PERSPECTIVES

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UCD School of Philosophy

Perspectives

Andrew O'Connor, Lisa Foran
Seferin James, Rozemund Uljée

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Editorial

Welcome to the third volume of *Perspectives: International Postgraduate Journal of Philosophy*. This journal is an annual, peer reviewed, postgraduate publication featuring interviews, articles and book reviews from both the analytic and continental traditions of philosophy.

The third volume of *Perspectives* is the first volume produced since the departure of its founding editors—Anna Nicholson, Luna Dolezal and Sheena Hyland—from practical editing duties. We wish them a fond farewell and hope that we have done justice to the spirit of the project they started with the current issue.

This year has been a transitional period for *Perspectives* in more than one sense. *Perspectives* has, up to this point, been published in both print and online form. Printing a journal is expensive. The money for printing the first two volumes of *Perspectives* had been secured through application and re-application to grant schemes within the university and subsidised by the School of Philosophy here in UCD Dublin. Depending on annual grant re-applications is a precarious way to fund a periodical. It was perhaps inevitable that there would come a year when all funding applications were rejected, but this year the event was dramatically precipitated by the collapse of the Irish property bubble, followed by the effective collapse of the banks and then the government.

The EU and the IMF stepped in to deal with the crisis of unpayable debts through a huge injection of more unpayable debt. This has been referred to as a bail *out* and not a bail *in* for reasons that no one can really understand. Unemployment, emigration, house repossessions and bankruptcy are on the rise. There have been huge cuts across the state sector and those institutions heavily dependent on state funding—such as the universities—have also suffered. Somewhere on the fringe of this economic mess stretching from Greece to

Wall Street is a small postgraduate philosophy journal called *Perspectives* with no money to print its third volume.

The impossibility of securing funding to print the third volume of *Perspectives* is cause for some slight regret. It is frustrating not to be able to continue on with a project precisely as before and at the very time when we first feel most responsible for it. Philosophy is a rather intangible practice and being able to hold a physical manifestation of all that hard work helps one to maintain a little sanity.

The current issue is ready to be published and we have decided to proceed with its publication in online form despite our inability to fund a print run at this time. Making this decision involved confronting the question of whether we feel it to be absolutely necessary to maintain a print run in addition to online publication. In confronting this question we decided that this issue represents far too much work by contributors, peer reviewers and ourselves to be put indefinitely on hold while we wait for the economy to improve or finish us off completely.

The financial situation may improve and *Perspectives* may make a return to the printed form in future issues. While we do not believe a print run to be absolutely necessary, the question remains of whether a return to print would be desirable. We are not sure that we could unambiguously recommend a future return to print even if the chance to do so should present itself. There are disadvantages as well as advantages to maintaining a print run of the journal and these must be evaluated in relation to what *Perspectives* is and what it is trying to achieve.

Perspectives is an independent journal that has been set up to publish peer reviewed postgraduate philosophical research. Is there a need for a journal to publish postgraduate philosophy? Postgraduates are certainly capable of publishing philosophy at a professional peer reviewed standard. A PhD thesis is required to meet this criteria and while it may be more challenging for masters students to reach the same standard, this does not mean that they are incapable of doing so.

Yet, if postgraduates are capable of producing philosophy of a professional standard then why not encourage them to publish in a professional philosophy publication rather than a postgraduate one? We know that there are some postgraduates that will only submit their work to professional philosophy journals. Such students feel an obligation to do so. They feel an imperative to strategically maximise their career capital before they hit the academic job market by publishing as much work as possible in journals that are as prestigious as possible.

From this point of view, there is no place for a postgraduate journal because a postgraduate journal will always be less prestigious than a professional journal. This kind of thinking would imply that it is counter productive for *Perspectives* to continue to identify itself as a postgraduate philosophy journal. It implies that it would be better for *Perspectives* to reposition itself as a philosophy journal that would remain open to submissions from postgraduates but no longer characterise itself as a postgraduate philosophy journal.

It seems to us that the attitude of strategic maximisation risks effacing not only the role of a postgraduate journal like *Perspectives* but also the meaning of philosophy in general. That people would study philosophy at all is incomprehensible from such a point of view. Strategic maximisers study things like medicine, engineering, business and law. Strategic maximisers do not study philosophy and yet philosophy remains a popular subject for undergraduate and postgraduate study. We must grasp a factor other than strategic maximisation to begin to come to terms with the phenomenon of philosophy.

Philosophy is interesting. It has cultural value. It expands intellectual horizons. It gives people perspectives.

The cultural value of philosophy creates the demand to study the subject. The demand to study the subject perpetuates philosophy as a profession. It is not a very big profession. Only a tiny fraction of people that ever study philosophy will be paid to teach it at university level and studying philosophy doesn't feed directly into any other career paths (at least in Ireland where there is no opportunity to teach philosophy as a secondary school subject). This is a real source of anxiety for postgraduate students who have already devoted a not-inconsiderable part of their lives and socio-economic capital to the cultural value of philosophy before they find themselves approaching the job market that could flip them from being what is effectively a paying customer of a university to an employee of one, or push them out into the cold. We know that there would be life after philosophy but we imagine it to be considerably less interesting. Anxiety about the future can suddenly induce an uncharacteristic proclivity towards strategic maximisation in the being of postgraduate philosophers.

We appreciate the anxiety postgraduate philosophy students can feel about their future employability. At the same time we want them to remember why they started doing philosophy in the first place and the value of what they are doing at the moment. It is only in the cultivation of this impulse that professional philosophy becomes a social and economic possibility. Postgraduates spend weeks, months, years, writing in an area that interests them and we want to give them a chance to share the work that they can be most proud of with people that share those interests. It matters to them and it matters to us.

A postgraduate philosophy journal offers a transitional space for publication. A space where people can submit work to be considered on its own merits, without the concern that an editor may be biased against publishing their work because they are an early stage researcher.

Perspectives seeks to facilitate the publication of postgraduate research but we do not indiscriminately publish postgraduate writing. Publication in *Perspectives* is not a trivial achievement. Our

peer reviewers are professional philosophers. They know that they are reviewing for a postgraduate journal but we do not ask them to make any special allowance for this fact in their consideration of the material. In this issue we are publishing only two articles out of a dozen submitted in the last year. At times we wished that we were able to accept more of the material submitted to the journal but overall we felt that the journal and the authors were served best in the long run by maintaining this high standard of publication.

The philosophical value of a journal is the quality of the philosophy it publishes. Good philosophy is time consuming to write, edit and have peer reviewed. A considerable amount of unpaid labour produces the real value of this—or any other—philosophy journal. The cost of printing a journal is substantial and the value it adds questionable. In a context where *Perspectives* has always been published online—where it is made openly accessible to anyone wishing to read it, indexed for anyone who wishes to find it and archived for posterity by the Directory of Open Access Journals—a physical print run actually makes only the most inefficient contribution to the dissemination of philosophical research by this journal.

In order to understand why printing physical copies of an independent journal like *Perspectives* has so little impact, it can be revealing to consider what actually happens to physical copies of a journal after they have been printed. The physical copies of the journal come back from the printer in boxes and they are destined to stay in those boxes until they can be meaningfully distributed. Meaningful distribution means placing a copy of the journal with someone that wants to read it or somewhere that such a person is likely to find it.

Meaningful distribution is a significant challenge for anyone that produces physical copies of a philosophical work. Philosophy is a fairly popular subject but it's not that popular. 'Journal' may have an etymological proximity to 'journalism' but journals are not sold at the newstand or in most commercial bookshops. This is mostly because the target audience for any given philosophical work is statistically—and therefore commercially—insignificant for almost

any population you can think of. Only in spaces where people explicitly congregate for philosophical purposes can a statistically significant concentration of potentially interested readers be found. These spaces include libraries, departments, specialist bookshops and conferences.

Meaningful distribution is a challenge for anyone but it is hardest for an independent journal like *Perspectives* that does not have any kind of pre-existing distribution system that journals produced under the umbrella of large publishing houses might have. The amount of meaningful distribution of physical copies of the journal that takes place is directly proportional to the amount of raw effort put into it by the editors. We already put a lot of our time into editing the journal—for love not money—because it is a worthwhile project and philosophically interesting for us. Trying to organise the meaningful distribution of physical copies of the journal in any sort of systematic way involves the commitment of considerably more of our already scarce time and the task does not even have the merit of being philosophically interesting. It is extremely time consuming and rather dull.

We could speak of modest successes in the meaningful distribution of physical copies of the journal but it is more revealing to speak of the futile failures. At one major conference this year we found ourselves in the position of trying to sell physical copies of the last issue of the journal at a loss on the cost of printing each unit in order to try and raise some money towards printing the current issue. Conferences have a large percentage of philosophical readers and large publishing houses appear to sell stock at conferences all the time so this sounds like an ordinary and straight forward thing to do. At the same time that we were offering *Perspectives* for sale at a loss, the university press of one of the worlds most prestigious universities simply gave away boxes and boxes of professional philosophy journals for free at the next stall. We believe that we can be justifiably proud of the quality of the postgraduate philosophy research published in *Perspectives* but one has to admit that this constitutes a difficult competitive environment.

The university press in question, like all of the large academic publishers, makes regular and considerable profits by selling periodicals to unversity libraries worldwide. The money they make is made through institutional subscriptions and any remaining physical copies are just so much stuff lying around in storage boxes. The physical copies of a journal can be given away by large publishing houses because physical copies of their journals are not the product but the by-product. They can give these physical copies away at conferences in order to promote the journal as a forum for publication to philosophers. It is somewhat bizarre that the people they give the physical copies to—those who actually read philosophy— are not actually the target market for the product. The philosophers they give copies of the journal to are instrumental in the production of the product but the product is also strangely detached from any particular contribution they might make.

The product of large academic publishers must be understood in terms of access and control. The product of large academic publishers is control over a slice of contemporary research that is substantial enough to allow them to seek rent for access to this research from university libraries. Rent seeking in this way is hugely profitable because the large academic publishers can more or less extort money from university libraries that are institutionally obliged to provide access to contemporary research for students and faculty. Large publishing houses extort money for periodicals from libraries that often struggle to maintain the rising cost of access to contemporary research for their students and faculty on tight or dwindling budgets.

We have no real interest in attempting to control access to the journal. Neither do our contributors or readers. Printing the journal has been the only substantial monetary cost associated with producing the journal and this cost has tended to pull us in directions we do not really want to go in. This cost has introduced the uncertainty and tedium of regular funding applications and the frustration of trying to meaningfully distribute physical copies of the journal while simultaneously feeling obliged to monetise those physical copies simply to try and mitigate the cost of printing them in the first place.

We have some slight regrets about the impossibility of funding a print run this year but the journal has also been released from the cost of its vainity.

Perspectives is a product of voluntary collaboration between contributors, editors and peer-reviewers. It is a mutual gift. We have always been delighted to preserve the spirit of this gift by making the journal available to anyone that wants it online. We can do this because online distribution is so cheap it's free. Once the issue is posted online it remains available and we neither run out of copies nor get stuck with more copies than we can meaningfully distribute. Online publication makes the material as easily available to anyone interested in reading it as the most ideal distribution of physical copies.

Online distribution is also the most efficient way to avoid the difficulty associated with the statistically tiny number of readers interested in reading any given philosophy article because it involves an element of self selection on the part of the reader. Readers that find *Perspectives* in their search for material on a particular subject—or because they met a contributor at a conference and want to check out their work—have selected themselves as the ideal interested readers of the publication out of billions of people. It is impossible to make a selection as powerful as self selection from the supply side. Physical copies of the journal only really promote the visibility of the journals availability, self selection by the reader remains the final factor.

In the spirit of the mutual gift it seems only right to publish *Perspectives* under a Creative Commons license so that this co-operative philosophical project can be certified free range and fair trade. All of our contributors are free to range as much as they want in their favourite library and they only lay eggs when they want to. The products of their voluntary labour are gifted to us and so it is only fair for us to trade them freely online to anyone that wants them.

Now without further ado—except, perhaps, the further ado of announcing the intention to proceed without further ado—we present the following brief introduction to the content of the current issue:

In "Modality & Other Matters: An Interview with Timothy Williamson", Paal Antonsen inteviews Williamson on his rejection of philosophical exceptionalism and how he approaches questions concerning the relationship between epistemology, metaphyics and modality.

In "Searle, Materialism, and the Mind-Body Problem", Erik Sorem evaluates John Searle's proposal of a simple solution to the mind-body problem in *The Rediscovery of Mind*. Sorem first explicates Searle's attempt to renegotiate the historical emergence of the mind-body problem from a particular understanding of science and materialism. He then argues that Searle's proposal of biological naturalism is problematically poised between a property dualism and a modified form of the identity theory and not such a simple solution after all.

In "David Lewis's Neglected Challenge: It's me or God", Andrew Stephenson examines Lewis's claim that either he is right about modal logic or there is a sound version of Anselm's ontological argument for the existence of God. As Stephenson concludes against Lewis in favour of the latter, it may be time to give up yer aul sins.

This issue also offers a number of really excellent book reviews. Paul Earlie's review of Michael Naas's book *Derrida From Now On* combines philosophical clarity with the elegant tone *apropos* to the very best literary criticism. Andrea Janae Sholtz review's Constantin Boundas's (ed.) *Gilles Deleuze: The Intensive Reduction* addresses the role of the intensive and the care required to avoid misunderstandings in the reception of Deleuze's thought. Jacob Vivian Pearce's review of Michel Serres's book *The Five Senses: A philosophy of Mingled Bodies* introduces a book of which everyone should be aware, a book that has only been translated into English from the French after twenty-five years. Ariane Fischer argues that ideology is a prominent but controversial concern of twentieth century intellectual culture before undertaking an entertainly scathing review of Mostafa Rejai's (ed.) *Ideology: Comparative and Cultural Status*, a book that collects a number of articles from the height of the cold war that proclaimed the decline of ideology for seemingly ideological

reasons. Finally, Andrew Turner's review of Chrysostomos Mantza-vinos's (ed.) *Philosophy of the Social Science: Philosophical theory and Scientific Practice* considers the excitement, possibilities and limitations of an interesting interdisciplinary project.

The Editors

Andrew O'Connor
Lisa Foran
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Rozemund Uljée

Modality & Other Matters:
An Interview with Timothy Williamson

Timothy Williamson (**TW**) has been the Wykeham Professor of Logic at Oxford since 2000. His books include *Vagueness* (Routledge, 1994), *Knowledge and its Limits* (Oxford, 2000), and *The Philosophy of Philosophy* (Blackwell, 2007). He has also published numerous articles on epistemology, philosophy of language, philosophy of logic and metaphysics. He taught at Trinity College Dublin, from 1980–1988.

The interviewer, Paal Antonsen (**PA**), is a philosophy student at Trinity College Dublin.

PA: In this interview I want to get an overview of some of your philosophical perspective. I will ask three main questions: the first about the difference between philosophical and non-philosophical knowledge, the second concerns the epistemology of modality, and the third is on the emerging metaphysical picture.

I

PA: In your recent book, *The Philosophy of Philosophy* (3), it is said to be an important part of your view that a common assumption, which you call 'philosophical exceptionalism', is rejected. Could you explain what you mean by this term, and what the alternative position 'philosophical anti-exceptionalism' involves?

