further, I will make use of a well-worn example, let us look at Western criticisms of female genital cutting (FGC) practiced in North Eastern Africa.[5] For our purposes, allow me to suppose that we are dealing with cases of FGC that are voluntary; not cases of child-abuse, rape or torture. For sometime, the topic of FGC was a hot topic in Western media. I can recall distinctly watching media reports of the practice denouncing it as inhumane and outright immoral. The hype surrounding FGC has died out

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[5] Most people are more familiar with the phrasing: 'Female Genital Mutilation.' I am here avoiding the term 'mutilation' because it seems to imply some normative judgment. I cannot conceive of morally 'good' mutilation.

somewhat since its 'discovery' in the late nineties, but it still surfaces from time to time when we need reminding that we, the modern West, are the yardstick by which morality is judged. Generally, criticisms of FGC involve a variant on Honneth's thesis: that FGC represses self-realization and/or women's autonomy, to which respondents forward charges of ethical absolutism. Proponents of FGC often argue that the practice liberates women from overpowering sexual desires or that it symbolizes the transition to adulthood thus *increasing* women's relation-to-self (Mhórdha, 2007). Even if we grant that both groups in this dialectic strive toward self-realization, we must acknowledge that the particular values associated with self-realization in each case differ greatly. Thus, on Honneth's account, we must resort to the notion of progress to provide the common ground between the two groups.

To invoke the notion of progress here, we would effectively be arguing that the conception of self-realization to which we adhere and on the grounds of which we are criticising FGC is implicit in FGC practicing group's conception of self-realization in an underdeveloped form. The implications of this claim are surprising. To make this claim is to assert that the western conception of self-realization is a developed form of the African conception of self-realization. The degree of cultural superiority that must be assumed to make this claim is deplorable. It may be equally plausible, on this account, that the African conception of self-realization is the progressively superior account. Perhaps the values attached to their conception of self-realization allow women more control over their bodies. Women can control the amount of gratification they receive from sex, they can control the frequency that they feel sexual urges and they can control the amount of gratification that their sexual partners receive from intercourse. We might even go so far as to mention the Western infatuation with plastic surgery. It could be argued that plastic surgery seems to show that the African norms of self-realization are implicit in the less-evolved American norms. Since many Africans voluntarily undergo FGC to altar themselves both aesthetically and physiologically for sexual reasons, it is not entirely implausible

to argue that the Western practices of breast augmentation and liposuction or the Japanese practice of feet wrapping are antecedents to FGC.

If we are to stick with the progress hypothesis, it appears as though each culture has a plausible claim to the title of progressively latter moral norms. There seems to be no process by which we may determine which norms are antecedent and which are consequent. It is tempting to argue that the norms that better allow for self-realization are progressively superior. Though this process, too, would be relativistic. It would require an appeal to a conception of self-realization that is not contingent on either culture; but there exists no such absolute conception of self-realization. Critics from both sides would argue that, on their construal of self-realization, their own practices better facilitate autonomy. Appeals to objectively superior self-realization are of little use.

We might instead argue that we must assume the criticizing culture is the more morally evolved culture – some would argue that this is how westerners generally conceive of themselves – but this commits the naturalistic fallacy. From every culture's standpoint, intercultural criticisms that do not rely on illustrating contradiction within the criticised group always evidence the normative superiority of their own culture; otherwise they would not make the criticism in the first place. Theories of progress fail to solve these problems.

In sum, Honneth's theory works well for internal critique based on extrapolated norms. The errors in his account only surface once he attempted to broaden the scope of his theory. By arguing that assumed historical normative progress will allow for better intercultural critiques, Honneth will inevitably encounter problems adjudicating between competing lifeworld-contingent norms. Without providing an additional account of the method by which we are to determine which norms are antecedent and which are consequent, Honneth may have to abandon the notion of progress and restrict recognition theory to internal critique – for which it works quite well.

University of Windsor

LYCEUM

Windsor, Ontario, Canada

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The "Rightness" Error: An Evaluation of Normative Ethics in the Absence of Moral Realism

Mathais Sarrazin

J.L. Mackie's Error Theory postulates that all normative claims are false. It does this based upon his denial of moral realism[1]. Without objective moral facts "out there", Error theory asserts that any purportedly moral claims are false because such statements make the assertion that some subject (a moral claim) belongs in the predicate of either "Rightness" or "Wrongness", neither of which exist. As a result the statement "murder is wrong" is false, since the predicate "wrong" has no extension, and therefore the subject "murder" could not possibly be in it. In arguing for Error Theory, Mackie spends a great deal of time attempting to refute moral realism; however, this paper's primary concern is with the relationship between moral realism and normative ethics, so to facilitate this process I will hereafter labour under the assumption that there is no moral realism. I will follow this line of argumentation through to its conclusion, in order to asses what impact this would have on the possibility of making justified normative claims. For the sake of clarity I will use throughout this paper the definition of moral realism put forward by David Brink in his book *Moral Realism and Moral Inquiry*, that is that "Moral realism is roughly the view that there are moral facts and true moral claims whose existence and nature are independent of our beliefs about what is right and wrong"[2] . Normative claims will also be defined as they are by Brink, as claims about things which are morally important (e.g., what is right and wrong)[3]. Throughout this paper the primary focus will be on finding an answer to the question "can justified normative claims be made without moral realism?" To this end I will examine several contemporary papers addressing this question, as well as asses the

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[1] Mackie, J.L. *"From Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong."*

[2] Brink, David. *"Moral Realism and Moral Inquiry"* p. 7.

[3] Ibid., p. 1.

stronger candidate metaethical positions for how they contribute to an answer. Furthermore I will postulate the hypothesis that justified normative claims can be made without moral realism, in hopes of either finding support for this hypothesis, or reason to reject it.

First it is important to note the implications of abandoning moral realism. This implies that we need to do away with all theoretical foundations for the inherence of objective mind-independent moral facts. As a result, the notion of a metaphysical ground from morality will be cast aside; as will, to some smaller extent, the rational grounds for a deontology such as Kant's. These can both be done without affecting the world as we experience it. First let it be that there are no metaphysical postulates known as morals, second, allow that human rationality cannot provide an objective ground for moral realism, since hypothetically this is too queer and would require psychological corroboration which is not presently available. So the world without moral realism look very much the same as it does now and the phenomenology of making moral judgements stays exactly as it would in a world where there were real moral facts. This brings us to our first consideration, that is that presumably people would continue to make moral judgements.

This superficially would lead us to a premature conclusion, which is that without moral realism it is plausible that people would continue to make claims about what is morally important, i.e. right and wrong, and therefore they can in fact make normative claims. This, however, hardly answers the larger question with which this paper is concerned, that is "can people make **justified** normative claims in the absence of moral realism?" The answer to this bigger question is ultimately more involved, as questions of justification often are. As a guideline to answering this I will outline several fundamental prerequisites I feel must accompany an affirmative assessment of a metaethical position. It is critical that the normative claims being made are justified in such a way that they are non-arbitrary, and provide a ground for establishing the claims as addressing the subject matter of morality. In other words the metaethical position taken must allow for claims to be more than opinions or feelings, they

must posses a character which identifies them as moral; in this sense they cannot contradict some very basic moral intuitions such as "killing is wrong". Furthermore whatever candidate position is adopted, it must be consistent within itself, and just as importantly it must offer a satisfactory explanation for why people make what appear to be normative claims without moral realism to ground them.