TW: By 'philosophical exceptionalism' I mean the view that philosophy is quite unlike other forms of intellectual inquiry, that there is something very special about philosophical inquiry. This was a

common view in a lot of 20th century of philosophy, held for example by the logical positivists and both the early and the later Wittgenstein. The idea was that the aim of philosophy was something like conceptual clarification rather than gaining knowledge of how things are. Sometimes it is said that philosophy is supposed to lead to understanding, but not to knowledge. There is a whole family of versions of this view. By 'philosophical anti-exceptionalism' I mean the negation of that view, that philosophical inquiry is a form of intellectual inquiry not so different from what goes on in other disciplines. This is not to say that it should be assimilated to any particular non-philosophical form of inquiry, such as physics, because there are wide variations among non-philosophical forms of inquiry. The differences between philosophy and other disciplines are not unlike the differences between physics, mathematics, history, economics, biology and linguistics, which are themselves very marked. In particular, I am suggesting that the aim of philosophy is, in the long run, to acquire some sort of knowledge of how things are. I also think that the alleged dichotomy between knowledge and understanding is a false one: you can't understand why something is so without knowing why it's so.

PA: A corollary of anti-exceptionalism is that there is no principal difference between philosophical and non-philosophical knowledge (and understanding). From this one may infer, as indeed Quine seems to have done, that the notion of 'metaphysical necessity' is simply spurious. If there is nothing special about philosophical knowledge, then there is no special knowledge of metaphysical modality involved either. How do you think that metaphysical necessity may be salvaged and how does it relate to non-metaphysical truths?

TW: I think the inference from the assumption that there is no very radical difference between philosophical and non-philosophical knowledge to the spuriousness of metaphysical necessity is fallacious. The notion of metaphysical necessity is not itself an epistemic idea.

It is simply an idea about how things could have been. Something is metaphysically necessary if it couldn't have been otherwise, in the most unrestricted sense. In other words, if something really is metaphysically necessary, it would have obtained no matter what had obtained. What I am suggesting is that the kinds of ways we have of acquiring non-philosophical knowledge are capable of being applied to give us philosophical knowledge, including knowledge of metaphysical necessity. The particular link I am making is between the sorts of methods we use to evaluate counterfactual conditionals outside philosophy and the notion of metaphysical necessity. I characterize metaphysical necessity as what would have been the case, whatever had been the case. That is, in effect, itself a generalized counterfactual conditional. As far as I can see, the methods we have for evaluating counterfactual conditionals in general are appropriate even in special cases like that of metaphysical necessity. Of course, to some extent they need to be refined for the special cases we are interested in when doing philosophy, but refining ways of acquiring knowledge does not mean switching to radically different ways of acquiring knowledge.

II

PA: Continuing this thought on the link between metaphysical modality and counterfactual conditionals takes us over to the issue concerning epistemology of modality. A crucial step in your formulation of philosophical methodology involves the logical equivalence between modal claims and counterfactual conditional claims. There are different ways of formulating it, but one way to explicate the equivalence is of the form **(1)**:

$$(1) \quad \Box A \leftrightarrow (\neg A \Box \rightarrow (A \,\&\, \neg A))$$

Informally, it reads as saying '**A** is necessary if and only if, if **A** weren't the case a contradiction would'. Under standard interpretations of modality and counterfactual conditionals **(1)** is valid. However, you think that **(1)** also plays an epistemological role, namely that given such a logical equivalence one can reduce the modal epistemology to counterfactual epistemology. Could you explain why you think that knowledge of modality is a special case of knowledge of counterfactuals?

TW: I think some people have slightly misinterpreted what I was saying in the book as the idea that if two things are logically equivalent then it just follows that the way we know one is the same as the way we know the other. That isn't strictly true. If we're not aware of the logical equivalence we may use different methods. We may be aware of the logical equivalence in principle without using it in practice. It is certainly not as straightforward as that. It also doesnt seem to be psychologically plausible that the way we evaluate modal claims about possibility and necessity is by actually articulating an equivalence of the kind that you mentioned, so that after evaluating the counterfactual claim we apply to the equivalence to make the corresponding modal judgement. The connection I see is a little bit subtler than that. It is something like this: suppose we manage to give a decent account of how it is we acquire knowledge of counterfactuals. This is going to involve postulating various sorts of cognitive mechanisms that will involve reasoning processes, the use of the imagination and so on. If we have such an account, the question arises, do we need to postulate any further cognitive capacities in order to explain our knowledge of modality? What I am in effect arguing in the book is that once we see what range of cognitive capacities is needed to explain our knowledge of counterfactuals, we see that those capacities are already sufficient to explain our knowledge of modality. That is not going by some inference that involves an equivalence like **(1)** as a premise. It is simply that the same capacities can be applied directly to the modal judgments, and applied in a way that we would expect given that the equivalence

(1) holds. In other words, the applications of these cognitive capacities will be the same for the left hand side as for the right hand side. That doesn't mean we are explicitly analysing modalities in terms of counterfactuals, but once we see that no further cognitive capacities need be postulated in order to explain our knowledge of modality, it becomes utterly implausible to suppose that nevertheless we are using some extra unnecessary cognitive capacities when we are evaluating claims of modality. In particular, whereas counterfactual conditionals have all sorts of practical applications, and it is quite easy to see why it would have been evolutionary valuable to develop capacities for evaluating counterfactuals, claims of metaphysical necessity and possibility are generally of little interest to anyone except philosophers. It would be very, very strange indeed if somehow evolution had given us these special cognitive capacities whose only application was to claims of interest to metaphysicians.

PA: Not only can you say that it seems sufficient to stipulate the ability to do counterfactuals to modality, it also seems that people who are arguing about particular modal claims fall back to counterfactual terms. In particular, I have in mind Kripke's preface to the second edition of *Naming and Necessity*. When challenged on the point of modal epistemology, he reverts back to talk about counterfactual scenarios. It seems that whenever people have to talk about specific cases, they have to revert back to talk about particular counterfactual situations. Also, as you were mentioning the role of evolution, both Dennett and Dawkins have pressed the importance of developing the capacity to evaluate counterfactual conditionals in order to predict future outcomes. Dennett also seems to think that evolution can explain the capacity for counterfactual conditionals, and thus provide a naturalized way of explaining the capacity for evaluating modal claims. Would you say that since people always revert back to counterfactual talk when explaining modality, that sort of goes to show your point as well?

TW: It's grist to my mill. One has to be a little bit careful, because the cognitive processes that are in fact employed, perhaps sub-personally, when people arrive at a judgment are not necessarily the same as the kinds of justification that people produce when they are pressed to do so. One thing that cognitive science has produced evidence for is that there is a considerable element of rationalization in the sort of justification we produce, partly because we often don't have access of an introspective kind to the processes we are actually using. One can't simply rely on what people say when they are pressed, because it may not correspond to the actual cognitive processes involved in the acquisition of the relevant beliefs. In this particular case however, there is as far as I can see no need or plausibility in postulating some alternative cognitive mechanism. The sort of reliance on counterfactuals that people do, as you say, typically make in such situation may indeed reflect the process by which they actually reached these judgments. But we need corroboration from several different directions to make the case convincing.

PA: It was mentioned that you want to sever a link between the epistemology and the metaphysics of modality. There is, however, a view that modality must in any case be more attached to epistemology. Some will be critical of the principle of bivalence as applied to counterfactual claims the principle of bivalence being the view that every proposition is determinately either true or false. If one holds bivalence for modal claims then, by **(1)**, one must also hold a similar condition for counterfactual conditionals. But the denial of a counterfactual may be represented in two different ways. Hence, we have two versions of conditional bivalence.

$$\textbf{(2)} \quad (\mathbf{A}\square \rightarrow \mathbf{B}) \vee \neg(\mathbf{A}\square \rightarrow \mathbf{B})$$
$$\textbf{(3)} \quad (\mathbf{A}\square \rightarrow \mathbf{B}) \vee (\mathbf{A}\square \rightarrow \neg\mathbf{B})$$

The strong denial of a counterfactual conditional in **(2)** is a negation of the counterfactual conditional as a whole, whereas the weaker denial of a counterfactual conditional in **(3)** is a negation of the conse-

quent. In some logics, **(2)** and **(3)** collapse, but you probably don't want that. Could you first explain how you see a difference in epistemology between affirming and denying a counterfactual conditional?

TW: This was something I wrote about in an article on bivalence and subjunctive conditionals, while here at Trinity. Let me make a few qualifications. One is that I would consider the principle of bivalence just to be the principle that every proposition is either true or false. I wouldn't add the 'determinately' qualification, which I think you have taken from Dummett. In my view, that just confuses the issue, but I don't think it's so crucial here. My views about the logic and semantics of counterfactuals are not primarily based on epistemological considerations, because, unlike Dummett, I am a realist. I don't think the meaning of counterfactuals is to be articulated in terms of the conditions under which we can know or assert them. I would rather evaluate these issues in directly logical, semantic and metaphysical terms. One point that I'd like to make is that it seems quite clear what the falsity of a counterfactual conditional is equivalent to; it is equivalent to the truth of its negation. The negation of a counterfactual conditional has to be represented as a negation of the whole thing. There is a further issue as to whether negating a counterfactual conditional is equivalent simply to negating its consequent. In other words, whether 'It is not the case that, if it had rained, the match would have been cancelled' is equivalent to 'If it had rained, the match would not have been cancelled'. There is actually a very straightforward consideration which shows that it is not always the case that negating a counterfactual conditional is equivalent to negating its consequent. This comes from considering counterfactual conditionals with impossible antecedents. First, let's take a principle which virtually all would accept, which is that a conjunction counterfactually implies its conjuncts. If $\mathbf{A} \& \mathbf{B}$ had been the case, then $\mathbf{A}$ would have been the case, and also if $\mathbf{A} \& \mathbf{B}$ had been the case, then $\mathbf{B}$ would have been the case. If we now consider the case where the antecedent is a contradiction, it give us that if $\mathbf{A} \& \neg\mathbf{A}$ had been the case, $\mathbf{A}$ would have been the case, and

also that if $\mathbf{A} \,\&\, \neg\mathbf{A}$ had been the case, then $\neg\mathbf{A}$ would have been the case. If negating the consequent is equivalent to negating the whole thing, the second of those would have been equivalent to the negation of the first and we would have a contradiction. But we have to assert both those counterfactual conditionals, because they are both instances of the truism that a conjunction counterfactually implies any one of its conjuncts. This establishes, on pretty uncontentious grounds, that negating a counterfactual conditional is not ipso facto equivalent to negating its consequent. It shows, from a syntactic point of view, that we can't think of the negation as in effect operating on the consequent. The only question, I think, is whether there are good reasons for independently accepting conditional excluded middle, which is the principle you called (3). One could accept (3) even if one thinks that the negation of a counterfactual is different from the result of negating its consequent. (3) is a principle that has been defended by Stalnaker. It is valid on his logic of counterfactuals, and he has defended it without any confusion about what the contradictory of a counterfactual conditional is. In my view, his defence is unconvincing and unnecessary. We have perfectly good logics for counterfactuals, like the one David Lewis gave, where (3) is invalid. The cases to consider are cases where the antecedent seems to be in some way completely neutral between the consequent and the negation of the consequent, maybe cases where, say, indeterminism holds. If we have 'If the coin had been tossed, it would have come up heads' and 'If the coin had been tossed, it would have could come up tails' and therefore 'not heads', and there is nothing to choose between them. It's not that we don't know which is true, but as it were, reality itself doesn't decide in favour of either of them. One way we might think about this is that in order for a counterfactual conditional to be true, there has to be some sort of connection between the antecedent and the consequent. Let's not now try to specify what sort of connection that is required. It seems that there would be cases where the antecedent lacks that connection to the consequent, but also lacks that connection to the negation of the consequent. In those cases conditional excluded middle would

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fail, but that is not a failure of bivalence, because if what's required for a counterfactual conditional to be true is that there is a connection of the right kind between the antecedent and the consequent, then all that is required for it to be false is the absence of such a connection. It is not required that there be some alternative connection going the opposite way. We could compare them to existential claims. What's required for 'There is a talking donkey' to be true is just that there be such a donkey. That means that what is required for that sentence to be false is simply that there be no such donkeys. It is not required that there be some other kind of donkey, that prevents all other donkeys from talking. It is only required that there be no talking donkeys at all. Similarly, if a counterfactual informs us that there is a connection of a certain kind, what it amounts to for it to be false is simply that there be no such connection.

III

PA: A natural progression from bivalence is to turn over to more general metaphysics. Let's think in terms of a familiar Quinean perspective: science introduces entities of certain kinds, and philosophy regiments the language of science into something like a first order language, where the objects in the domain of quantification are the things said to exist—hence the slogan 'to be is to be the value of a variable. From your perspective, this provides an impoverished ontology. How do you see yourself as differing from a traditional view of this kind?

TW: First, let me say something that seems right about Quine's perspective. That is that the existential quantifier of first order logic is the right way to express the claim that there are things of a certain kind. I'm taking existence here just as a matter of being

something or other, and not requiring a further property of concreteness. I think that, properly interpreted, Quine's claim that to be is to be value of a variable is correct. What I don't think is that it is as informative as Quine suggests, because I don't think that the metalingusitic element in talking about values of variables is really adding anything useful. It's not that things are because they are the values of variables, it is rather that they are values of variables because they are. The metaphysics is preceding the semantics, and not the other way around. I differ from Quine on several other points. First, I think Quine is being much too narrow in insisting that in order to evaluate the ontological commitments of a theory we have to regiment the theory in first order logic. There are many plausible and intelligible semantic constructions, for example modal operators, higher order quantifiers and operators for propositional attitudes, such as belief and knowledge. These are not devices of first order logic, but nevertheless are entirely legitimate. In my view, we're distorting a theory if it is first formulated in those terms, and then we insist on trying, in some procrustean way, to find a first order analogue of it. Suppose we take claims of possibility. If we try to put them in first order terms, we may have to go to a first order language in which we quantify over possible worlds. Then we'll understand claims of possibility as claiming, amongst other things, that there is a possible world of a certain kind. But that is not a commitment of the original claim, which is in good standing before it's regimented, and the regimentation may be unfaithful to what the philosopher is putting forward. I therefore think we need to be much more liberal than Quine was in what sorts of language we think it is legitimate for philosophers to formulate their theories in. A second point is that Quine's emphasis on natural science, which you hinted at when you talked about science introducing entities, seems to be too narrow. There is considerably more legitimate diversity within intellectual inquiry than Quine allows. Physics may be one of our highest achievements, but it is not the case that any form of knowledge needs to be derived from physics in order to count as part of our best theory of the world. So I would repudiate Quine's emphasis

on fundamental natural science to the exclusion of all other forms of inquiry, as the proper test of ontology. I would also insist that the emphasis on ontology to the exclusion of other forms of metaphysical commitment seems to me lopsided. Quine himself is aware that ontological commitment is not the only form of commitment; he does talk of ideology as well as ontology. I think that once one is more liberal about the sorts of languages that it is legitimate to theorize in one has to realize that there are all sorts of claims that are formulated, using semantic operations that are not first order. They nevertheless involve metaphysical commitments, because they involve commitments to how things really are. It is only that in the strict sense the commitments they involve are not ontological commitment, because they are not commitments to the effect that there are some things of a certain kind. I guess the fourth point on which I differ from Quine as you represented him is a more technical one. The way you formulated it was that we talk about objects in the domain of quantification. When we're quantifying unrestrictedly, which is what we do in metaphysics, we're quantifying so widely that, for reasons connected with Russell's paradox, we can't allow that all the things we are generalizing over (which are all the things there are) could fit into any single domain. No set is big enough to hold them all. We are therefore quantifying over everything, and not the set that contains everything, because there is not such set. But actually, Quine himself doesn't insist on this talk of domains, so that's not really a difference with Quine.