Within the field of metaethics, there is a dichotomy between cognitivist and non-cognitivist approaches, the former being the position that moral claims have truth values, and the latter that they do not. Because they deny that there can be any truth in moral statements, non-cognitivists are traditionally opposed to moral realism, and therefore are not affected by the assumption that there is no such thing. The non-cognitivists, therefore, are committed to the position that normative propositions cannot be made in a way that would satisfy the perquisites outlined earlier. A brief sketch of the two prominent non-cognitivist positions will outline the challenges which must be faced by the candidate metaethical position which aspires to give a positive answer to our question about normative claims. These negative accounts will set the bar for the quality of answer which must be expected if an opposing thesis is to provide a positive account of normative ethics.

The two non-cognitivist accounts this paper will discuss will be Emotivism and Prescriptivism. Emotivists take the position that when someone makes an assertion which aspires to normative content, they are actually expressing their own emotive states and opinions. The purpose, then, of making such claims for the Emotivist is to sway the subjective states of others. Prescriptivism, on the other hand is not meant to be factual in content, but rather as Brink explains it, "express universal prescriptions or recommendations"[4]. These both provide a viable explanation for what is actually happening when people make normative claims; in this way they serve as opposition to the remaining normative positions, by way of providing and alternative hypothesis

[4] Brink, David. *"Moral Realism and Moral Inquiry"* p. 19.

for the reason behind them. It is imperative, therefore, that an acceptable cognitivist thesis must succeed in providing an account of normative claims which is equally as plausible as its non-cognitivist counterparts.

It should be stated as well that cognitivist moral philosophy does not unanimously support the thesis that justified moral claims can be made. As Geoffrey Sayre-McCord points out in his paper *The Many Moral Realisms*, cognitivist theories can be divided between error and success theories[5]. The most prominent cognitivist error theory is, for obvious reasons, Error Theory, as was discussed in the introduction of this essay. This is a position that holds that moral claims do in fact have truth values; however, they are all false. Accordingly, this position will not be helpful in providing a positive answer to our question about normative justifiability.

If we are to find a positive answer regarding the possibility of making normative claims, it will surely be within the success theory positions within the cognitivist camp. Once again this paper will analyse only the most prominent of these positions, in this case I will look at Subjectivism, Intersubjectivism, and Objectivism, respectively.

Subjectivism, insofar as it is a cognitivist perspective, asserts that moral claims have truth values, however these are not dependent on external metaphysical facts, but on the subjective states of individuals. Of the specific version of moral subjectivism this paper will discuss, Sayre-McCord says that for it, "…judgements of value make sense only relative to the desires, preferences, and goals of the judger, so that the claim that 'x is good' should be treated as elliptical for 'x is good-for-me'[6]. In this case moral subjectivism would be relative, however this is not always the case; several variations of subjectivism provide an objective account of value. One variation makes the claim that any source of subjective value is objectively good; this however, does

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[5] Sayre-McCord, Geoffrey. *"The Many Moral Realisms"* p. 15.

[6] Sayre-McCord, Geoffrey. *"The Many Moral Realisms"* p. 16-17.

not sufficiently account for moral debate, since all goods are viewed as objectively good. The third and most sophisticated version of subjectivism that will be considered here encompasses the Ideal Observer theories. These, as their name suggests, involves a speculative 'Ideal Observer' who is privy to all relevant information concerning any given decision or value judgement. It is this Ideal Observer's subjective states which establish the objective good. In this way the objective good is informed by what in fact 'ought' to be the objective good based on the state of the world. Despite providing an objective ground for value, this thesis, which I believe to be the strongest offered by subjectivism, fails to sufficiently justify normative claims. What the Ideal Agent provides are useful suggestions for action based on the given circumstances, despite this it (he/she [if it is gendered]) does not actually articulate moral value. The only way in which the Ideal Observer could give grounds for moral claims, is if there were moral facts which it was informed of, however, this violates the original hypothesis of this paper. Without inserting its own value, the Ideal Observer could not make the claim that "killing is wrong" without the existence of wrongness; as a result, this perspective just defers the justifiability of our normative claims to an unjustified Ideal Observer.

Intersubjectivism, like subjectivism, relies on the subjective states of people; however, instead of it addressing one person's subjective state at a time, it incorporates an entire society's collective values together. Simple intersubjectivism or conventionalism, argues that morals are just whatever values are established by any society. This, unlike subjectivism, provides an account of what could be going on within moral discourse, which is that people are deliberating over what morals should be incorporated into the society's value structure. Despite this advantage over subjectivism, conventionalism still is not acceptable, since if it claims that morality is determined by a social group, meaning that morality is socially relative. If it is not making this claim, but is saying that when people engage in moral discourse they are just discussing conventions, then conventionalism would be non-cognitivist, since what appear to be normative claims are just claims about norms. Furthermore, as Sayre-

The "Rightness" Error:

McCord argues in his paper, moral discovery in conventionalism reduces to sociological observation, which does not coincide with our intuitions about how the process of understanding morality ought to look. To improve upon this view he offers a strengthened variation wherein we "…abstract from actual practices and people and treat the truth of moral claims as being determined in someway by the hypothetical conventions or practices of hypothetical people", he then claims that the benefit of such a process would be in "…holding that the truth of moral claims turns on what appropriately idealised agents would agree to under specified conditions"[7]. Though this removes conventionalism from the concerns of relativism, it runs into much the same problems faced by subjectivism, which is that it does not appear to be discussing what is meant when the term morality is used. Once again an idealised agent, this time a society, cannot discover morality unless it existed "out there", which in this scenario it doesn't; when it made what appeared to be a normative claim, what it would really be doing is prescribing some value. Even if the society in question is infinitely well informed, a prescription based on non-moral facts does not constitute a justified normative claim.

The last of the cognitivist positions discussed by Sayre-McCord, objectivism, is only worth mentioning here in passing. In short objectivists assert that morality exists outside of subjective or intersubjective value, which means that it exists "out there", Sayre-McCord provides a quote from Ross which articulates his intuitions that goodness does not arise from are appreciation of something, but that we appreciate its goodness[8]. This postulation of external goodness obviously violates the anti-realist nature of this paper, and therefore requires no further discussion here.

The preceding discussion of competing moral theories was not intended to be an exhaustive examination of all or even any metaethical and

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[7] Sayre-McCord, Geoffrey. *"The Many Moral Realisms"* p. 19.

[8] Ibid., p. 18.

normative positions. The purpose was to evaluate the quality of answers which were available amongst the prominent divisions in moral thought. With the survey roughly completed, it is now possible to evaluate its results, in order to support or weaken the hypothesis that it is possible to make justified normative claims without moral realism. The most significant trend throughout all the theories looked at is that none met the prerequisites which were set out for an affirmative response. Accordingly, since a substantial fraction of the moral landscape has been assessed, and not one perspective yielded an acceptable basis for a positive response to our question, it can be said that the hypothesis has been weakened. Of course, since the survey was not exhaustive, there is no reason to abandon our hypothesis yet.

Given these findings, it is now possible to asses the likelihood of a moral theory proving that it is possible make normative claims in the way that has been outlined. It is our assumption that metaphysical and psychological claims to moral realism must be abandoned. Since normative claims would be impossible in a non-cognitivist framework, cognitivism must be where a positive answer would lie. Objectivism failed by default. Subjectivism, when simple was relativistic, when sophisticated postulated a hypothetical entity which could not provide an objective ground for normative claims. Intersubjectivism paralleled subjectivism, just on a larger scale, at first relativistic, then non-moral. The question which remains, then, is what a positive answer would look like, and if it would be possible.

An anti-realist argument for justified normative assertions would first require a ground for justification. Since this cannot be external, or “real”, it must be internal. Since normative claims are universally prescriptive, their foundation must be universally accessible. This, however, would require that there be some faculty which a) everybody has b) provides consistent and universally prescriptive moral insight c) and qualifies that insight as moral in a non-arbitrary sense. Now assuming there is some such faculty (a), given that there are variations between subjective and intersubjective moral value, it is doubtful that it satisfies (b). This, however, is a surmountable challenge, if one is willing

to grant that not everyone can access their moral faculty, due to an uncultivated soul or some such explanation. Granting this, it would still have to meet prerequisite (c), which is impossible without reference to some variety of moral realism. If there is nothing in the universe which is a moral fact outside of us, then this special moral faculty, which we have by assumption, is free to prescribe anything whatsoever. Since no objective ground for justification could ever be provided (without moral realism), the decisions made by the moral faculty must be morally arbitrary. It could be pragmatic in its prescription, or even follow a consistent set of "normativesque" imperatives; however, there can never be an objective non-arbitrary foundation for these. Unless one were willing to grant that non-moral facts are relevant to normative claims, then the latter could never come to be in a non-arbitrary way. Allowing non-moral facts to influence moral deliberation presupposes some understanding of the subject matter of morality. Since we are attempting to isolate what the process of achieving real moral understanding would look like, we cannot assume what is or is not permissible as a foundation for morality. As a result it is impossible to know what would be a sufficiently non-arbitrary basis for justified normative claims. At very best, then, it may be possible to make justified normative statements without moral realism, however, we could never know if they were justified. With this in mind, it is then possible to assert that we cannot be justified in making normative claims in the absence of moral realism, even if we might make justified normative claims despite this.

University of Victoria
Victoria, BC, Canada

Berkeley's Arguments on Realism and Idealism

Blake Winter

Introduction

Bertrand Russell credited Berkeley with being the first philosopher to show that the position of idealism may be held without contradiction (Russell, 1997). However, in addition to this, Berkeley also attempted to show that realism was absurd, because it required concepts which could not in fact be conceptualized (1977). From this, Berkeley concluded that idealism was not merely possible but necessary, or at least necessarily the only theory we could understand.

We will commence by defining a number of terms which will be necessary or convenient for our exposition. We will proceed to give a succinct logical version of Berkeley's argument, in order to illustrate the precise set of assumptions which are required. We will then show that using a parallel argument the same assumptions also prove that idealism as Berkeley conceived it is also not well defined.

Definitions

Let us first define realism and idealism. We will take *realism* to mean the ontological position that there are things which exist that are neither minds nor ideas in minds. We will take *idealism* to mean the ontological position that everything that exists is either a mind or an idea in a mind. We may also define *solipsism* to be the position that everything that exists is either me or my ideas.

A concept will be said to be *concrete* if it may be defined ostensibly: that is, if all its conditions may be defined by direct (positive) comparisons with collections of particulars. In other words, a concept is concrete if we may determine whether an object meets its criteria by comparing it with the minimum collection of properties held in common among some collection of ostensible particulars, but we may *not* use the negation of these properties,

unless the negation of the property in question is something for which we also have an exemplar particular (this is what is meant by the *positivity* of the comparison), and nor may we use only a part of the properties which are common to these particulars. We will say that a concept which is not concrete is *abstract*. Note that a property may be observed, but not concrete, if all particulars have that property together with some other property so that it cannot be isolated as the minimal commonality among any collection of ostensible particulars. Let us define a concept to be *thinkable* if it is possible to conceptualize that concept in a meaningful fashion. A concept is *unthinkable*, then, if it is not thinkable.

Berkeley's Argument Against Realism

We are finally in a position to give Berkeley's argument. Berkeley indeed only required one assumption for his result, namely:

> **Assumption B:** Every concept that is thinkable is concrete (Berkeley, 1977).

Although Berkeley did not explicitly phrase his assumptions this way, this assumption contains the essence of his argument (he also argued that the only observable properties are the concrete ones, which is of course essential if they are to be the only thinkable ones). We now come to our first main result.

> **Theorem 1:** The realist concept of *being* cannot be concrete (Berkeley,1977).

> **Proof:** Everything of which we are aware may be said to be. However, each thing of which we are aware involves the 'awareness of a mind.' This notion of 'the awareness of a mind' is therefore one of the (positive) properties held in common among any collection of particulars of which we are aware. Therefore it is

part of any concrete concept. But the realist notion of being explicitly requires that this not be a part of its definition. QED.

Corollary 2: Under assumption B, the realist concept of being is unthinkable.

Note however that Theorem 1 does not depend upon assumption B; it holds under any set of assumptions.

This result, in any case, is what Berkeley believed that he had shown. However, the argument goes far deeper.

The Extension of the Argument To Idealism

The careful reader may have noticed that our proof of Theorem 1 in fact involved an implicit assumption, or rather, that there was something which was not well-defined. Indeed we failed to give consideration to the precise meaning of 'awareness of some mind.' It was this error which led Berkeley to believe that he had shown that only realist being was unthinkable, and caused him to fail to realize that his argument is in fact much stronger. Let us discover what sort of concept of *being* we may obtain, while restricting ourselves to simple concepts.

First, we will define a new concept. Hume and Nietzsche both argued that we cannot even conceive of the *self* as being (Hume, 2004; Nietzsche, 1968). All we have are these ideas, which exist for-us, but the *us* apart from its being *for-us* is not in fact thinkable. In fact, then, our only notion of the self, according to both Hume and Nietzsche, is that of this conglomerate of sensation-ideas which we have, and the only notion of *being* which we may have, or the only concrete notion, is the notion of 'being an idea for-me.' Merleau-Ponty also asserts that this is the only notion that being can have for us (2006). All of these philosophers provided a degree of argument for this, but both also allowed that we were somehow able to 'project' the notion of the self behind these. Therefore, it became unclear whether they actually were asserting

that the notion of the self was unthinkable, or whether they were only asserting that it was never concretely encountered. In any case, we will call this conception of being the *Hume-Nietzschean concept of being*.