PA: Let me follow up on the last comment of quantification, together with the issue of modality. Two modal principles that stand out as crucial in your view of modal metaphysics is the Barcan formula (BF) and its converse (CBF). In their existential version, they may be stated as follows.

$$\textbf{BF} \quad \Diamond \exists x A \to \exists x \Diamond A$$
$$\textbf{CBF} \quad \exists x \Diamond A \to \Diamond \exists x A$$

The claim **BF** reads informally as saying that 'If there could have been something that met the condition **A**, then there is something that could have met condition **A**', and the claim **CBF** reads with the opposite direction. If **BF** is true, the everything that could have existed must in some sense already exist. One motivation for rejecting **BF** is that, on many understandings of the sense of 'exist', it contains a metaphysical commitment that is highly implausible. How can the Barcan formulas be reconciled with or improve on our intuitions about existence?

TW: The first thing we need to do is to distinguish between material existence and existence in general. Numbers may be an example of things that exist without having material existence. By existence I mean 'being something or other'. What is overwhelmingly plausible is that it is contingent what material things there are. There could have been more or fewer material things than there in fact are. That is consistent with **BF** and **CBF**, because it is consistent with the idea that if, for example, the table we're sitting at had not been material it would still have been something. It would just not have been something material. Initially, that sounds like a strange claim, and the immediate question is: well, what would it have been? I'm not talking about the table as being a collection scattered atoms. That is still something material, and even those atoms might never have been. What I'm suggesting is that if there had been no such table and no such atoms, there would still have been a possible table, in other words, something that could have been a table and that could have been a material thing. But in those circumstances, it would not have been material, it would not have been a table, and so it would not have been located in space and time. It would have been a merely possible table, a merely possible material thing. Once we see that that is what **BF** and **CBF** is claiming, when they are understood with the quantifiers completely unrestricted and not limited to material things, it is much less obvious that there is any inconsistency between what those formulas are committing us to and what common sense is in any position to

assert or have any special authority over. It seems that scientifically informed common sense may have some authority over what materially and contingent things there are, but once the question is what merely possible material things there are, that sort of abstract questions is not to be decided by common sense. That question is to be decided by systematic theory. Of course, it is not at all obvious such theoretical considerations themselves will favour **BF** and **CBF**, but what I have tried to argue in a series of works is that in fact they do. When we try to develop a systematic theory of metaphysics of quantified modal logic, we get into a mess unless we accept **BF** and **CBF**. So, in the end, we are driven, not by some immediately intuitive consideration, but by considerations of the needs of systematic theory into accepting these formulas.

PA: When talking about the impoverished ontology of Quine you also mentioned the impoverished language. In your latest work you have been focusing on metaphysical issues with the use second order modal logic. Could you say something about why you think that future work in metaphysics will profit from the application of logics of this kind, and also perhaps what you take to be the most pressing question(s) that is opened up with this new method of analysis?

TW: Second order logic, depending on how we interpret it, allows us to generalize over, as well as over things, over the properties those things have. It also allows us to generalize in a plural way, a point that Peter Geach originally made. If you take a sentence like 'Some critics admire only one another' you can't formalize it in first order logic even though it sounds like a first order claim on first hearing. The plural quantifier 'some critics' needs something like second order logic in order to formalize it. I think second order logic is quite widely, though not universally, accepted for such purposes and for technical reasons it seems a much more natural background for a lot of mathematics for set theory and arithmetic than first order logic. At the same time, most philosophers are happy to use modal operators for possibility and necessity. So second order modal logic

is simply the result of combining these different resources that separately probably the majority of philosophers acknowledge the need for. Of course, the question is whether these two sets of logical notions interact in any interesting way. I think what people have not realized is how rich the new questions that arise concerning the interaction between them are. A simple example is that we have these two ways of interpreting second order logic; one in terms of plurals and one in terms of properties. In the non-modal case, it is not obvious it makes any difference which one you use, but as soon as you introduce modal operators, you see these two forms of interpretations of second order quantification interact quite differently with the modal operators. We can use the interaction with modality as a way of separating different interpretations of second order logic. They might both be equally legitimate interpretations, but if they are different we need to keep them separated and it is modality that separates them. But I am also interested in second order modal logic because it provides a wider setting for the evaluation of formulas such as **BF** and **CBF**. It is a more expressive language than first order modal logic and therefore allows us to ask more questions and bring in a wider variety of systematic considerations to bear on the evaluation of these formulas. In effect, it gives us a wider evidence base for reaching our conclusions, even about formulas like **BF** and **CBF**, which are themselves formulas of first order modal logic. Once we consider how they interact with second order modal logic, we can make a more informed judgement of what their overall theoretical effects are and in my view that judgement comes out in favour of the two forms.

Searle, Materialism, and the Mind-Body Problem

Erik Sorem

UCD Dublin

Abstract

In *The Rediscovery of Mind*, Searle gives a spirited attempt to offer a "simple solution" to the mind-body problem in his "biological naturalism." It is the purpose of this paper, however, to show that the solution he offers is not simple and is arguably incoherent as it currently stands. I focus on Searle's claim that the key to solving the mind-body problem is to first reject the system of conceptual categories that underlies materialism and then adopt his biological naturalism. I argue that the positions articulated in this theory, however, appear to generate serious inconsistencies that make his proposal look either incoherent or suggestive of the sort of property dualism he wants to reject. Because Searle lacks a sufficient metaphysical scheme to produce compelling arguments against these particular accusations and because it is not clear that biological naturalism is the obvious or common-sense position he says it is, I conclude that his proposal cannot be a "simple solution."

In his influential book, *The Rediscovery of Mind* (RM) (Searle 1992), John Searle declares that "the famous mind-body problem, the source of so much controversy over the past two millennia, has a simple solution." (1992, 1) His proposal is simply to acknowledge that "Mental phenomena are caused by neurophysiological processes in the brain and are themselves features of the brain." (1992, 1) Could a solution, which has proven to be such a difficult problem for philosophy of mind over the past two millennia, really be this simple? As I shall argue, Searle's proposed solution is not as simple as acknowledging the position above. In fact, this position depends on several other

crucial assumptions that, when taken together, appear to generate inconsistencies, making it difficult for him to argue against the various property dualism accusations. I therefore conclude that without a more coherent metaphysical scheme, Searle cannot claim that his 'solution' is a simple one.

From the outset of RM, Searle distinguishes his view from other positions in the philosophy of mind by calling his "biological naturalism." Generally construed, biological naturalism is the idea that "mental events and processes are as much part of our biological natural history as digestion, mitosis, meiosis, or enzyme secretion." (1992, 1) Although Searle contends that this view is a "simple solution" to the mind-body problem, there are several steps one must take to get to this position. For example, an essential theme running throughout RM is the belief that the key to the mind-body problem is to completely reject the system of Cartesian categories, a system which Searle believes has traditionally been expressed through our dualistic vocabulary. As we shall soon discover, however, this belief ultimately rests on Searle's particular understanding of materialism. Hence, in assessing Searle's proposed solution to the mind-body problem, it will be necessary to first understand his thoughts regarding materialism, as he conceives it, and the fundamental problems he believes plague all varieties of materialism.

I. Materialism according to Searle

What is Searle's conception of materialism? Searle explains that the doctrine of "materialism" does not, as the word may suggest, consist simply in the view that the world is entirely made up of material particles. He reasons that such a view does not distinguish itself from every other position found in contemporary philosophy of mind, except possibly the Cartesian dualist view that there exist

both physical and mental substances. Although materialism would obviously be opposed to the Cartesian view of reality, it is not, according to Searle, simply the system of thought defined solely as the antithesis of Cartesian dualism. For example, referring specifically to the three Australian 'identity theorists', J.J.C. Smart,[1] U.T. Place,[2] and D. Armstrong,[3] Searle states: "it seems clear that when they assert the identity of the mental with the physical, they are claiming something more than simply the denial of Cartesian substance dualism." (1992, 27)

Searle suggests that these philosophers distinguish their materialism from other non-Cartesian theories (the mere denial of the Cartesian ontological categories) by further denying the existence of any irreducible mental properties in the world or phenomenological properties[4] attributed to consciousness (qualia, etc.). (1992, 27) Materialism of the identity variety (Smart 1965), explains Searle, attempts to get a description of mental features in terms of 'topic-neutral' vocabulary that does not mention the fact that they are mental. (1992, 37) In fact, affirming the existence of such irreducible mental features is often seen as subscribing to "property dualism," which from the materialist's point of view is just as untenable as substance dualism. Although Searle rejects property dualism, he makes it clear that he does not agree with this common materialist assumption. He believes that it is perfectly consistent with naturalism to hold that the world is entirely composed of physical particles obeying the laws of physics while still maintaining that there are irreducible features of the mind that fit perfectly well into a naturalistic physical ontology.

The view that there are irreducible features of the mind coupled with the belief that everything that exists is nevertheless entirely physical has led many to accuse Searle of being a property dualist. Searle, however, emphatically denies this accusation.[5] (1992, 13-14) So on what grounds does he make this denial? He explains that he rejects property and substance dualism for the same reasons he rejects materialism. (1992, 28) The problem with all these positions, according to Searle, is that they consider the mental and

physical to be mutually exclusive, that is, "because mental states are intrinsically mental, they cannot be in that very respect, physical." (2004, 81) However, Searle holds that "because they are intrinsically mental, they are a certain type of biological state, and therefore a fortiori they are physical." (2004, 81) As far as he is concerned, the materialists are incorrect when charging him with being a property dualist on account of introducing irreducible mental features because they mistakenly assume that the naturalistic belief that everything is physical is incompatible with the view that there are irreducible mental properties. So Searle contends that accepting both the existence of irreducible features of mind and the idea that everything is physical does not force one into adopting some variety of property dualism. Materialism, as he understands it, assumes that our only choice in categorizing reality is to say that it is either ontologically one (monism) or it is dualistic (property or substance dualism); therefore, when they reason that dualism is untenable, they are obliged to conclude that monism is the only option. As we shall see, a crucial point behind Searle's "simple solution" is his belief that both 'monism' and 'dualism' themselves are actually confused and ambiguous categories: "They both accept a certain vocabulary and with it a set of assumptions." (1992, 2) There is much leading up to this assertion. In the following sections I will examine Searle's attempt to show that this vocabulary (dualistic vocabulary) is in fact obsolete and the assumptions materialism makes are, as he sees it, false. It will prove useful to our examination to first define Searle's particular conception of materialism by examining what he sees as its common assumptions and definite methodological presuppositions.

II. Materialism's Common Assumptions and Methodological Presuppositions

Searle discusses the foundations of classical materialism in RM by addressing what he identifies as its common assumptions and methodological presuppositions, which he lists as follows:

> (1) Where the scientific study of the mind is concerned, consciousness and its special features are of rather minor importance. [...] (2) Science is objective. [...] (3) Because reality is objective, the best method in the study of the mind is to adopt the objective or third-person point of view. [...] (4) From the third-person, objective point of view, the only answer to the epistemological question 'How would we know about the mental phenomena of another system?' is: We know by observing its behaviour [...] (5) Intelligent behaviour and causal relations to intelligent behaviour are in some way the essence of the mental [...] (6) Every fact in the universe is in principle knowable and understandaquoteble by human investigators. [...] (7) The only things that exist are ultimately physical, as the physical is traditionally conceived, that is, as opposed to the mental. (1992, 10–11)

With respect to (1), Searle believes that materialism aspires to give an account of the mind by describing language, cognition, and functional mental states, yet it assumes this can be accomplished without paying attention to facts about consciousness as a first-personal subjective state. In qualifying (2), he states that it is assumed that science is actually objective, "not only in the sense that it strives to reach conclusions that are independent of personal biases and points of view, but more important, it concerns a reality that is objective." (1992, 10) In other words, the idea that science is objective

is derived from the fact that all of reality (including mental states) is objective. Hence, on this assumption it would follow that the best way to study the mind is to proceed in the same way we study objective reality, i.e., by adopting the third-person/objective point of view (3). Searle summarizes the traditional materialist position, stating: "The objectivity of science requires that the phenomena studied be completely objective, and in the case of cognitive science this means that it must study objectively observable behaviour." (1992, 10) Therefore, from materialism's common assumptions, it necessarily follows that a scientific study of the mind is simply a study of intelligent behaviour.

To the epistemological question of how we know about the mental phenomena of another person or system, the only solution for the materialist according to Searle's analysis must be (4), "We know by observing its behaviour." He argues that given the materialist's previous assumptions and commitments, this can be the only solution to the "other minds problem." (1992, 10–11) For example, he explains that "A basic question, perhaps the basic question, in the study of the mind is the epistemological question: How would we know whether or not some other 'system' has such-and-such mental properties? And the only scientific answer is: By its behaviour." (1992, 10 11) As he sees it, epistemology, therefore, only becomes significant for the materialist insofar as science is required to identify and distinguish mental systems from the rest of reality and natural phenomena. On this supposition this can only happen by observing and studying behaviour.

Searle's contention is that if we restrict ourselves to the aforementioned materialist assumptions, then there is nothing more to the mental other than what is observed in intelligent behaviour and causal relations to intelligent behaviour. (1992, 11) By way of further explanation, he writes:

> Adherence to the view that there is an essential connection between mind and behaviour range all the way from the extreme version of behaviourism that says there isn't

> anything to having mental states except having disposi-
> tions to behaviour, to the functionalists attempt to define
> mental notions in terms of internal and external causal
> relations, to Wittgenstein's (1953, para. 580) puzzling
> claim, "An 'inner process' stands in need of outward cri-
> teria." (1992, 11)

Point (6), that every fact in the universe is in principle knowable
by us, is supposed to follow from prior assumptions held by the
materialists: namely, that all of reality must be physical, science only
concerns itself with physical reality, and in principle there "are no
limits on what we can know of physical reality." (1992, 10–11) Searle
shows that from these common assumptions it would follow that "all
of the facts in the universe are knowable and understandable by us."
(1992, 11) Because there is an adherence to the belief that all of
reality is physical, traditionally conceived as being opposed to the
mental, there follows a sort of vernacular and categorical dualism in
which the physical is affirmed and the mental is denied.[6]

Searle's assessment of the aforementioned assumptions is that
there is a particular logical order in which these views hang together
that, according to him, reveals the materialist's philosophical com-
mitments and methodological presuppositions. Summarizing his ar-
gument, he reasons it should be clear that adherence to (2), "reality
is objective," leads to (7), "everything is physical." Taken together,
(2) and (7) lead to (3), "the best study of the mind is done by way
of the third-person point of view." From (3) naturally follows (4),
which states that "we only know mental phenomena by observing
behaviour." However, as Searle argues, "If the mind really exists and
has an objective ontology, then it appears its ontology must be in
some sense behavioural and causal." (1992, 11) Again, this is point
(5) of materialism's methodological presuppositions, which he be-
lieves inevitably hangs upon the epistemological tenet (4), that "we
only know about the mental through observing behaviour." (1992,
11) He then proceeds to argue that from the assumption that "all
reality is ultimately physical," point (7), together with the belief

that "everything is completely objective," point (2), it is deduced
by the materialists that "everything in reality is in principle know-
able to us" point (6). It is Searles belief that in taking all the points
in this particular order, it becomes obvious to the materialist that
"There is no place or at least very little place for consciousness
in this overall picture." (1992, 12) At this juncture we may want
to ask ourselves whether materialism is really committed to these
theses, i.e., whether Searle has fairly represented the alleged materi-
alist orthodoxy. For the present purpose I will assume that, whether
implicitly or explicitly, classical materialism has been accurately rep-
resented in Searle's list of materialism's common assumptions and
methodological presuppositions.[7] Although the clarification of this
list of presuppositions does not by itself entail a resolution of the
mind-body problem, Searle's intention in providing this list is to
identify the target of his assault and exactly what is at stake, which
for Searle is most importantly the real existence of consciousness as
a first-person subjective phenomenon.