> **Theorem 3:** The only meaning of being which is concrete is the Hume-Nietzschean version.

> **Proof:** The proof is virtually identical to the proof of *Theorem* 1. Every particular of which we are aware is therefore something which is an idea for-us. Therefore the set of common properties among any collection of particulars includes 'an idea for-us.' But then 'being for-us' is in fact the only notion of being left to us that is concrete. QED.

> **Corollary 4:** Under assumption B, only the Hume-Nietzschean concept of being is thinkable.

But note that this means that we cannot even conceive of being-for-others under assumption B. Therefore, assumption B leads us to solipsism, and not merely to solipsism but to a very limited sort of solipsism where we cannot even conceive of our own existence except in terms of our particular ideas. We have therefore shown

> **Theorem 5:** Assumption B leads to the sort of solipsism defined in the previous paragraph being the only thinkable ontological theory.

Consequences

Now that we have shown where assumption B leads, let us discuss the consequences of this fact (*Theorem* 5).

We may, if we wish to do so, retain assumption B and accept the form of solipsism that we are left with. Of course, by doing so we do not assert that this sort of solipsism is *correct*, but only that it is the only sort of thing we may think of and describe.

However, this sort of a result will seem rather unpleasant to most philosophers. It follows that we must reject assumption B in favor of some other postulate. If we reject assumption B, then there is no reason why idealism is unthinkable. However, rejecting assumption B results not merely in the possibility of idealism being thinkable, but *also* in the possibility of realism being thinkable. We are therefore left with the following question: is it possible to nonetheless assert that idealism is thinkable, but not realism?

The answer is, of course, yes. However, this 'yes' has a certain caveat, in that while it is certainly possible to make such an assertion, the price of the assertion will be high. For example, let us say that we allow ourselves a certain degree of negative comparison in order to speak of being-for-others as well as being-for-us. If we do this, it is unclear why this sort of abstraction is permissible, but the similar abstraction to the being-in-itself of realism is not permissible. Similar considerations apply to other methods of obtaining a definition for being-for-others. If we wish to also think of minds existing in-themselves, it becomes even further muddled why only minds should have this privilege. Therefore, such an assertion as a Berkelian philosopher might like make becomes a seemingly arbitrary one. Whereas assumption B has a certain elegance to it which gives it some appeal, we have now descended into *ad hoc* assumptions designed solely for the purpose of retaining the consequence of *Theorem* 1.

However, whether or not it is logically possible to remain a Berkelian idealist (in the sense of holding to idealism and *also* denying the thinkability of realism), a more relevant question might be whether or not this is in fact true. Obviously we cannot discover this through simple logical analysis. The question before us is two-fold. First, it asks us whether or not the concepts which are components of idealism are thinkable, and second, it asks us whether or not the

concepts which are components in realism are thinkable. Now we cannot answer this question by simply asserting postulates, unless we first have verified these postulates by phenomenological investigation.

It therefore follows that the ultimate test of the thinkability of both idealism and realism, and indeed of any concept of theory, lies in the phenomenological consideration of our own conceptualizations. In the opinion of the author, obtained through phenomenological studies of his own concepts, both are in fact thinkable. However, the concepts of being-for-others and being-in-itself are not concrete, and nor are they reducible. That is, they cannot be defined by taking a collection of simpler concepts and joining them together. Indeed, they must be conceived directly, through a conceptual *leap*, and not through any concrete derivation. For this reason, it is impossible to communicate what being-for-others or being-in-itself are. This should not be surprising: we cannot communicate the concept of *redness* to another, but no one will try to assert that this is an empty concept. In fact it will be seen, without much difficulty, that we in general communicate by assuming that there are certain irreducible concepts in common between us. However, a discussion of this lies beyond the scope of this paper; some work in this area may be found in (Wittgenstein, 2001).

We may give a description of two processes of conceptualization which may lead to the realization that realism is thinkable. One method has already been hinted at. If it be granted that there is some nontrivial method by which we conceptualize the *other* used in idealism (where by 'nontrivial' we mean that it is not simply the case that this concept comes to us as if it were an inborn idea), then this same method may be applied to abstract our way to the concept of things-in-themselves. The other method depends upon the concept of causation-for-us (which some have denied, but which is discovered by us phenomenologically in the author's opinion). By abstraction from this causation, as well as from objects-for-us, it may be easier to conceive of a causally-acting object without reference to the for-us. However, in both cases, a *leap* is eventually required in order to conceptualize being-in-itself. It should also be

observed that merely having successfully conceived of the concept, it by no means follows that the concept is applicable to any actual entity.

It should be noted that whenever we make an abstract conceptualization, we do tend to also have a sensation-image of some particular exemplar. This, perhaps, was what led Berkeley, Hume, and the other skeptical empiricists to deny that we have abstract conceptions at all. Similarly, they looked for notions such as causation occurring without themselves, in, for example, the motion of the arm (Hume, 1999; Nietzsche, 1968). It is no wonder, then, that they failed to see an exemplar of the concept. To find exemplars of causation it is necessary to begin by looking inside the mind itself, and the relation of the mind to its sensations and ideas. However, a detailed phenomenological exploration of these matters would take us too far afield; for a more detailed discussion of the phenomenology of causation (and the associated methodological errors of the skeptics in this regard) the interested reader may consult (Whitehead, 1978). In a similar fashion, perhaps it is possible to see this concept of being-in-itself as a component within ostensible particulars (this would make it possible to have epistemic certainty that they did, in fact, exist in-themselves). Nonetheless, the concept would not be concrete, since according to realism, that concept would be exemplified by all particulars, and all observed particulars also exemplify the concept of being-seen-by-me, as we have discussed. In particular, from the definition of being-in-itself, it is quite clear that everything we apprehend exists in-itself (if that concept has meaning), since that form of existence contains that of being-for-us; therefore those things we apprehend exist in-themselves, and are-in-themselves for-us.

Conclusion

We set out to consider the full implications of Berkeley's argument against the thinkability of realism (1977). We have shown that this argument in fact denies not only the thinkability of realism, but also of idealism, and in fact restricts us to the Hume-Nietzschean type of being as the only thinkable kind. It follows

that any attempt to maintain Berkeley's result must use an assumption which is weakened, but we have argued that such a weakening is quite inelegant unless it also permits the thinkability of realism.

However, the ultimate decision of this issue must depend solely upon consideration of what we phenomenologically find in our conceptualizations. This unfortunately is not the sort of study that can be logically proven from one person to another. Nonetheless, we have suggested that both realism and idealism are fully thinkable.