III. The Historical Origins of Materialism

In an attempt to better understand Searle's particular conception
of materialism and thus also his argument against that entire tra-
dition, let us examine his explanation of how we got ourselves into
the particular problem outlined in the previous section. Searle re-
marks that, "If we were to think of the philosophy of mind over the
past fifty years as a single individual, we would say of that person
that he is a compulsive neurotic, and his neurosis takes the form of
repeating the same pattern of behaviour over and over." (1992, 31)
What is the "repeating the same pattern of behaviour" that Searle
speaks of here? The answer is found in his discussion of the origins
of materialism itself. In identifying the historical origins of materi-
alism, Searle notes that we are all working within a given tradition.

He then explains that consequently certain questions and their respective answers are necessarily formed in the context of one's own tradition. In other words, our conceptual framework, inherited from a given tradition, makes our particular questions appear to be the right sort of questions to ask. (1992, 12) A look into the tradition of materialism, as Searle suggests, reveals several answers to the question of why materialism has emerged and gained significance within philosophy. The first factor relating to its emergence and popularity, according to Searle, is the fear of falling into Cartesian dualism. (1992, 13) A consequence of this fear is that "some philosophers are reluctant to admit the existence of consciousness because they fail to see that the mental state of consciousness is just an ordinary biological, that is, physical, feature of the brain." (1992, 13) This reluctance, he believes, arises in part from the fear that admitting obvious facts about mental phenomena will lead to accepting other facts implicit in Cartesian dualism. To put it another way, many find only two options to choose from—either some type of materialism or some variation on dualism. (1992, 14) Searle therefore concludes that a fear of dualism often leads to a belief in materialism.

As we had noted earlier, Searle asserts that we are all working within a given tradition; however, the point that he is trying to make is that we have mistakenly adopted a certain vocabulary from the Cartesian tradition and find ourselves "historically conditioned" (1992, 14) to think and operate within this vocabulary. This vocabulary, according to him, "includes a series of apparent oppositions: 'physical' versus 'mental,' 'body' versus 'mind,' 'materialism' versus 'mentalism,' 'mentalism' versus 'spirit.'" (1992, 14) Materialism, in his view, is one tradition that has inherited this vocabulary embodying these categories of opposition. He believes that the acceptance of this traditional dualistic vocabulary, which expresses the inadequate system of Cartesian categories, is one of the distinguishing features of materialism. He insists that the persistence of this type of vocabulary has generated such "odd terminology" as: "property dualism," "anomalous monism," and "token identity." (1992, 15) Admittedly, other traditional philosophical terms do not always

bear the clear meanings they purport to bear; however, Searle's point is that "there are several nouns and verbs that look as if they had a clear meaning and actually stood for well-defined objects and activities—'mind,' 'self,' and 'introspection' are obvious examples." (1992, 15) He concludes that even the terms that cognitive science employs have many of the same problems as well; for example, terms such as "intelligence," "cognition," "information processing," etc., he contends, all carry ambiguous and imprecise meanings. (1992, 15) It is apparent that in the practice of philosophy and cognitive science there are not always adequately defined notions and the meaning of terms can often be quite ambiguous. These are all examples, for Searle, in which accepting an inadequate vocabulary has led to definite philosophical and scientific problems. According to Searle, these are problems either because they have generated ambiguous meanings or because they have actually committed categorical errors (e.g., assuming 'physical' is opposed to 'mental' and vice versa) that lead to the sort of intractable mind-body problems we find discussed in the current literature.

As in the case of so many philosophical problems, Searle believes these difficulties can often be solved by showing that somewhere along the line we have adopted false presuppositions.[8] In the philosophy of mind, his contention is that the most troublesome false presuppositions are actually contained in the terminology itself. He asserts that "Once we overcome ... the presupposition that the mental and the physical naively construed are mutually exclusive, then it seems to me we have a solution to the traditional mind-body problem." (1992, 15) The problem with materialism, according to Searle, is that it has a false presupposition built into its very terminology which commits itself to naming mutually exclusive categories of reality, i.e. mental versus physical. For example, when we say that consciousness is a higher-level physical feature of the neurophysiological brain, materialism tempts us into thinking this means "physical-as-opposed-to-mental" (1992, 15) and that consciousness should therefore only be described in "objective behavioural or neurophysiological terms." (1992, 15) However, because Searle himself

ultimately argues that "consciousness qua consciousness, qua mental, qua subjective" (1992, 15) is something physical, and that it is physical because it is mental, he concludes that the traditional vocabulary of materialism is therefore completely inadequate. Just as with the previous examples where similar terminology often lacks a clear or precise meaning (e.g., mind, self, introspection, etc.), accepting the problematic traditional vocabulary of materialism is what, according to his view, has led to the intractable difficulties with the mind-body problem itself.

Searle's attempt to locate the errors of materialism by way of a historical analysis in chapter two of RM appears promising. Even Daniel Dennett comments that if Searle "can show that he is an acute and sympathetic interpreter of the processes of thought that have led to the impasse, we will at least be given grounds for supposing that he may indeed have uncovered an overlooked opportunity of major proportions."[9] However, the common objection to Searle's proposal is that on final analysis he does not live up to the standards he has set for himself. Why is this exactly?

Critics such as Dennett argue that Searle's treatment of the history of materialism is an oversimplification. Dennett remarks that "the execution of this review is unfortunate, and [Searle's] other discussions of alternative positions later in the book are equally unprepossessing. We enter a world of breathtaking oversimplification, everything black and white, with no shades of gray permitted."[10] Although it may be true that Searle's treatment of the history of materialism is in some sense a simplified account, it certainly makes a strong *prima facie* case that modern materialism has inherited a vocabulary that has built into it distinctions that are derived from classical Cartesian dualism, which if they prove to be dubious, the rejection of such erroneous categories would admittedly be part of a move towards a solution. Possessing a sketch of a solution, however, is not the same as actually having one, and as it stands, the mere rejection of materialism and the traditional Cartesian categories does not solve the mind-body problem. Nevertheless, one could ask whether Searle thinks that such a rejection would in fact

constitute a resolution. Is this what he means by a "simple solution": that if we reject materialism with its inherited vocabulary, the problem will just go away? His belief that there is no mind-body problem, other than in the minds of some philosophers,[11] and assertion that "Once we overcome ... the presupposition that the mental and the physical naively construed are mutually exclusive, then it seems to me we have a solution to the traditional mind-body problem,"[12] (2001, 492) would seem to imply this. The basic idea is that if materialism and dualism are the sole cause of the mind-body problem, then our rejection of them would solve the problem. This looks like a simplification, and perhaps an instance of the dubious advice that 'if we ignore it, it will just go away.' If he wants to provide an acceptable solution to the mind-body problem, he will have to do more than assert that it is as simple as denying materialism and its erroneous Cartesian categories. He must show how it is necessary to adhere to his biological naturalism in constructing a solution. It appears from our analysis of his views on this that his avowedly "simple solution" to the mind-body problem is not in fact a one step solution (the mere rejection of materialism with its Cartesian categories), but at the very least, it involves two steps—the rejection of materialism with its erroneous opposed categories and the coherent articulation and defence of biological naturalism as the correct alternative. We shall soon see that due to certain difficulties with biological naturalism, Searles proposed "simple solution" is neither simple nor obvious—and in fact, as it stands, it is not a solution.

IV. Common-Sense and Science According to Searle

Why does Searle think that rejecting materialism with its inherited Cartesian categories and adopting biological naturalism is the key to solving the mind-body problem? At this point let us digress briefly to consider his thoughts on common-sense and science, specifically as they relate to his understanding of materialism and biological naturalism, in order that we may gain further insight into his overall argument. Essential to Searle's particular formulation of materialism is his belief that there are common tendencies within materialism to persist in objectifying all phenomena. In other words, as we saw, his contention is that not only does materialism assume everything is physical, it holds that the physical domain contains only objective, observer-independent features. According to Searle this conclusion is derived from the assumption, common in science and philosophy, that all reality is objective (observer-independent features); that is, "We have the conviction that if something is real, it must be equally accessible to all competent observers." (1992, 16) Often referred to as the *third person objective point of view*, the idea is that if something is real, then it must be objective and therefore accessible to any observer and described, in theory, in the same way. Searle urges his readers to understand that this assumption has inevitably led to the belief that "the only 'scientific' way to study the mind is as a set of objective phenomena." (1992, 16) In his view, this tenet is at the center of materialism and can be shown to be an error that is very much responsible for many of our current difficulties with the mind-body problem. Furthermore, the belief that the third-person analysis of the mind is the only scientifically legitimate way to investigate such phenomena has inevitably led, Searle argues, to the philosophical development of theories such as behaviourism, functionalism, strong AI, and eliminative materialism. (1992, 17)

Searle presents his own position, in contrast to the materialist views, as being a common-sense view of mind, which clearly implies that the theories mentioned above are uncommonsensical. He sees his own position as the common-sense view primarily because he thinks preserving the first-person subjective features of consciousness fits with our experience and that to deny this is actually uncommonsensical.[13] Nevertheless, given that the common-sense view has a somewhat dark history, especially in light of the scientific revolution, Searle will need to show how his alleged common-sense philosophy is supposed to be compatible with a contemporary scientific worldview. Daniel Dennett has written:

> Recognizing ...that common sense has had an embarrassing history of bowing to scientific revolution in the past, Searle is particularly intent to challenge the arguments that claim that functionalism (and its family of supporting doctrines) is nothing more than an application of standard scientific method to the phenomena of mind.[14]

Since Searle believes that his own theory of the mind, and not that of the functionalists and the materialists, is an application of the scientific method and simultaneously the view of common-sense, he not only needs to demonstrate that modern materialism is not such an application, he must reveal that his view of the mind is. This will no doubt be a difficult task for Searle; however, he is not alone in this undertaking. Many philosophers, especially those whose theories restrict themselves to the ontology of current or envisioned science, have had the difficult task of harmonizing 'common-sense' with the scientific theories that are often counter common-sense.[15] Their attempts frequently involve the assumption that the scientific theory is the "real story" and common-sense is the nave view of reality. Searle, however, believes that the real story about the mind is also commonsensical, which may make his task a little less formidable. Nevertheless, we can expect that any attempt from Searle to harmonize[16] these two views (scientific account and common-sense) will

be plagued with difficulties. For example, he must demonstrate that the materialist theories that he is critiquing are not an application of the modern scientific method. To accomplish this, he will need to show that these theories either leave out some essential feature of the mind or that they commit some fundamental mistake when it comes to the way that we ought to study mental phenomena in science. Our attempt to locate these arguments leads us to the next section.

V. Searle's Arguments against the Doctrine of Materialism

In *The Rediscovery of the Mind* we discover that Searle characterizesthe materialist, whether it's a behaviourist, identity theorist, or functionalist, assomeone committed to the belief that subtracting consciousness (consciousness as essentially first-person subjective feature) from a mental state, still leaves a mental state for us to study and explain.Searle thinks that this commitment is apparentfrom the fact that materialists confuse fundamentally distinct questions and categories that he believes must be carefully distinguished if there is to be a successful scientific investigation of the mind. Since understanding any phenomenon requires an analysis of its ontological, epistemological, and causal dimensions, Searle believes that in science we should ask the following categorical questions: "what is it?" (ontological); "how do we know about it?" (epistemological); and "what does it do?" (causal).[17] His contention is that behaviourism, for example, confuses the epistemological question with the ontological question. Searle argues that with behaviourism one would allegedly find out about the ontology of mental states by simply observing behaviour, and it is this presupposition that feeds the conclusion that mental states consist in nothing more than behaviour

and dispositions to behaviour.[18] He believes that functionalism, on the other hand, confuses the causation question with the onto-logical question. Since the functionalist believes "mental states have causal relations to input stimuli, other mental states, and output be-haviour," (1991, 47) they are left to conclude that mental states must therefore only consist in having these causal relations alone. Hence, for Searle, the functionalist answers the "what is it?" question with a causal answer, "mental states are simply causal relations."

With respect to epistemological considerations pertaining to men-tal features such as consciousness, Searle contends that "we have no conception of an unconscious mental state except in terms derived from conscious metal states." (1992, 19) Consequently, assuming for the sake of argument that Searle were right about this, this would mean that in studying the mind there is no way to avoid studying consciousness; and the study of consciousness necessarily invokes de-scriptive language that can only be expressed in *consciousness lingo*. He therefore believes that, from an epistemological point of view, a commitment to the reality of subjective consciousness is unavoidable and the first-person, subjective ontology cannot be eliminated from the study of the mind. We can reasonably conclude from this that Searle interprets materialism as being a position that maintains the possibility of eliminating phenomenological consciousness in some way from the study of the mind while still preserving a legitimate science of cognition. However, as we have seen, he believes that in order for a theory to be truly scientific, it must keep the *onto-logical*, *epistemological*, and *causal* categories distinct. Eliminating the first-person, subjective ontology of consciousness because of a fundamental misunderstanding over ontological and epistemological categories shows that materialism cannot be a true application of the scientific method according to Searle. He believes that this confusion arises, in part, due to our general convictions about knowledge (the epistemological category), namely, that we ought to eliminate sub-jectivity in an attempt to obtain objectivity. However, for Searle, it does not follow (ontologically speaking) that everything that is real is objective (objective-observer-independent).

In RM he explains that there is widespread confusion between the claim that "one should try to eliminate personal subjective biases from the pursuit of objective truth" (1992, 19) and the claim that "reality is objective and contains no subjective elements." (1992, 19) He sees thisas another example whereby one confuses episte-mological and ontological questions. As we have seen, he believes that materialism has failed to heed this distinction and states that this "tradition tries to study the mind as if it consisted of neutral phenomena, independent of consciousness and subjectivity." (1992, 19) For him, it is apparent howthis would lead to the idea that we can only describe things like beliefs (apparent subjective states) in terms of external behaviour, an idea that he argues is common both to behaviourism and functionalism.Searle also refers to more extreme versions of materialism, such as those which attempt to eliminate consciousness altogether by asserting that beliefs do not really exist, existing only in a "manner of speaking." Although it is more than likely an oversimplification of the available positions, he nevertheless identifies this belief as a form of eliminative material-ism, a belief he thinks isn't the proper application of the scientific method due to its fundamental confusion over epistemological and ontological questions.[19] Searle believes that a solution to the mind body problem should be consistent with the scientific method. This position must deny materialism and replace it with something that can explain the facts, avoid the errors of materialism, and remain faithful to our modern scientific method. His biological naturalism is supposed to fulfil these criteria.

VI. Is Biological Naturalism a Simple Solution?

Having examined Searle's explanation for why materialism is not an appropriate application of the modern scientific method, we found that his argument centers on what he believes is a failure to properly distinguish the ontological, epistemological, and causal categories when carrying out a study of the mind. We also found that he believes materialism should be rejected because it leads us to think in erroneous dualistic categories, which are in themselves the source of the mind-body problem. We have seen that he proposes his biological naturalism as the only reasonable alternative and argues that accepting it will immediately resolve the problem.

Although we focused on Searle's particular notion of materialism and why he thinks it should be rejected, we have not critically assessed his biological naturalism, which is supposed to be the 'simple' solution to the mind-body problem itself. At the start of this paper, biological naturalism was presented as the position that "mental phenomena are caused by neurophysiological processes in the brain and are themselves features of the brain." (1992, 1) In this final section I want to argue that, far from being a simple solution, this position rests on many assumptions about the nature of mental processes that threaten the coherence of his biological naturalism and would seem to lead to some variety of property dualism after all.

In *Mind*, Searle states his biological naturalism in four theses, which I've summarized as follows:

1. Consciousness is a *real* ontologically irreducible mental feature of the physical world.

2. Consciousness is causally reducible and therefore both caused by and entirely explainable by the lower-level interactions in the neurophysiological brain.

3. Consciousness, a higher-level system feature of the brain, is biological and therefore a physical feature of the brain.

4. Mental states (higher-level features) are causally efficacious, meaning that they can causally affect other mental states as well as lower-level physiological events and processes.

Since Searle proposes his biological naturalism as a "simple solution" to the mind-body problem, the least we would expect is that the theses outlined above not pose any serious philosophical problems. However, when taken together they appear to generate serious inconsistencies within biological naturalism itself. It can be argued[20] that while any individual tenet may appear reasonable and true, the theory becomes incoherent when several of the theses are held in conjunction with one another. If we take (1) and (3), for example, we understand Searle to be saying that consciousness is both a mental and physical feature of the world. Assuming both physicalism and substance monism, however, every feature is either a mental property or a physical property. Hence, consciousness is either a mental property or a physical property. It cannot be both. The problem for Searle then is that he has to either deny that consciousness is both a mental and physical feature of the world or reject substance monism. If he rejects substance monism, he would be implicitly endorsing a form of property dualism. However, we know that Searle emphatically and explicitly rejects property dualism. He cannot accept property dualism and deny it at the same time.

Because theses (1) and (3) appear to be incompatible with one another, the position that consciousness is both a mental and physical feature of the world becomes untenable. A possible way around this dilemma is to assert that mental states, such as consciousness, are identical with brain states. But since this is the identity theorist's position, and something Searle does not want to embrace, it cannot be how he wants us to understand his biological naturalism.

There might be another way out of this contradiction, however. What if it were possible to reject the identity theory yet still maintain that mental states are identical with brain states? Searle does

say that consciousness, a higher-level feature, is simply the state that the brain is in. The problem with this is that when he states that "consciousness is just a brain process," (2004, 88) he goes on to explain that consciousness is an *aspect* of the brain, "the aspect that consists of ontologically subjective experiences." (2004, 89) Are we to understand that there is a difference between saying 'consciousness is a brain state' and asserting 'consciousness is an aspect of the brain?' It would appear so, since the materialist also holds that 'consciousness is a brain state,' and Searle maintains that his own position is essentially different from materialism. Perhaps his earlier comment that the mental and physical are not opposed offers him a way out. If the two are not opposed, one could conclude that mental states are identical to physical states in the brain, but this brings us back to Searles general criticisms of the identity theory.[21] To overcome this objection Searle will have to contend that mental states, which as we have seen he in some contexts suggests are identical to brain states, are not identical to any particular neurophysiological parts or processes going on in the brain. Rather, they are identical to system-features of the brain as a whole, when the brain is in certain states as a whole.[22] It is perhaps a distinction of this kind that Searle thinks enables him to reject both token and type identity theories while still maintaining a physical identity between mental and brain states (in the form of 'higher-level system-features' of the brain as a whole), when he states that "Consciousness is just a brain process" (2004, 88) and "it is just *the state that the brain is in.*" (2004, 146) However, does this really amount to a physical identity between mental states and brain states? If mental states are not identical to any particular neurophysiological feature or process of the brain, then they can only be identical to physical features of the whole brain. Therefore, mental states are not *identical* to particular brain states, they are only identical to the particular state that the brain as a whole is in.

Is Searle finally in a place where he can maintain that consciousness is both a mental and physical state of the brain without falling into property dualism? Unfortunately, his rejection of substance

monism seems to undo the work we have done above. The dilemma that 'every feature is either a mental property or physical property' is solved only by adopting a position that looks much like property dualism. Even if he can show that consciousness is both a mental and physical feature of the brain, even if he argues that mental states are identical to the state that the brain is in, his contention that consciousness is an ontologically irreducible high-level feature of low-level features and processes of the brain still appears to lead to a form of property dualism. How does he propose to answer such an objection? He responds by simply denying that his biological naturalism is a version of property dualism. Surely he will have to do better than that.

In his defense, however, we do discover that all varieties of property dualism are, at the very least, committed to the idea that there exist properties (e.g. mental properties) that are distinct from physical properties. Since he denies that mental properties are distinct from physical ones, he can plausibly maintain that his theory is not a form of property dualism. Furthermore, thesis (2) gives him a way to further distinguish his view from property dualism by asserting that consciousness, a higher-level feature, is causally reducible and entirely explainable by what goes on in the lower-level neurophysiology of the brain. I am not convinced, however, that these two assertions are enough to overcome the objection that his position is but a novel form of property dualism insofar as it divides the world up into high and low-level features (properties). Although he deploys additional arguments to defend his position from these accusations of property dualism (e.g., liquidity and solidity[23] are higher-level features of the entire system of molecules, higher and lower-levels[24] are simply different ways to view and describe properties, etc.), he must still expend a considerable amount of effort to show that biological naturalism is not just another variety of property dualism. Although for my own part I ultimately agree with Searle's position that mental phenomena are both caused by and realized in the processes and neurophysiological structures of the brain, that mental states are both physical and ontologically irreducible, and that

these positions can be affirmed without accepting some version of property dualism, for the reasons given above I do not believe that Searle has as yet provided a successful defense of the coherence of this outlook on the mind-body problem. I do not believe that Searle has the metaphysical repertoire or a sufficiently robust enough conceptual scheme to argue for his position without actually appearing to be a property dualist or without rendering his biological naturalism incoherent. Therefore, without a more coherent metaphysical scheme that would avoid these difficulties, he cannot claim that his 'solution' is simple.

Perhaps by 'simple', Searle means obvious, which is what he seems to suggest when he explains that a solution has been available to us "since serious work began on the brain nearly a century ago." (1992, 1) If this is the case, then why have we not noticed it until now? According to Searle, we have inherited a certain Cartesian vocabulary and with it certain assumptions that make what would otherwise be obvious appear difficult. It is his contention that since functionalism and materialism are primarily responsible for keeping us historically conditioned to think and operate within this mistaken vocabulary, rejecting these positions should make a solution to the mind-body problem obvious and, therefore, simple. I am not convinced, however, that rejecting materialism (and its family of supporting doctrines) makes it clear that the position, "mental phenomena are caused by neurophysiological processes in the brain and are themselves features of the brain," (1992, 1) is obvious, as Searle says it is. For example, Gilbert Ryle (1949) points out that the most common view people hold about the nature and place of minds (the official doctrine)[25] is that mind is not a feature of the brain but attached to it as something distinct (Cartesian dualism); therefore, it would appear that rejecting materialism wouldn't leave biological naturalism as obvious but something like Cartesian dualism. Searle might reply that it is not simply materialism he is urging us to reject, but rather the whole system of Cartesian categories and vocabulary, which both materialism and dualism have accepted. Thus if we reject dualism with materialism, then the obvious and

common-sense answer would be something like what is stated in biological naturalism. Nevertheless, I think that what Searle means by 'simple' isn't just 'the view that's obvious' but that the view, i.e., biological naturalism, is an easy solution to the mind-body problem. Again, because of the difficulties that his biological naturalism faces on account of what I believe is an insufficient metaphysical scheme, Searle's proposal cannot be a simple solution to the mind-body problem until, as Jaegwon Kim (1995, 189) points out, his metaphysics is rethought from the bottom up.[26]

Conclusion

We have seen that Searle has argued for the following positions: materialism is unable to explain how mental states are both "caused by" and "realized in" the neurophysiological process of the brain; materialism's categorical dualism is the primary cause of the mind-body problem; and biological naturalism is the only reasonable alternative that is consistent with our scientific model and capable of accounting for the first-person subjective nature of consciousness. This final position requires that we expand our notion of physical ontology to include the mental; however, according to Searle, in doing so we will see the mind-body problem disappear. Whether or not he is correct in his assessment of materialism and his overall arguments for biological naturalism, I think that it is clear that his statement, "the famous mind-body problem, the source of so much controversy over the past two millennia, has a simple solution," (1992, 1) is false.

Endnotes

[1] J.J. C. Smart (1965) "The Identity Thesis: A Reply to Professor Garrett." *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 43 (1): 82–3.

[2] U.T. Place (1956) "Is Consciousness a Brain Process?" *British Journal of Psychology* 47: 44–50.

[3] Armstrong also developed a functionalist theory; however, here Searle is referring to D. Armstrong (1968) *A Materialist Theory of Mind*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

[4] These are important parts of the general literature on the irreducibility of consciousness that are relevant to the issue at hand. Searle makes reference to the work of Nagel (1974), Kripke (1971), and Jackson (1982) but does not give a detailed treatment of it due to the fact that he is interested in presenting his own argument. See *The Rediscovery of Mind*, (Cambridge, MA.: MIT Press, 1992), 116–117.

[5] Searle has also written an article completely devoted to this defense: Searle (2002) "Why I am not a Property Dualist." Journal of Conscious Studies, 9 (12): 57–64.

[6] "This means that in the traditional oppositions—dualism versus monism, mentalism versus materialism—the right hand term names the correct view; the left-hand term names the false view." (Searle 1992, 11)

[7] Even Daniel Dennett in his review of *The Rediscovery of the Mind* says that Searle has almost got this foundational list, i.e., materialism's common assumptions and methodological presuppositions, exactly right. He states that "As a targeted representative of orthodoxy, I for one accept all seven propositions, with only one demurrer..."(Dennett, *Journal of Philosophy*, 60, (4), Apr. 1993, pp. 194)

[8] "When we at last overcome one of these intractable problems it often happens that we do so by showing that we had made a false presupposition." (Searle, *Philosophy*, Vol. 76, No. 298, Oct., 2001, pp. 492)

[9] Taken from Daniel Dennett's article, "The Review of Searle, The Rediscovery of the Mind." *Journal of Philosophy*, 60, (4), Apr. 1993, pp. 202.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Searle states in his book *Intentionality* that "They [dualists and physicalists] both attempt to solve the mind-body problem when the correct approach is to see that there is no such problem. The 'mind-body problem' is no more a real problems than the 'stomach-digestion problem'." (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 15.

[12] Taken from Searle's article, "Free Will as a Problem in Neurobiology" in *Philosophy*, Vol. 76, No. 298 (Oct., 2001): 491-514.

[13] Searle's claim is obviously highly controversial and a topic for debate. For example, the functionalists think the common-sense view is functionalism; Ryle thinks it's largely Rylean rather than Cartesian; the Aristotelians believe it's

Aristotle's metaphysics, etc. In fact, many opposed positions think they preserve sound aspects of our pre-theoretical, 'common sense' view of the mind. A reasonable conclusion from all this is that Searle doesn't have exclusive rights to the term 'common sense.'

[14]Dennett 1993, 194.

[15]An example of this can be found in what some have referred to as the *clash of images* problem, arising out of Wilfrid Sellars's work in his 1962 essay, "Philosophy and the Scientific Image of Man." Here Sellars discusses certain philosophical problems of how it is possible to harmonize two apparently clashing views: the "manifest image," which is what our common-sense reveals about the world, and the "scientific image," which is supposedly the true account of the world, but it appears fundamentally irreconcilable with our common-sense, "manifest image" view of the world.

[16]Searle acknowledges and addresses this issue of 'harmonizing' the two views in his article, "What is to Be Done?" *Topoi* 25 (2006): 101–08.

[17]Apart from RM, we find in his article, "Consciousness, Unconsciousness and Intentionality," Philosophical Issues, Vol. 1 (1991): 45–66, Searle formulating an argument against materialism that centers on making these crucial distinctions about *ontology*, *epistemology*, and *causation*.

[18]Searle 1991, 47.

[19]"Once we have located the place of consciousness in our overall world view, we can see that the materialist theories of the mind we discussed in chapter 3 are just as profoundly antiscientific as the dualism they thought they were attacking." (Searle 1992, 84–85)

[20]A similar argument is presented by K. Corcoran in his article, "The Trouble with Searle's Biological Naturalism," *Erkenntnis*, No. 3 (2001), pp. 307–324. However, different from my argument, Corcoran concludes that Searle's positions ultimately cannot be reconciled and that, therefore, his biological naturalism is actually an incoherent theory.

[21]For his objection against the identity theorists see RM, 39.

[22]Searle states: "I am simply describing the whole neurobiological system at the level of the entire system and not at the level of particular microelements." (2004, 146)

[23]"Think of it this way: roughly speaking, consciousness is to neurons as the solidity of the piston is to the metal molecules neither is 'over and above' the systems of which they are a part." (Searle 2004, 91)

[24]"We are not talking about two different entities but about the same system at different levels." (Searle 2004, 89)

[25]See Gilbert Ryle's Chapter 1, "Descartes' Myth" in *The Concept of Mind*, 11.

[26]See Kim's article, "Mental Causation in Searle's 'Biological Naturalism'." *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, Vol. LV, No. 1 (March 1995): 189–194.

David Lewis's Neglected Challenge: It's Me or God

Andrew Stephenson

University of Oxford

Abstract

I begin by sketching a dialectic typical of modern discussions of the ontological argument and explain the underlying modal principles. I will not pursue this well-worn dialectic. Instead I will explicate David Lewis's valid reconstruction (in first order predicate logic) of St Anselm's argument in *Proslogion-II*. Lewis's objections to this argument are based on his idiosyncratic views about modality. Implicitly, Lewis presents a challenge: either I am right about modality, or there is a sound version of the ontological argument. More specifically, Lewis claims there is no good reason to suppose there is anything special about the actual world. I suggest there is good reason to think that must be incorrect. Thus we are left with a formal version of the ontological argument for God's existence that for all we have seen here looks eminently viable.

I

Modal versions of the ontological argument for Gods existence depend on the plausibility of their claim that some proposition p to the effect that God exists is possibly necessary (or, if they are comfortable with *de re* modal ascriptions, their claim that God is such that He possibly necessarily exists). Such an argument might take the following form (sticking with modality *de dicto*):

(1)	Possibly necessarily p	(premise)
(2)	If possibly necessarily p then necessarily p	(modal principle)
(3)	Necessarily p	(from (1) and (2))
(4)	If necessarily p then p	(modal principle)
(5)	p	(from (3) and (4))

(2) instantiates a theorem of S5, a system of modal logic in which the accessibility relation between possible worlds is one of equivalence. The antecedent of the conditional in (2) says that from some world w there is at least one possible world v in which it is necessary that p, which is to say that in all worlds that are possible from v it is the case that p. But if the accessibility relation between worlds is one of equivalence, then all the worlds that are possible from v are all the worlds that are possible from any world. In *all* possible worlds, then, it is the case that p, so necessarily p. (4) instantiates a formula that is an axiom of S5 (and any system of modal logic likely to be useful here) and the inferences to (3) and (5) are valid by *modus ponens*, which is an underived rule in S5 (and any system of modal logic likely to be useful here). So, excluding for the moment doubts about the applicability of S5, the contentious issue is going to be (1).