SUNY at Buffalo
Buffalo, New York

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The Tao of Salinger

Sara Kallock

> The sage never has a mind of his own;
> He considers the minds of the common people to be his mind.
>
> Treat well those who are good,
> Also treat well those who are not good;
> thus is goodness attained.
>
> The sage
> is self-effacing in his dealings with all under heaven,
> and bemuddles his mind for the sake of all under heaven.
>
> The common people all rivet their eyes and ears upon him, and the sage makes them all chuckle like children.
>
> Lao Tzu[1]

The above excerpt serves as a simple characterization of the Taoist saint: a person who has subdued his ego thus enabling him to indiscriminately embrace all of humanity, attain for himself a fulfilling life in connection with the Tao (the "Way"), and the strength to be a example of righteousness according to the Way for mankind. Taoism holds that below the apparent chaos of reality lies a unifying theme of existence called the "the Way", referred to as the Tao. This inherent "Tao" unites all of existence in a subtle harmony that is disturbed by any action a person's ego forces upon it in an effort to change its nature. Such actions include brute force, prejudice, or judging the intentions of others, for any of these acts impede one's perception of reality and thus create unneeded conflict that would otherwise not arise. Forceful imposition of one man's view

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[1] *Tao Te Ching*, Lao Tzu, p. 17.

on another and cast judgment of another's intentions and perspective only aggravates situations and blinds one from perceiving the world according to Tao. In order to attain an accurate perception of reality, one must live according to the Tao and use the humility of virtue instead of the forceful ego to "work like gravity between man and man"2. By acting in such an unimposing fashion, the Taoist saint is able to see the heart of the situation lucidly and pacify the situation with greater ease. By dissolving his misleading ego, a saint is able to live in deep understanding of the Tao, and indiscriminately love all of existence with enough virtue and patience to serve as an example of goodness for mankind. In Salinger's works, the Taoist saint is a figure is present and colorfully captured in his numerous characters: the attempted saint is depicted in Catcher and the Rye's Holden Caulfield; the mistreated saint is found in Teddy and Seymour; and in Franny and Zooey one finds the completed and socially successful saint in Zooey and Franny. These examples all emphasize Salinger's passion for the ethical message Taoism proclaims: that "it is spiritually impossible to prevent the Fall [from innocence]", so "Salinger's idealistic heroes are doomed either to suicide (Seymour) or insanity (Holden, Sargent X) or mysticism (Franny), or the ways of sainthood" 3. From the stories of each of these characters the path to potential fulfillment is proffered for the reader so one may, unlike many of Salinger's character and perhaps Salinger himself, attempt to reach Taoist sainthood for himself.

Salinger held Eastern philosophies in high esteem throughout a majority of his writing career, as evidenced by his specific Buddhist diets, daily hours of deep meditation, and the emanation of "the essence of [Eastern] spirituality"[4]. A thorough critic can find throughout Salinger's works the influences of Eastern philosophies, such as Zen Buddhism, Hinduism, and Taoism. Though Taoism is only lightly referenced, Salinger's characters and

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2 *Taoism: The Parting of the Way*, Welch, p. 22.

3 Baumbuch, p. 56.

4 *Salinger: A Biography*, Alexander, p. 180.

their struggle for spiritual contentment, closely reflect the efforts and philosophies of Taoist philosophy. Buddy Glass, who at many points serves as Salinger's persona throughout the Glass narratives, considers the roots of his thoughts and actions to be "planted in the New and Old Testament, Advaita Vedanta [of Hinduism], and classical Taoism,"[5] thereupon illustrating the bridge Salinger on which walks between Eastern and Western thought. Though Taoist doctrine does not rule Salinger's works, the Taoist path to sainthood and contentment is reflected throughout Salinger's writings and lived throughout Salinger's life.

Though it could be argued that by the end of Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye* Holden has found *some* measure of sainthood, he still lacks the forgiving love for humanity that would allow him the patience to be an example of Taoist righteousness; "he is an impotent saint, unable either to redeem the fallen or to prevent their fall"[6]. Taoism seeks to coincide with the natural patterns of person and nature; Holden however is consistently disenchanted with and contrary towards the dispositions of he various characters throughout the novel. What saintliness he possesses lies in the single epiphany he has concerning his younger sister Phoebe, for he realizes that she has the indispensable ability to embrace and "kiss"[7] him despite his failure to adequately succeed in society. Inspired by the example of *her* saintliness, Holden gains the mere recognition of the path to happiness but not the strength to walk it. Perhaps if Salinger had extended Holden's story, the reader would find that Holden had successfully achieved a sense of wholeness with the aid of the wisdom his little sister's innocent love revealed to him. However, Holden's story ends with him uncertain about "what the hell to say"[8] to D.B.'s inquiry into his opinion of his fiancée *instead of* understanding and embracing her

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[5] *Seymour: An Introduction*, Salinger, p. 209.
[6] Baumbach, p. 60.
[7] *The Catcher in the Rye*, Salinger, p. 212.
[8] p 13.

without bias as Phoebe did for him. Holden's journey to Taoist sainthood ends ambiguously, for he is unable to fully love mankind as-is but is convinced he should; it is because of Phoebe's loving sacrifice of his hat, which "gave [him] quite a lot of protection"[9] from the sufferings raining upon him, that he is able to look at her and be so "damn happy"[10] with relief that love exists. Though his feelings towards Phoebe are illuminated, he relates to the book's other characters with a more or less dichotomous love. His ambivalence reflects the vain search for spiritual contentment in a phony and disappointing world; he is hence stuck in a limbo of confused compassion for mankind. Holden is unable to express any sort of compassion for D.B.'s "good-looking"[11] fiancée, who resembles the figure he has been repulsed by throughout the novel: a figure embodying a materialistic society; a society Holden lives in and despises; a society obsessed with Hollywood and plagued with people who make it practically impossible [12] to hold a genuinely intelligent conversation. He is only certain that he misses[13] the numerous characters throughout the book. This very act of simply "missing" these characters indicates that he wants to love them unreservedly but cannot perceives them without regard to himself; he only identifies them in terms of his own consciousness and ego, yet a true Taoist saint dissolves his ego to the best of his ability in order to love fully without discrimination. A true Taoist saint would have no need to say he "misses" someone, for that would be selfish and tantamount to saying that he desires to fill the hole in his life and not sympathize with the humanity of the person of their desire. For when the ego is involved in an individual's worldly perception, it has the potential to distort reality from being as it truly is and instead skew the presented reality as the ego desires. This disrupts the harmony that is existence

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[9] p. 213.
[10] p. 213.
[11] p. 213.
[12] p. 73.
[13] p. 214.