To sharpen this focus even more, we can formulate the following *reductio ad absurdum*:[1]

(1)	Possibly necessarily p	(premise)
(2)	If possibly necessarily p then necessarily p	(modal principle)
(3)	Necessarily p	(from (1) and (2))
(6)	Possibly not p	(premise)
(7)	Not necessarily p	(from (6)[2])
(8)	Necessarily p and not necessarily p	(from (3) and (7))

The problem for these modal versions of the ontological argument, then, is not simply how to motivate (1), but how to do so without simultaneously motivating (6). Perhaps this could not be done within a framework of conceptual modality. For suppose that logical consistency is sufficient for conceptual possibility. Then although it

seems plausible to suppose that there is nothing logically inconsistent about (1), it seems at least equally plausible to suppose that there is nothing logically inconsistent about a possible world in which nothing exists except a ball in a void, from which fact it seems reasonable to infer (6). Or suppose that conceivability is sufficient for conceptual possibility (making no assumptions about the relation of conceivability to logical consistency). It seems plausible to suppose that we can at least conceive of God's not existing, from which fact we could again infer (6).

Perhaps, then, we must operate within a framework of metaphysical or even physical modality. And returning to what doubts may have occurred regarding the applicability of S5, it might even be useful to invoke a *weaker* system of modal logic in order to avoid the above *reductio*:

(1)	Possibly necessarily p	(premise)
(9)	If possibly necessarily p then p	(modal principle)
(5)	p	(from (1) and (9))

(9) is derivable in Brouwer, a system of modal logic in which the accessibility relation is symmetrical and reflexive, but not transitive. Again, the antecedent of the conditional in (9) says that from some world w there is at least one possible world v in which it is necessary that p, which is to say that in all worlds that are possible from v it is the case that p. But if the accessibility relation between worlds is symmetrical, then one of the worlds that is possible from v is w, since one of the worlds that is possible from w is v. So it is the case that p in w.

II

Given David Lewis's prominence in this general area of metaphysics, it might be expected that we must follow something similar to this standard dialectic in order to explore his challenge. In fact he takes quite a different direction. Lewis (1970) focuses on a version of the ontological argument for God's existence that has its origin in Anselm's *Proslogion II* (Charlesworth (1968:117)):

> Even the fool, then, is forced to agree that something-than-which-nothing-greater-can-be-thought exists in the mind, since he understands this when he hears it, and whatever is understood is in the mind. And surely that-than-which-a-greater-cannot-be-thought cannot exist in the mind alone. For if it exists solely in the mind even, it can be thought to exist in reality also, which is greater. If then that-than-which-a-greater-cannot-be-thought exists in the mind alone, this same that-than-which-a-greater-*cannot*-be-thought is that-than-which-a-greater-*can*-be-thought. But this is obviously impossible. Therefore there is absolutely no doubt that something-than-which-a-greater-cannot-be-thought exists both in the mind and in reality.

Essentially, my primary aim in the rest of this paper is to defend the viability of this argument against the novel objection put to it by Lewis.

First of all, however, some preliminary conceptual translation is required in order that we might make use of the modern idiom of possible worlds. Anselm talks of existing in both reality (*re*) and, crucially, the mind (*intellectu*). Thus if we are to translate this into talk about possible worlds, we must surely work within a framework of *conceptual* modality. Let us suppose that conceivability is

necessary and sufficient for conceptual possibility. *If* we take an infinitesimal to be conceptually impossible, we are committed to its inconceivability, and *if* we take a round square to be inconceivable, we are committed to its conceptual impossibility. Henceforth when I talk of possibility I mean conceptual possibility in this sense.

For 'exists in the mind' we can quite naturally read 'is conceivable'. Given our assumptions about conceivability and possibility, then, to exist in the mind is to exist in a possible world. It would then be natural to assume that to 'exist in reality' is to exist in the actual world. We can therefore think of existence as a relation—one that holds or fails to hold—between entities and worlds. Although the canonical Kantian objection is eminently relevant here, my concern is to defend the argument against Lewis, and to do so in the space available I shall have to assume much of what he assumes.[3]

Three points need to be made clear about this general concession, however. The first is that no position is thereby determined as regards the issue of transworld identity. The second is that nor do I have to assume Lewis's (2001) position on what possible worlds are and what existing in them amounts to. The third is distinct but closely related to this—it is about what we must allow into our universe of discourse. The first point will have to be left unexplored,[4] I will deal with the second now, and the third can be left until **V**.

Anselm's talk of existing 'solely' in a possible world is ambiguous. It might simply be meant to preclude the possibility of existing in an *im*possible world. This would be uncontentious. However, it might also be meant to allow the possibility of existing in what we might call a *merely* possible world. A *merely* possible world is not the actual world, nor any proper part thereof. This would be far from uncontentious—it quickly commits us to a quasi-Meinongion ontology of objects that do not actually exist.[5] There is, fortunately, no need to accept this (although, infamously, Lewis does). Instead, we can take such talk—of existing solely in a possible world—as derivative. Assume, for example, Plantinga's (1974) position, that possible worlds are maximal states of affairs. As such they are purely abstract objects that one and all actually exist. Therefore there are

no merely possible worlds (in the sense defined above). To talk of existing solely in a possible world is simply to talk of existing *had that possible world been the actual world*, although in fact it is not— it is to talk of existing *had a certain maximal state of affairs been realised*, although in fact it was not. And to ascribe a property to an entity that exists solely in a possible world is simply to say that had that entity existed in the actual world (although in fact it does not), it would have had that property. (And if we remove the 'solely' qualifications here we can remove the 'although in fact it is/was/does not' clauses. This becomes relevant in **V**.)

I will call such a view *ontologically innocent*. And some similar reduction to counterfactual discourse can be made if we assume with Kripke (1980) that possible worlds are total states the cosmos could have been in or histories it could have had, or with Adams (1974) that they are maximally compossible sets of propositions that might have been jointly true, for example. What I say in **III** and **IV** is compatible with any of these theories, although I will not make it explicit when my talk of existence needs to be construed as derivative if it is to be free of quasi-Meinongion commitments.

III

We can now proceed to translate the following contraction of the passage from Anselm into premises equivalent to those Lewis (1970) uses in order to frame his objection:

(10)   . . . something-than-which-nothing-greater-can-be-thought exists in the mind. . .

(11)   . . . if it exists solely in the mind even, it can be thought to exist in reality also,

(12)   . . . which is greater. . .

(13)   . . . something-than-which-a-greater-cannot-be-thought
        exists both in the mind and in reality.

Generalizing (11), it can very naturally be read as saying that whatever entity exists in a possible world could have existed in the actual world. This might be true, but it is stronger than is strictly required. Instead, given that existence is a relation between entities and worlds, and that the actual world is a possible world, we might simply take (11) as saying that whatever we can conceive of exists in some possible world or other. In order to symbolize this I will use 'C' and 'W' as monadic predicate constants for '. . . is a conceivable entity' and ' . . . is a possible world' respectively, and 'E' as a binary predicate constant for '. . . exists in . . . ':[6]

(11) $\forall x(Cx \to \exists w(Ww \wedge Exw))$
        (For any conceivable entity x there is a possible world w
        such that x exists in it.)

This is a very plausible claim, given our basic assumptions about conceivability and possibility. Moreover, Lewis has no wish to contest it.

There are also weak and strong translations of (12) available, corresponding to those of (11). Again, the text most naturally suggests the strong claim that existence in the actual world is greater than existence solely in a possible world. And it could also be read as making the even stronger claim that *anything* that exists in the actual world is greater than *anything* that exists solely in a possible world. Anselm may well have held either or both of these views. For our purposes here, however, we can again settle for the weak reading, according to which the claim is simply that existence in a world w is what I will call a *greater-maker* in w—if an entity x exists in w then x is thereby greater in w than it would otherwise have been.

An entity's greatness, then, is not absolute. According to this weak reading, that an entity x exists in a world w is a greater-maker for x in w, but it is not a greater-maker for x in any world. The

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negative aspect of the premise seems plausible, for x's existence in w is no reason for it to be rendered greater in v. Rather an entity must have its greatness relative to worlds. Therefore greatness is a property had by ordered 2-tuples of entities and worlds, for example $< x,w >$. Moreover, the relation is greater than, with which this premise is concerned, therefore holds or fails to hold of ordered 4-tuples of entities and worlds, for example $< x,w,x,v >$. In order to symbolize this I introduce 'G' as a four-place predicate constant for '... in... is greater than ... in...':

(12) $\forall x \forall w \forall v (Cx \wedge Ww \wedge Wv \wedge Exw \wedge \neg Exv \rightarrow Gxwxv)$
(For any conceivable entity x and for any possible worlds w and v, if x exists in w but not in v, then x in w is greater than x in v.)

In order to justify his acceptance of this premise, Lewis (1970:178) allows that 'within wide limits, [the ontological arguer] is entitled to whatever standards of greatness he wants.'

Accordingly I want to follow Findlay (1948:177) and connect greatness with being the 'adequate object of religious attitudes.' For clearly Anselm meant his definite description, 'that-than-which-a-greater-cannot-be-thought', to be a definition of God.[7] Greatness, then, is worthiness of worship. Given this understanding, it is extremely plausible that existence is a greater-maker—surely a nonexistent entity cannot be worthy of worship. But although it is necessary, bare existence is not sufficient to deserve worship. Value-properties such as goodness will also be greater-makers, as will properties to which we ascribe value, such as rationality, knowledgeability, and powerfulness. And what we might call the *greatest* greater-makers will be properties just like these, but they will be unexceedable. (Note that greater-making properties that do not come in degrees—existence, perhaps—will therefore be greatest greater-makers by default.) So omniscience, omnipotence, and omnibenevolence, for example, are amongst the greatest greater-makers. Now, it is entirely possible to worship idols, but they are not *worthy* of

such treatment. So let us say, loosely, that an entity x *maximally owns* a set of properties s iff x has all the properties in s. Then an entity is worthy of worship only if it maximally owns the set of all greatest greater-makers.

This account has two extremely useful consequences. First, if we assume that there cannot be more than one omnipotent entity—an assumption we might justify by counting the paradoxes that arise otherwise—it follows that there cannot be more than one entity that is worthy of worship. And second, two persistent parodies are rendered illegitimate. On this account, neither perfect islands nor almost-Gods are worthy of worship, for neither can maximally own the set of all greatest greater-makers. Indeed, it would not even make sense for them to do so—the ideas of an-island-greater-than-which-*nothing*-can-be-thought and an-almost-God-greater-than-which-*nothing*-can-be-thought are absurd.[8]

We can finally turn to what is for Lewis the key premise. (10) says at least that an entity x, whose greatness is unexceeded, exists in a possible world. However, since we have relativized greatness, there remains a question as to which greatness of that entity (10) says is unexceeded. If we hold constant some particular entity x and ask which of x's greatnesses is our concern, we are effectively asking which possible world or worlds we wish to pair with x. Lewis considers different answers to this question, but only one need concern us here. It is surely plausible to take Anselm as concerned with the actual greatness of x—that is, the greatness of x when paired with the actual world. Call the actual world '@'. (10) says that the greatness of the ordered 2-tuple $< x,@ >$ is unexceeded. We do not need to introduce a new predicate for this:

(10) $\exists x(Cx \land \neg\exists w \exists y(Ww \land Gywx@))$
       (There is a conceivable entity x such that for no world w and entity y does the greatness of y in w exceed the greatness of x in the actual world.)

Before tackling the issues that surround the plausibility of (10), it remains to check the validity of the argument, and for this we need to know the conclusion.

(13) says that there is an entity x that exists in the actual world and whose greatness in the actual world is unexceeded. Again, we are concerned with the ordered 2-tuple $< x,@ >$, and not one involving some other world, $< x,v >$ for example. This is evident from the fact that Anselm wishes to expose 'the fool', who presumably is also paired with the actual world—he would not be the least bit troubled by an argument the conclusion of which was that something-than-which-a-greater-cannot-be-thought exists solely in a possible world, unless from this fact it could be inferred that such an entity must thereby exist in the actual world. But then we are back to issues of necessary existence and accessibility relations again. So, Anselm concludes:

(13) $\exists x(Ex@ \wedge \neg\exists w\exists y(Ww \wedge Gywx@)$
(There is an entity x existing in the actual world such that for no world w and entity y does the greatness of y in w exceed the greatness of x in the actual world.)

IV

For the purposes of showing the validity of this argument, we can ignore our predicates C and W if we assume that $\neg\exists x(Cx \wedge Wx)$. So we get:

(10) $\exists x\neg\exists w\exists y(Gywx@)$
(11) $\forall x\exists w(Exw)$
(12) $\forall x\forall w\forall v(Exw \wedge \neg Exv \rightarrow Gxwxv)$
(13) $\exists x(Ex@ \wedge \neg\exists w\exists y(Gywx@))$

We might then obtain some initial derivations in order to simplify matters, like so:

(10) $\forall w \forall y \neg (Gywa@)$
(11) Eao
¬(13) $\neg Ea@ \lor Gbma@$

Now we can construct a tableau to show validity:

(10) $\forall w \forall y \neg (Gywa@)$
(11) Eao
(12) $\forall x \forall w \forall v (Exw \land \neg Exv \to Gxwxv)$

¬(13)$\neg Ea@ \lor Gbma@$

$\neg Ea@$

(12)$(Ean \land \neg Ea@) \to Gana@$

$Gana@$

(10)$\dfrac{\neg Gana@}{X}$

$Gbma@$

(10)$\dfrac{\neg Gbma@}{X}$

$\neg (Ean \land \neg Ea@)$

$\neg Ean$

$\dfrac{Ea@}{X}$

(12)$(Eao \land \neg Ea@) \to Gaoa@$

$Gaoa@$

(10)$\dfrac{\neg Gaoa@}{X}$

$\neg Eao$

$\dfrac{Eao}{X}$

$\neg (Eao \land \neg Ea@)$

$\dfrac{Ea@}{X}$
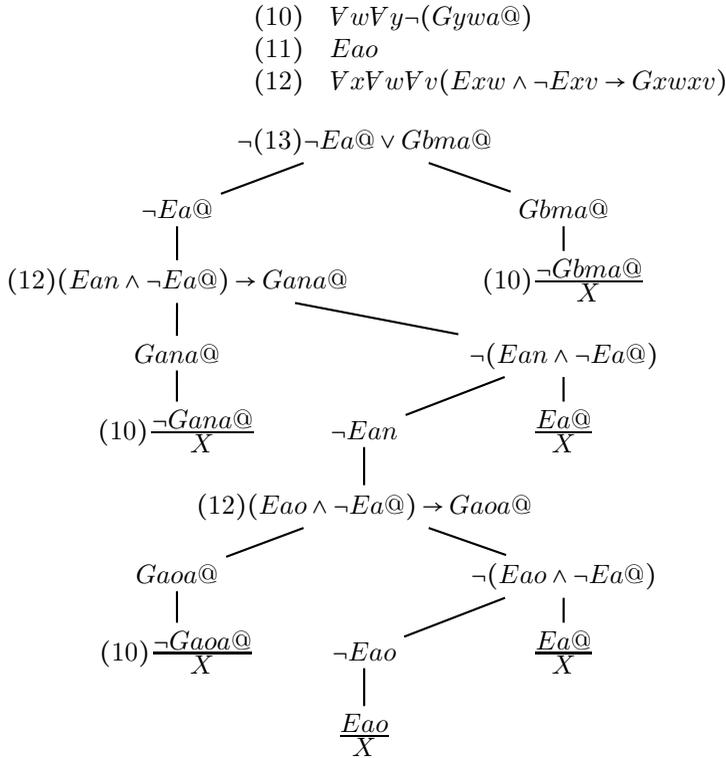
V

Let us distinguish between the distinct subject matters of two doctrines that have both been called possibilism. $Possibilism_1$ is a doctrine about the range of our quantifiers. $Possibilism_2$ is a doctrine about what exists. $Possibilism_2$ states that nonactual objects exist (are realized). $Possibilism_1$ states that the range of our quantifiers is not restricted to entities that exist (are realized) in the actual world. Drawing a very common analogy with temporal discourse, Salmon (1987:57) points out that the potential for variegation in the range of our quantifiers is reflected in ordinary language: 'the domain of quantification may be, and very often is, adjusted either up or down in various ways, at the drop of a hat. Consider our readiness to quantify over no longer existing objects in discourse about the past.' According to $possibilism_1$, then, when Quine (1980:15) said 'to be is to be the value of a variable', he was either wrong or he did not mean for 'is' to signify identity. For there are values of variables that do not be, as it were.

If we are to accept (11) and (12), we are neither prescribed nor precluded $possibilism_1$, for these premises do not involve existential quantification over entities, and so would not beg the question when it comes to arguing that some specific entity exists in the actual world. However, acceptance of (10) requires at least that we must take our quantifiers as unrestricted. For if we did not, (10) would beg the question—it would say, in virtue of its existential quantification, that there actually exists (is realized) an entity whose greatness is unexceeded. We are, then, committed to $possibilism_1$. This does not render the argument uninteresting, for the *conclusion*, (13), still says of an entity that it both exists (is realized) in the actual world and has a greatness which is unexceeded. Nor are we thereby committed to any particular view on possible worlds—we can still take our predicate E and its talk of existence as derivative (as described

in **II**), for in this case the possible world in which, according to (13), some entity would have existed (been realized) if that world were actual, *is* actual, so that entity exists (is realized).

Moreover, Fine (1977) has provided definitions of the unrestricted quantifiers in terms of the restricted ones and the standard modal operators—the restricted quantifiers range over individuals and possible worlds and a predicate is used to ascribe realization to a possible world. Here possible worlds are thought of as abstract objects that actually exist, so this confirms that $possibilism_1$ is compatible with what I called the ontologically innocent theories of possible worlds (and their derivative talk of existence in possible worlds). But $possibilism_2$ is certainly not ontologically innocent—it commits us to what I called a quasi-Meinongion ontology. So $possibilism_1$ does not entail $possibilism_2$ (and $possibilism_1$ remains all we are committed to).

The converse, however, is not the case—$possibilism_2$, which Lewis endorses, entails $possibilism_1$.[9] Therefore given that Lewis does not wish to dispute (11) or (12), and given that the argument is valid, he must find some objection to (10) other than that it begs the question—if, that is, he is to avoid (13).

(10) says that the ordered 2-tuple $< x,@ >$ has a greatness that is unexceeded. Lewis (1970:184) observes that in order to find such a premise credible, we need some reason to think that 'the actual world, unlike some other worlds, is a *place of greatest greatness.*' We cannot provide such a reason by pointing out the many features of the actual world that impress us, for this is both empirical and contingent—the ontological argument is supposed to be *a priori* and many possible worlds have features that would impress us more. Rather we must find a reason to think the actual world a fitting place of greatest greatness precisely because it is actual. Lewis, however, contends that actuality is *not* what we might call a *special-maker.*

Lewis propounds an indexical theory of actuality, according to which the word 'actual' and its cognates (and its synonyms in other languages etc.) varies its reference with its context of utterance. In this way it is analogous to temporal, spatial, and personal indexicals,

such as 'now', 'here', 'I' and 'you'. By this analysis, for any utterance token of 'the actual world' that occurs in w, w is the reference. Lewis infers that actuality is not a special-maker—it does not render a world the fitting place of 'greatest greatness'—for it is a property had by *any* world.[10] Actuality, like greatness, is relative.

Many arguments have been marshalled against this theory. For example, some take it to entail *possibilism*$_2$ or a theory of counterparts (or both), and then from the implausibility of these consequents they infer the implausibility of the indexicality theory. However, even regardless of the plausibility of *possibilism*$_2$ or counterpart theories, it is far from clear that this entailment relation obtains.[11] On the other hand, then, some focus their attention on Lewis's (1970:186) statement that 'the *strongest* evidence for the indexical analysis of actuality is that it explains why skepticism about our own actuality is absurd' (my italics). Van Inwagen (1980:426), for example, argues that 'I exist in the actual world' can only mean 'I exist', so 'surely we do not need any recondite theory of actuality to explain why skepticism about one's own existence is absurd.'

Perhaps the most fundamental objection, however, is to be found in Adams (1974:215). It seems that Lewis accounts for the absurdity of skepticism about our own actuality only at the cost of rendering foundationless our belief in the greater importance of the actual in direct contrast with the merely or solely possible (from our point of view). One aspect of this belief manifests itself with particularly strong intuitions in our value judgements. Wrongdoers are morally condemned for their *actual* misdeeds, and we are most affected by *actual* atrocities. Of course Lewis might protest that this is purely because we, being actual, share a world with actual misdeeds and actual atrocities. But the intuition remains that there is something special—beyond the egocentric specialness conferred by our own actuality—in the actuality of morally significant actions and occurrences.

In response to such objections, Lewis (1983:22) has conceded that he must distinguish between two senses of actuality. Lewis (1970:185) briefly alludes to this distinction as a complication, but

it is Salmon (1987) who fully works out the way in which it deflects the objection from moral intuition. The details are complex and subtle, but the basic point is that while actuality in the primary sense is indexical, actuality in the secondary sense is not. $Actuality_1$ is a property had by any world *in that world*. $Actuality_2$, according to Salmon and working within a framework of possible worlds as abstract entities, is just the property of existence (realization). Our intuitions regarding the importance of our value judgements are due to our ascription to them of the property of $actuality_2$.

The relevant point here is that this way of justifying the indexicality theory of actuality frees us of the burden of showing it to be false. First of all, it is evidently compatible with ontologically innocent views of possible worlds and a rejection of $possibilism_2$. And second of all, it can even offer a way in which actuality is a special-maker. If, that is, we reject $possibilism_2$ and retain the indexicality theory, then even though we must concede that $actuality_1$ is not a special-maker—because in any world that world is $actual_1$—we can nevertheless maintain that $actuality_2$ is most certainly a special-maker, because only one world has it—the actual world, the world that is in fact realized, the world in which all other possible worlds exist as abstract objects.

Therefore we can present Lewis with the following dilemma: either the indexicality theory is incorrect or it is mitigated by a bifurcation in the meaning of actuality. In either case, there is something special about the actual world, and his objection does not stand. Thus we are left with a valid argument, all of whose premises we have some positive reason to accept and none of which we have any good reason to reject. Moreover, these reasons are at no point based on the controversial theories of $possibilism_2$ or counterparts. Rather they are based on the much more widely accepted theories of $possibilism_1$ and some version of an ontologically innocent view of possible worlds. This argument is not *conclusive*, for we do not yet have particularly strong reason to accept (10)—it is not yet clear that $actuality_2$ is a special-maker of sufficient strength to justify the claim of (10) that the actual world is a suitable place for the great-

est greatness. Nor are we *sure* that the theories upon which the argument is based are correct, or the many assumptions that have been made true. Nevertheless, it seems fair to conclude that there is one form of the ontological argument for God's existence that is eminently viable, and that faced with Lewis's neglected challenge, we should choose God.

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Endnotes

[1]To the same effect, we could infer the negation of (1) from (7) and (2) by *modus tollens*.

[2](7) follows from (6) by definition and double negation elimination.

[3]Moreover, many commentators now think that the Kantian objection—essentially that existence is not a first-level predicate—is either entirely mistaken or at least not pertinent in Anselm's case. To take a small but wide sample, cf. Salmon (1987), Leftow (2005), and Lowe (2007).

[4]I will just observe that Lewis (1970:177) affirms that his assumption that existence is a relation between entities and worlds does not bear on his counterpart theory at all (for an account of which cf. Lewis (1968)), whilst Adams (1971:34) contends that Anselm's argument is committed to entities and their properties *not* being world-bound.

[5]I say '*quasi*-Meinongion' because it does not commit us to the existence of objects with contradictory properties.

[6]Remember that apart from superficial differences in symbolization and presentation this is Lewis's reconstruction I am exploring here.

[7]Cf. Charlesworth (1968:121), Anselm's *Proslogion IV*. As we have seen, Anselm also uses the *in*definite description '*something*-than-which-a-greater-cannot-be-thought'—this is the description even the fool understands. My ex-

planation of greatness in terms of worthiness of worship ensures that at most one entity can be picked out by either description.

[8]Cf. Charlesworth (1968:163-4) for Gaunilo's famous island parody in his *A Reply on Behalf of the Fool*, and Oppy (1995:162-85) for a comprehensive list of parodies including those of the almost-Gods. Cf. Leftow (2005:92-6), from whom this last phrase is borrowed, and Brecher (1974:104) for the discussions from which my criticism is derived.

[9]Thus Lewis (1973) somewhat unsatisfactorily suggests taking as primitive the unrestricted existential quantifier, for example, and defining the restricted existential quantifier in terms of it, like so: $\exists^{@}x(\phi x) =_{df.} \exists x(\phi x \wedge x$ is actual$)$. Cf. Loux (1979:46).

[10]It would be misleading to say that actuality is a property had by every world, for the assertion that 'every world is actual' is false (and is so in every world).

[11]Cf. Stalnaker (1976).

Derrida From Now On
By Michael Naas
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Pbk £23.50 ($28.00).

Will we ever be done with Derrida's burial rites? And ought we to
have done with them? *Derrida From Now On*, a collection of eleven
essays by Michael Naas, situates itself on the fault line between these
two questions; it is a work both of "mourning" and of "celebration"
(10). Consequently, each of the essays collected here is a kind of
double response: both a scholarly or academic response to Derrida,
to his work, to the texts which he has bequeathed to us, and a
highly personal and affecting response to his death in 2004. In this
sense, Naas's book naturally forms part of a much larger corpus of
reactions to Derrida's life and death, a corpus whose *leitmotif* of
mourning and melancholia remains as passioned and passionate as
it was half a decade ago. We need only mention the titles of some
recent responses to Derrida's work - Nicholas Royle's *In Memory
of Jacques Derrida* (University of Edinburgh Press, 2009), Geoffrey
Bennington's *Not Half No End: Militantly Melancholic Essays of
Jacques Derrida* (University of Edinburgh Press, 2010), and Peggy
Kamuf's *To Follow: The Wake of Jacques Derrida* (University of
Edinburgh Press, 2010)—to grasp, at a glance, the elegiac state of
current Derrida scholarship.

It is lucky, then, that deconstruction has always been a coming-
to-terms with death. Born from Derrida's early meditations on death
and finitude in Husserl, notably in his *Edmund Husserl's "Origin of
Geometry": An Introduction* (University of Nebraska Press, 1989),
the death of deconstruction was declared at almost every stage of
its protean evolution. Death too was at its theoretical heart: the
death necessitated by an inexorable *espacement* or spacing always
already at work in temporality. No one understood this figurative
and non-figurative death better than Derrida himself, whom Naas
quotes early in his introduction: "Each time I let something go,
each time some trace leaves me, 'proceeds from me, unable to be

reappropriated, I live my death in writing" (5).

If *Derrida From Now On* dramatises these tightly interwoven deaths, there is at least one more death at work in Naas's text: the patricide which is interior to all patrimony, what Derrida once described in a lecture on Foucault (his former teacher) as the "unhappy consciousness" of the reluctant disciple. Eventually, observed Derrida, every disciple is called to answer back to "the master who speaks within him and before him" (*Writing and Difference*, Routledge, 36–7). This inherent and inheritory tension is legible in every essay of Naas's collection, which exhibits on one hand a desire for fidelity, for the patient reading and exegesis of texts which have outlived their master, and on the other hand the desire, the drive to see these works transformed, transplanted, brought into violent collision with affairs that are both current and urgent.

The books third chapter, on "Derrida's Laïcité", seems traversed from either end by this simultaneous desire for fidelity and transformation. Naas's goal here is to elaborate Derrida's commitment to what the French term *laïcité*, "the protection of French institutions from religious dogma and authority" (62). Naas argues that Derrida's version of *laïcité* rigorously thinks through the concept's ideological underpinnings and ironic dogmatisms, offering in its stead a kind of deconstructed *laïcité* which emphasises its theologico-political origins and exposes not "a reason divorced from religion" (62) but a prior faith or belief underlying both scientific and religious discourses. What this chapter exemplifies quite clearly is Naas's exegetical skill. His reading of Derrida's texts, in this chapter as well as in the collection as a whole, can scarcely be faulted: it is a patient, subtle blend of the microscopic and the panoramic, demonstrating an impressive knowledge of Derridas extensive oeuvre while balancing an intimate and intricate command of his sometimes difficult and always evolving lexicon.

The chapter's most interesting moment, however, and also its most short-lived, has nothing to do with theoretical explication. It comes towards the close of the essay, when Naas is led to stage a surprising confrontation between Derrida and Pope Benedict XVI.

This encounter concerns the opposition between *foi* and *savoir*, faith and knowledge. Naas highlights a 2004 article in which the former Cardinal argued that, in a world where reason has become detached from God, "all that remains is reason's dissolution, its deconstruction, as, for example, Jacques Derrida has set it out for us" (76). The reader is offered a tantalising yet elliptical sketch of the form a dialogue between Derrida and Benedict might have taken, one that is all the more timely today in light of Benedict's assured pronouncements on social issues, and Derrida's discussion (for instance) of the nuclear family, feminism, and gay marriage in *For What Tomorrow* (Stanford University Press, 2004). Given Naas's stated explicative goal, his willingness to simply gesture towards future avenues of exploration is understandable. By necessity every burial ceremony involves a kind of stocktaking; and the reader anxious to set his sights on the future horizons of deconstructive thinking will first have to await its conclusion.

Certainly, the highlight of this stocktaking or analytic reading is the book's second chapter, in which Naas proposes a reading of deconstruction as the deconstruction of the 'as'. This short yet vivid account would function perfectly well as a stand-alone piece, even as an introduction to Derrida's thought (albeit quite a sophisticated one), but it easily slots into the logic of the larger work as an ironic *après-coup* to the books opening chapter ("*Alors, qui êtes vous*?: Jacques Derrida and the Question of Hospitality"), which had painstakingly advanced a reading of deconstruction as hospitality. The chapter succeeds because of its willingness to nail deconstruction down to a pithy formula, and explore all ramifications thereon. Before it is anything else, Naas concludes, deconstruction is "a critique of the 'as,' the 'as such,' and the 'as if' that make all comparison and analogy possible" (37). Naas insists on the importance of Derrida's discussion of analogy, in a reading which stretches from Derrida's well-known early text, "Plato's Pharmacy" (1972), to his much later analysis of reason and sovereignty post-9/11 in *Rogues* (2002).