and the way of the Tao decrees that saints must be able to create inner peace by creating outer peace; thus in disturbing the harmony of existence they disturb their inner harmony. The Taoist approach to "staying out of trouble" and encourage outer peace is to *be* rather then do; to live "by attitude rather than act"[14]. So even though Holden's attitude towards characters like Stradlater and Maurice is sympathetic by the end of the book, he still regards them from within the boundaries of his own perception: as people whom he has trusted and have let him down; his love, therefore, is not the egoless love Taoism professes. Holden *somewhat* forgives characters like Stradlater and Maurice for their misgivings towards him, but he cannot forget the betrayal of people he trusted like Mr. Antolini, the "sought-for, wise-good, father" (Baumbauch 56) Holden needs as an example of righteousness. Because of such disillusionments, Holden advises the reader to beware of trusting society and embracing it with indiscriminate trust. However, the Taoist professes that the distrust of the listener makes the *speaker* a liar, not the act an act of lying. In order for Holden to reconcile with a "phony" society that he has grown dissatisfied with he must not regard other's actions as bad or good but as truthfully intended (whether the intention is openly stated or concealed by the person), and he is not doing this; Holden is letting his ego rule. If a person asks two forty-year old women their age, the first may answer, "I am forty", because she is, in fact, forty. The other may answer, "I am thirty-five" because she fears old age; "the listener who understands the Tao of human nature catches this meaning…[and] to him she has told the truth"[15]. Holden, however, still sees humanity as inherently phony-unintelligent, shallow and distrustful- and renders people best when they are simply attractive and "deaf-mute"[16] instead of looking below their phoniness to find the truth. His disgust with society's phoniness must be transformed into an empathetic patience before Holden can be a saint worthy of aspiration and

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[14] *Taoism: The Parting of the Way*, Welch, p. 21.
[15] p. 24.
[16] *The Catcher in the Rye*.

endowed with the power to bring others to their own salvation. His immaturity impedes him from being a virtuous model for mankind because he "retreats into fancy- into childhood"[17], as is evident in his discussion on sex with Carol Luce in which he dismisses the notion of sex being spiritual and aims to discuss sex on its physical level: "I regard [sex] as a wuddayacallit- a physical *and* spiritual experience and all"[18], somewhat deriding Carlo's previous statement on the spirituality of sex.. Holden cannot appreciate spiritual achievement yet because he is too resentful, too blinded by his loss of innocence to attempt harmony with the society and thus harmony with the Tao. This renders him incapable of serving as a model of virtue and spiritual strength.

It is clear that by the completion of *The Catcher in the Rye,* Holden has not achieved the spiritual accomplishment of sainthood; he is too shallow to love humanity, to immature to serve as a model of virtue to mankind and too egotistical to consider the individual outside of his own frame of conscience. Holden is incapable of seeing people objectively, and for that reason he cannot logically love them without the potential of his own inherent indiscrimination. Interestingly enough, Holden is a character that Salinger does not reuse like he does with Seymour and other Glass family characters. Holden may be an early attempt on behalf of Salinger to resolve Salinger's own dissatisfaction with society, an attempt that failed because Holden could not find the strength within himself to love society unquestionably. At the point of writing *The Catcher in the Rye*, Salinger was not influenced by Eastern philosophies and there are no specific references to Eastern philosophies in *The Catcher and the Rye,* furthering the supposition that Holden's lack of Eastern and Taoist insight encumbers him in the story as such it does Salinger in his life. It is after *The Catcher and the Rye* and with the increased influence of Eastern thought in Salinger's life that Salinger's characters find contentment in an unsatisfactory society and become the accomplished saints of the Taoist lifestyle.

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[17] Baumbach, p. 62.
[18] p. 146.

In the character of Holden, we see that because of Holden's inherent misgivings, misgivings that may be reflective of Salinger's own failings, Salinger fails to develop him as a saint. Salinger was young in both life and career during the writing of *The Catcher and the Rye*, and had not yet removed himself from the suffocation of society and especially the pressure of the publishing business. However, with the characters of Teddy and Seymour, the responsibility of their failed sanctification lies exactly with this suffocating, relentlessly intrusive society and *not* with inherent flaws of their own characters. Seymour has attained what can at least be recognized as an impressive measure of sainthood; well-versed in Eastern and Western philosophies, Seymour can be accurately connected to the Taoist train of thought because Taoism is referenced most often in stories concerning him and other Glass family characters. Seymour can also be described as living the Taoist life style, donning "no grievous faults, no vices, no meannesses that can be listed"[19]. He approaches humanity with a deaf ear, muted voice, and a constant grin like that of *Raise High the Roof Beam Carpenter's* "happy man"[20]. Throughout the Glass narratives, Seymour acts unobtrusively, often conducting himself in accordance with "the affairs of nonaction [and carrying] out doctrine without words"[21]. The intentions of his actions seem obscure sometimes because the acts themselves seem nonexistent. For example, whenever Seymour critiques Buddy's writings, he has Buddy read them to him while he lays on the floor and would then "jot down a few notes on a piece of paper or a shirt cardboard and either leave it on [Buddy's} bed or at [his] place at the dinner table or (very rarely) send it to me through the U.S. mail"[22]. By conducting himself in such a self-effacing manner, Seymour manages to convey his criticisms without conflict to the receiver because he simply poses- not forces- his opinion.

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[19] "Seymour: An Introduction", Salinger, p. 108.

[20] "Raise High the Roof Beam, Carpenters", Salinger, p. 91.

[21] Mair, p. 60.

[22] "Seymour: An Introduction", Salinger, p. 153.

Seymour's inaction allows him to be an esteemed role model for society, so much so that he seems transcendently detached from society. His apparent transcendence is portrayed by the muted affects of society, such as "what [his] mother called Food Made by Dirty Men That Never Even Wash Their Hands"[23], food that gives Buddy a persistent case of acne but was noted to have no negative effect on Seymour. Society seems unable to taint Seymour, however, this is because society and are incompatible; just like the numerous suits Seymour tries to wear, nothing about society "ever fitted him properly"[24]. Perhaps such sentiments of incompatibility reflect Salinger's own feelings of incongruity; he never completed a degree, found it difficult to settle down romantically, and despised the intrusion of publisher's opinions on his art. Salinger, like Seymour, was in constant conflict with society, but unlike Seymour, or Teddy, was *unable* to emotionally transcend it without withdrawing into seclusion. Seymour, though, tries to live in the world because he seeks to establish harmony with society just as he has established harmony with the Tao. He tries to accommodate himself to society as the Taoist does to the Tao. Just as the Tao is universal force that was "formlessly fashioned…[that] existed before heaven and earth….dependent on nothing, unchanging, all pervading, unfailing; 'Way' is the by-name that we give it"[25], the current of society are self-forming, self-perpetuating, and pervade the individual. Unfortunately, because the Tao underlies all of existence, being in such deep connection with it makes it difficult to exist in a society where the surrounding beings do not. In order to be pragmatic (to fit into society with ease and maintain that deep connections with the Tao), the Taoist saint must condescend to society with humility and patience. It is why Seymour chooses to enter the "institution of marriage"[26] and "be happy happy *happy* [with his]

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[23] "Seymour: An Introduction", p. 184.
[24] p. 187.
[25] p. 53.
[26] "Raise High the Roof Beam, Carpenters", p. 71.

beautiful Muriel"[27]. It is an attempt to marry into society and achieve a balance between the world in which Seymour lives and the call of the universal Tao to flow with the distasteful aspects of society and human nature. Desiring to reconcile with society, he is happy with Muriel, but remains wishing that "she [like society] could only be happier with [him]"[28]. His marriage becomes a failed attempt that only results in an unbearable emptiness, for though Seymour is faster than Buddy("the Fastest Boy Runner in the World"[29]) he was still panting after he caught up to him mid-race. Seymour, though able to transcend most human frailties, is still human, and thus vulnerable to overpowering, emotional discontent. His suicide in "A Perfect Day for Bananafish" does not simply represent an escape from the world, but implies the vicious irreconcilability which exists between him and society. Throughout the rest of the Glass narratives his suicide is regarded as a failure (for Franny does not want his sister to succumb to such an urge) on behalf of Seymour, but also as a laudable cry against society of which Seymour had no choice but to commit; society is to blame for Seymour's suicide, not Seymour. Its persecution is evidenced in his encounter with the woman in the elevator in "A Perfect Day for Bananafish" who was a "God-damned sneak" [30] blatantly staring at his feet. She illustrates society's tendency to prejudicially view Seymour as abnormal. The woman's staring suggests that she views him as unusual but is too "phony" to be sincere as Seymour wants her to be. Seymour is annoyed with such insincerity and society's "Bananafish tendencies", the tendency to gorge on material goods to the point of spiritual incapacitation. He calls the day he commits suicide "a perfect day for Bananafish" because he realizes that society is presently overridden with persons who gorge themselves consistently on futile pursuits and only develop an empty sense of worth founded in physical perfection, cheap

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[27] p. 65.
[28] p. 71.
[29] "Seymour: An Introduction", p. 210.
[30] "A Perfect Day for Bananafish", Salinger, p. 25.

entertainment, and material wealth. He either grows despondent over his own Bananafish transformation or the engulfing swarm of Bananafish he has coexisted with since his marriage to Muriel. He is pushed by this unhappiness to the point of suicide- his only escape. Though clearly saintly, society's pressure is too potent for Seymour. His suicide felt like the only choice left to him, for he knew he could never be reconciled with such persons who gorge themselves to the point of emptiness, or love himself if he acted similarly. .

Unlike Seymour, who is indirectly persecuted by society, Teddy is a character who is deliberately persecuted by society, but is later on the condition upon which society comes to regret its patterns of persecution. Though he mostly reflects Hindu thought because of his persistent reference to reincarnation, Teddy also embodies the Taoist saint . At the age of ten he is a precocious, Buddha-like figure that has dissolved his ego so thoroughly he holds no sentimentality toward man whatsoever on the grounds that emotion "is too unreliable"[31]. Living with a intemperate sister and two constantly quarrelling parents, Teddy is incredibly detached and emotionless in his approach to society, indicating that he has managed to separate his ego from his environment and withhold himself from acting and aggravating the world around him by imposing his sentimental judgments. He sees no point in "sticking one's emotions in things that have no emotions", like the weather, or death and God; "If I were God, I certainly wouldn't want people to love me sentimentally [he says]. It's too unreliable". Such objectivity resembles that of Seymour, who was able to detach himself so cleanly from the pain of his broken leg that he felt no pain at all ("Hapworth 16 1924"). The only emotion Teddy expresses is a measure of despondency at having been seduced by a woman in a past life, for her allure has arrested him in the circle of reincarnation. This incident reflects the detrimental effects society has on the Taoist's plight, that if approached with the trappings of the ego, the saint cannot reject

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[31] "Teddy", Salinger, p. 285.

"extremes…excess…[or] extravagance"[32]. His fall from grace in his previous life echoes the fatal fall into the pool that he suffers at either his or his sister's hand. His younger sister, disdainful of him for what appears to be nothing other than childish spite, represents the persecution society commits upon figures like Teddy and Seymour. She resembles the jealous figures of society, who look upon Teddy's purity and wisdom with ignorant jealousy. She may be covetous of Teddy's saintly ability to escape "finite dimensions"[33] and see that "everything is God"[34], that stopping to absorb a simple moment of reality is to find spiritual peace. Unable to bring herself to admiration of such rational wisdom though, it is suggested that Teddy's sister accidentally kills him by pushing him into a empty pool, only to recognize the horror of what she's done with an "all piercing sustained scream"[35] of regret. In an ironic twist, her scream proves that Teddy has indeed served as a model for the world, for his murder reveals to society the horror of its own actions and narrow-mindedness.

Thus far, the characters examined in this paper have possessed either great potential for Taoist sanctification, or great skill as Taoist saints, but only Franny and Zooey (who are students of Seymour) seem to become and remain truly holy in the Taoist sense. Moreover, they are the only characters able to reconcile with society and be reconciled with *by* society. At the beginning of their story, Zooey seems to have the best grasp on the Taoist philosophy. Described by Buddy Glass as a "'sought after'"[36] young television actor, Zooey is one of the few characters who successfully balances himself between society and sainthood. Most significantly contributing to this balancing act is his employment as an actor, for the pursuit of such a profession is considered by Seymour to be a function required of all those who wish to coexist in a society

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[32] *Tao Te Ching*, p. 94.
[33] "Teddy", p. 294.
[34] p. 289.
[35] p. 302.
[36] *Franny and Zooey*, Salinger, p. 52.

that leaves them unhappy; acting requires detachment, and detachment is what "makes an actor in the first place"[37]. An actor must be able to abandon emotional anchors and focus solely on their performance, just as a saint must abandon all desires so as to focus on being a model of righteousness for mankind. Franny, however, has decided to give up acting - even though she's very good at it - because she misinterprets it as phony and therefore unbeneficial in her struggle for spiritual fulfillment. She instead strives for spiritual contentment through the unceasing repetition of the Jesus prayer, a prayer that Zooey will claim is intrinsically useless. It is Franny's attempt to mold Jesus to her liking. Zooey certainly sympathizes with Franny and her inability to love a Jesus she "didn't approve of"; he sympathizes with her desire to follow a religion that doesn't discriminate against anyone or thing, but disapproves that she morphs Jesus into "St. Francis of Assisi to make him more lovable"[38]. This, he claims, is making her more spiritually miserable, for her ego is trying to make God something he is not. God is in everything, Zooey says, from a cup of "consecrated chicken soup" [39] to the most sincere prayer; he exists as is and to change him is to fight the harmony of the world. The Tao is the "origin" of all that exists, and so all that exists is, as Teddy puts it, an aspect of God himself. Zooey recognizes that praying the Jesus prayer won't help Franny because she's too emotionally attached to it; "detachment, buddy, and only detachment… 'cessation from all hankerings'"[40] is what frees the spirit from the ego, and allows the soul to live in and love the world without debilitating discrimination according. In the beginning of the story, Franny is so angry with the world she unfairly criticizes its "unskilled laughter" without realizing that such judgments make her miserable. The solution he suggests to her is to put aside the futile impositions of her ego and "shoot for some kind of perfection *on [her] own*

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[37] p. 198.
[38] p. 166.
[39] p. 196.
[40] p. 198.

terms"[41], to be a model instead of imposing onto others "what's none of [her] business"[42]. Franny's and Zooey's roles as saints are to be actors, to approach society with an *attitude* of redeeming love that renders them role models to all mankind, but to act in accord with society in the spirit of toleration . As actors, they work for an audience of "morons"[43] but still realize that it is their job to "shine their shoes for the Fat Lady" for "there isn't anyone out there who isn't Seymour's Fat Lady"[44], who isn't undeserving of love and their shining example. Therefore, all persons should be loved despite their moronic ways. Furthermore, Zooey says that the Fat Lady is "Christ himself"[45], implying that the Tao is present in all humans and that by acting Franny will fulfill herself more completely than in the ceaseless blubbering of a prayer to Christ. He claims it is futile to recite the Jesus prayer and expect some mystical experience to evolve from its incessant chanting because the prayer requires great spiritual investment as well as constant repetition. With Zooey's guidance, Franny realizes that acting is spiritually strengthening, practical, honorable and the most virtuous solution to her spiritual discontent. Realizing this, she lies down on the couch "as if all of what little of much wisdom there is in the world were suddenly hers…she [falls] into a sleep, dreamless sleep…smiling at the ceiling"[46]. Like Zooey, Franny can use her acting skills to do what they as children did on the radio show "It's a Wise Child"- "expound"[47]: guide mankind by example.

Eastern Philosophy has a heavy presence throughout Salinger's works, from the quotes on Buddy's wall in *Franny and Zooey*, the structure of the Glass children's education, to the idea of reincarnation presented in "Teddy".

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[41] *Franny and Zooey.*
[42] p. 162.
[43] p. 200.
[44] p. 201.
[45] p. 202.
[46] p. 202.
[47] p. 140.

Chinese Taoism gives them the tools and guidance to love society without judgment and cope with others by being a model of virtue than an enforcer of righteousness. The Tao itself can be easily compared to the Greek translation of Christ written in the Gospel of John, *logos:* both are "the first principle of existence…[the] unity [that] lies beneath the surface, for it is a unity of diverse and conflicting opposites…[in which] the Logos [the Tao] maintains the equilibrium of the universe at every moment"[48]. The saints which Salinger creates (Teddy, Seymour, Franny, Zooey and too some extent Holden), see, or must learn to see, the world without the corruption of the ego and therefore must be harmony with the Tao . The constructions of Salinger's characters are revolutionary, because their Eastern spirituality and thought complements their role as citizens in Western society by helping them to reconcile with society by showing how the ego disrupts us from accepting society. The ego is not a part of the Tao, but is an individual's desire to control and judge, clouding his sense of perception. Seymour and Teddy are able to dissolve their egos but remain either so disturbed by society or so violated that their witness to the Tao goes unnoticed, even repulsed by society. Franny and Zooey, however, are able to overcome society by acting as if they are happy, thus enabling themselves to move amongst society without outer conflict so as to induce inner peace. Only in Holden does one of Salinger's characters fail in becoming a model for Taoist saintliness, for he is not able to dissolve his ego, and therefore unable to love society without thinking of his own opinion first. Yet even in Holden's story, the message of Taoism is implied through Holden's failed attempt at sainthood by depicting the opposite attitudes of a saint, and providing for the reader an Eastern solution to the shortcomings of Western society. It is implied that the journeys of Salinger's characters reflect Salinger's own journey for sainthood and spiritual contentment. Caught between "a Chinese restaurant and a Kosher delicatessen" like the barbershop where Buddy and Seymour get their hair cuts, Salinger himself walks the path between Western and Eastern society, seeking

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[48] *Christ the Eternal Tao,* Damascene, p. 31.

to pacify his discontent with Western culture with Eastern methods, only to, in the end, retreat from society altogether, like Seymour does, by moving to Northern new Hampshire. Perhaps he felt he had no choice, and reclusion was the best path to unimpeded fulfillment; or perhaps Salinger was too weak to reconcile with society as Franny and Zooey do. Whatever his motivation, Salinger has nonetheless subtly given to his audience Taoist insight. By being a role model through art he has divulged a compromise between Western and Eastern society, between man and society, and man and himself. Now we too may fall, like Franny, into a peaceful rest.

Saint Anselm College
Manchester, NH

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About the Authors

Chris Tollefsen is a 1989 graduate of Saint Anselm College and currently Professor of Philosophy at the University of South Carolina. In addition to various articles, he is the author of two recent books, *Biomedical Research and Beyond: Expanding the Ethics of Inquiry*, and *Embryo: A Defense of Human Life*, co-authored with Robert P. George.

Jan Kyrre Berg Olsen, Ph.D., teaches theory of science at the Department of Public Health, University of Copenhagen, Denmark. He is author and co-editor (with Evan Selinger) of *Five Questions in Philosophy of Technology*, Automatic Press VIP (2007); (with Evan Selinger and Søren Riis) of *New Waves in Philosophy of Technology*, Palgrave Macmillan (2008); Guest-editor on *Technology and Science - Epistemological Paradigms and New Trends*, Special edition of *Synthese - An International Journal for Epistemology, Methodology and Philosophy of Science*, Springer, fall 2008; and forthcoming *A Companion to the Philosophy of Technology*, Blackwell-Wiley (April 2009).



David Johnson is a 2nd year PhD student in the Department of Philosophy at The Pennsylvania State University. Originally from New Orleans, he did his undergraduate degree in philosophy at Emory University. After graduating, he spent 6 years abroad teaching English in Korea and Japan before returning for graduate school. His main interests are in phenomenology, philosophical hermeneutics, and aesthetics (especially Heidegger, Gadamer, Ricoeur, Merleau-Ponty, and Charles Taylor). He is also interested in ancient Greek philosophy, especially Plato, Aristotle, and Greek Skepticism.

Jordan Bartol is an undergraduate student at the University of Windsor, Canada. His philosophical interests are primarily in Critical Theory. He is

especially interested in the relationship between processes of socialization and human nature.

Mathais Sarrazin is currently in the fourth year of his honours philosophy degree at the University of Victoria, in British Columbia, Canada. Last spring he was a presenter at the Western Canadian Undergraduate Philosophy Conference, and is Chair of the University of Victoria's Philosophy Student Union. Presently, he is writing his honours thesis on Tarskian logical consequence.

Blake Winter is currently a doctoral student in mathematics at the University of Buffalo. His academic interests include topology, logic, and metaphysics, including the ontological nature of physical theories.

Sara M. Kallock is a Liberal Studies in the Great Books major and a member of the class of 2009 at Saint Anselm College in Manchester, NH. Originally from the North Shore of Massachusetts, she now lives in New Hampshire. Next year she hopes to be a teacher and then in the following years pursue either law school or a PhD in philosophy or women's studies. Kallock wrote "The Tao of Salinger" during an independent study in the summer of '07. The following year she took a course in Taoist texts and was happy to see that her previous research did not contradict a proper study of Taoist philosophy. Sara thanks her mother, father, step-father, and grandparents for their encouragement in her collegiate pursuits.