The exemplary analogy occurs, for Derrida as for Naas, in Plato's *Timaeus*, in which the philosopher compares the Good to the realm of the sun, thereby implying a relation between "sensible visibility and intelligible visibility" (39). This comparison is seen to inaugurate "the sovereign reign of analogy" (38) in the Platonic and Western traditions. Naas's reading demonstrates, quite compellingly and often surprisingly, that deconstruction is precisely the attempt to counter, or at the very least undermine, this analogical reign. There is a fundamental link, or so Naas concludes, between deconstruction and what he calls "anagrammatology" (45): a science of the "anagram", or that which remains irreducible within each and every movement of analogical reasoning. Derrida's reading would thus consist in seeking out the anagram within every apparently stable analogy. The classic example of this in Derrida's writings would be, of course, the analogy between writing and *pharmakon* (meaning both remedy and poison) in Plato's *Phaedrus*. It is because the meaning of the word *pharmakon* cannot be definitively stabilised or fixed that it is the "pivot point" between values which cannot be wholly neutralised or determined, and thus provides Derrida with a means of undermining the oppositional logic which appears to be upheld by the seemingly innocent analogy.

What is most remarkable about this piece is Naas's willingness to state in quite clear and deliberate terms Derrida's "method" of reading (often a dirty word in accounts of deconstruction). Furthermore, Naas takes these methodological conclusions—which stress deconstruction's symbiotic relationship to analogy and metaphor—and uses them to conduct what can only be described as a *séance* in the sixth essay of this collection, "Derrida at the Wheel". The essay is itself a kind of prosopopoeia, as Naas employs the same impressionistic, free-associative style so beloved, derided, and pastiched by Derrida's supporters and naysayers. Ironically, it is at this moment when Naas seems closest to Derrida that he leaves behind his labour of exegesis and approaches an inventive, productive, and thoroughly deconstructive reading, as he explores a tradition of analogies involving pottery and urn-making from Genesis (where man is formed

from earth or clay), to Socrates love of the potter's craft as "an image of the activity of education and, ultimately, of the philosopher" (115), to the poetry of John Keats and Wallace Stevens. For Naas, the analogy of the urn is always one of "storage and secrecy" (119), of simultaneous corporality and formality. When Naas describes, however, Derrida's seminars at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (which Naas was fortunate enough to attend) in terms of a pottery-class, that is, each disciple gathered at the foot of the master's pottery wheel "to learn at his hands" (113), the question is unavoidably begged: is the pot which Naas himself has produced his own? It is certainly unique for the ease with which it almost entirely dispenses with Derrida's texts, instead conducting its own philosophical and cultural odyssey through the history of Western philosophy and culture.

On the other hand, Naas seems content to offer up his reading of craft-making analogies as "simply a shard of what might have been, just a bit of baked clay, a single ceramic tile to be added to the mosaic" (121). In this regard, Naas certainly privileges his more traditional and scholarly *explications* of Derrida's texts above his own deconstructive forays (the book's ninth chapter, "History's Remains: Of Memory, Mourning, and the Event(s) of 9/11" occupies a kind of middle ground between these poles, as Naas here attempts to extend Derrida's conclusions regarding private mourning to the public mourning of a nation-state, in this case the US). Yet the greatest worth of *Derrida From Now On* might be found less in its analysis of the content and underlying philosophical unity of Derrida's texts, than in the way it reads Derrida reading: that is, its concern with the structure of his writings, with the form of his arguments and the consistency of its method. Naas is correct to emphasise the role of analogy, simile, and metaphor in Derrida: all these figural tropes are what induce legibility in the philosophical or non-philosophical text to be analysed. They ensure, like the symptom in Freud, that the repression which has failed—in all cases the repression of the unconditional condition of signification, *différance*—can be traced.

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Given these analytic undertones, it is unfortunate that Freud is not given more pride of place in this collection, particularly given that Naas's role as the translator of Derrida's later text, *Resistances of Psychoanalysis* (Stanford University Press, 1998), would certainly have equipped him to do so. Nevertheless, Naas does make several isolated references to Freud, of which the most compelling and interesting occurs in the books seventh chapter, "'One Nation ... Indivisible': *Of Autoimmunity, Democracy, and the Nation-State*". Here Naas's aim is to emphasise an often undervalued concept in Derrida's writings, namely, autoimmunity, that "illogical logic" (in Derrida's phrase) which turns something against itself precisely to uphold the very identity which it seems to threaten (the term becomes current in Derrida in light of his theorising of democracy, terrorism, and, in particular, anti-terrorist measures in the wake of 9/11).

The reference to Freud comes when Naas appeals to something like a congruity between Derrida's concept of autoimmunity and Freud's concept of the death drive (*Todestrieb*). Naas writes that autoimmunity, like deconstruction itself, "appears to name a process that is inevitably and irreducibly at work more or less everywhere". This is because it is "*like* a death drive" (my emphasis), one which "comes to affect not only the bodies we call discourses or texts but psychic systems and political institutions, nation-states and national contexts, and perhaps even, though this is the most contentious, God himself" (124).

If, as we have just learned, there is no such thing as an innocent analogy, what are we to make of this "like a death drive"? Given the scope and shape of his essay, Naas quite rightly does not purse this analogy to its anagrammatical core, though he does signal towards the way in which the Freudian doctrine of the death drive might return or survive in the Derridean concept of autoimmunity, that is, life turning death against (life) itself, the essential suicide of all structurality which opens a wound legible only to deconstructive reading. This question is troubling precisely because of the problematic it opens: that of inheritance and patricide (this time not

Naas's but Derrida's). In a way, it serves Naas's purpose, since it highlights the still fledgling state of Derrida scholarship - of which *Derrida From Now On* constitutes, to borrow an earlier metaphor, a valuable tile "added to the mosaic". The purpose of this scholarship will be to answer the innumerable questions which this analogy raises: what was the extent of Derrida's patricide, of his fidelity to past masters (Husserl, Heidegger, Freud, Levinas, among many others)? And what, moreover, was the extent of his disruptive originality? *Derrida From Now On* is situated at the confluence of all these questions, many of which it admirably attempts to answer. Yet as Naas seems aware, in all his gesturing towards future horizons, if there is to be a Derrida from now on it will, necessarily, only be through a deconstruction from now on. In other words, there must be patricide, a willingness, once we are through reading the way Derrida read, to leave his texts behind. If *Derrida From Now On* dramatises the anxiety of the disciple's relation to his master, it also signals towards a future-to-come stripped of this very anxiety: a future which can only arrive when we have learned, at last, to separate Derrida from deconstruction.

Paul Earlie
Balliol College, Oxford & Ecole Normale Supérieure, Paris

Gilles Deleuze: The Intensive Reduction
Edited by Constantin Boundas
Continuum Studies in Continental Philosophy, 2009. Pp. ix-241.
ISBN-13: 978-1-8470-6517-9. Hbk $130.00.

Gilles Deleuze: The Intensive Reduction is a compilation of eighteen essays first presented at an international conference at Trent University in 2004. Boundas introduces the volume by way of a question, how does one pay tribute to a master—such as Deleuze? The answer: by proliferating his senses, contributing to the unlimited glossalia that Deleuze identifies as the creative possibility of philosophy. The essays in this volume form an assemblage of a truly Deleuzian nature, rhizomatic offshoots that take his philosophy down aberrant paths. The "golden thread," as the title suggests, is the intensive. The intensive relates to forces or affects in the process of becoming, contrasting the more familiar domain of fully formed entities, the extensive. The intensive is characterized by qualitative differences of relational elements in process or flux. In Deleuze's terminology, the intensive is associated with the virtual rather than the actual. Deleuze is particularly interested in uncovering the intensive dynamism that exist in tandem with the domain of the extensive, which is the usual focus of philosophic inquiry. The intensive is Deleuze's contribution to the expansion of philosophys explanatory power. It undergirds most all of his inquiries. It is for this reason that Boundas claims that Deleuze is irretrievable without acknowledging virtual intensity as the generative milieu at the heart of his thought. All being has to be accounted for in terms of intensity as the anti-phenomenal, non-resembling different/ciation of a field of forces, the emphasis on which providing each contributor the opportunity to retrieve a contested and poorly understood point of Deleuze's philosophy. Several misguided tendencies in Deleuze interpretation are addressed throughout the book, contributing to the sense that this is a book for the already initiated. One might consider reading these essays as a corrective to some of the more persistent and widespread caricatures abounding. For instance, Boundas

cites the tendency to emphasize the imperative of creation without the commensurate re-positioning of ethics according to a Spinozist model of affirmation. Likewise, Deleuzian politics, often misunderstood exclusively as resistance and destruction, is refined only by consideration of the precision involved in creation born out of the intensive.

The book is divided into four sections, the first dealing with Deleuze's general ontological commitments and envisioning the future possibilities inherent in thinking through the Virtual. Véronique Bergens "Deleuze and the Question of Ontology" orients the reader by placing Deleuze in relation to Kant. Where the progression of ontology is foreclosed by Kantian schematism, Deleuze provides a model, transcendental empiricism, whereby the inaccessibility of the *noumenon* is overcome. The shift happens according to the presentation of an image of thought that relies on the breakdown of the faculties rather than their accord. Ontic failure leads to the intuition of the intensive realm of differential forces. The question motivating Bergen derives from the work of Francois Zourabichivili: "the question that every reader of Deleuze must confront [. . .] is how this thinker could coordinate two positions [. . .] the transcendental and the ontological" (ft.1, 19). What Bergen calls the ascent to the transcendental field of experience happens by way of thought reaching its limits, just where Kant will not allow it to go. Deleuze embraces the limit as the moment of liberation of thought: "thought posits itself when the adjustment of an object to the forms of knowledge breaks down" (9). As Bergen explains it, there is no problem - thought becomes the fold of Being as Event understood as commerce with the conditions of real experience, the Virtual. Yet, after explaining all this, Bergen poses a series of open questions, which seem to boil down to asking what guarantees this ontological "leap": "lifting the focus from the actual does not ipso facto bring about a new focus on the virtual" (17). It is less about refocus than it is about intrusion, and Bergen acknowledges this as "shock" (15). But does she domesticate Deleuze by assuming that this shock is supposed to induce an "agreement and an adequation with the plan of Being" (15)? Bergen

charges that it is Deleuze re-instantiating the necessity of representation, but if representation is not the goal of this intuition, then her criticism appears less potent. The second essay, "The 'Future' of Deleuze An Unfinished Project," continues thinking *impuissance* as a constitutive break or caesura, but switches focus by tackling ontology in terms of time. Baross moves from thinking Deleuze's future of thought to the sense of the future that his work engenders, drawing from Bergsonian duration and the syntheses of time in *Difference and Repetition*. The future is redeployed as the eternity of the forever new, meaning that Deleuze is less interested in a future to come than the new (future) as a dimension of the present and as synthesis of the past. The point of caesura is what he calls the *imprévisible*—though a synthesis, the future is structured by a series of cuts that shatter mere repetition, thus providing the possibility of creating new, unforeseeable futures. The third and fourth essays in this section continue the trend of following the intersecting lines of Deleuze and his predecessors, taking up Leibniz and Whitehead respectively. Bogue's emphasis on the new harmony of the Baroque underscores this point, drawing together the fold between Leibniz's monads and bodies in terms of the heterogeneous harmony of the musical chord. Rather than pre-established harmony, the emphasis falls to dissonant accords, the minor elements of Baroque style which integrate series as temporary and unstable phases. It is the freeing of the model, the creation of the new melody and the coexistence of future worlds that resonates with Deleuzian ontology, thus adding another Deleuzian theme, the reciprocity between philosophy and the non-philosophy of art. Lastly, one encounters Whitehead, as Robinson retrieves this more marginal figure from Deleuze's texts, drawing them together in terms of their ontological constructivism. The synthesis involved in Baross's "future" doubles as a motif for the section as Deleuzian ontology of the future is connected to undeveloped reverberations of tradition and temporality, or as Robinson is keen to point out, "a number of authors were already 'behind' him" (47), making of this section a kind of vibratory whole.

The second section explores the complex intersections of Deleuze and Lacan, clarifying the development of his thought toward schizo-analysis out of the encounter with Lacanian theories of desire and the Real. "On the Idea of a Critique of Pure Practical Reason in Kant, Lacan, and Deleuze" leaves one pivotal figure out of the title, Sade. This omission is curious considering that it is the linkage of Kant and Sade as inverted bedfellows, which allows him to suggest the necessity of a critique of pure practical reason and move on to Lacan's attempt at it. Desire producing its own lost object accounts for the presupposition of the transcendent object of law-abiding will in both cases. Recognizing this is to move beyond a certain kind of moralism, to jump over to the side of unconscious and desire, the home of both Lacan and Deleuze, whom Cutrofello artfully weaves together. Radicalizing rather than repudiating Lacan, Deleuze's desire is machinic rather than symbolic, not a faculty of a unified subject but a function of a differential manifold. This essay makes clear the debt to the innovations of Lacan's theory of desiring production. Cutrofello ends with a provocative twist: Deleuze's way out of oedipal tyranny is to embrace Sade's irony and perversion, to release desiring production from its bondage, yet if Kant and Sade are themselves inseparable, what is the status of Deleuze's Sadean schizo? The next essay, by Shannon Winnubst, proves to be a complement to the first in which Sade and Kant become indistinguishable and Lacan is Deleuze's ally. She examines the absurdity of law without content or as pure form (maxim), and she locates the misreading of Lacan with those who remain at the level of the Symbolic/Phallus and do not account for his move to *object a*. *Object a* rather than the Other is the cause of desire, thus indicating the limits of the Symbolic and re-emergence of the Lacanian Real as a site amenable to Deleuze's project of subversion of and laughter at the law. Daniel Smith's essay also helps to clarify the relation of Deleuze to Lacan, locating Deleuze's formulation of the body-without-organs through the re-reading of Lacan and reworking of his own philosophy. Countering Žižek's claims that *Anti-Oedipus* represents a move away from Lacanian presuppositions, Smith finds

that the Lacanian Real revealed in psychosis provides the model for schizoanalysis, the plunge into the depths of the Real itself rather than remaining tied to the model of *Logic of Sense* where the Real is only ever mediated through an oscillation of surface effects. The body-without-organs, "the Real in all its positivity" (92), replaces the language of surface-depth. Smith's essay is helpful in clarifying the progression of this term.

The third section, "Deleuze and the Arts", includes three essays that trace the creative activity of thinking the Virtual as a specific power of art—though the emphasis of each in addressing this specificity is distinct enough to keep the reader intrigued. Darren Ambrose's essay provides a helpful overview of the symbiotic relationship between art and philosophy in Deleuze, while highlighting the need for philosophy to take heed of the artists ability to negotiate the "self-positing element of materiality" (119). Two points of interest in this essay are the characterization of materiality in terms of auto-poetic virtual traits and the elaboration of the diagram. In the next essay, Deleuze is paired with Merleau-Ponty in order to reflect the move beyond phenomenology to the level of the Virtual, thus providing a more complete description of the work of art. The essay uses the notion of Gestalt as a hinge, a swinging door that both opens the importance of Merleau-Ponty's recognition of the conditions of perception for Deleuze and forecloses the phenomenological circuit by allowing Deleuze to conceive the collapse of the Gestalt as flesh flowing out of itself, a flight to the intensive that conditions this element of the world. The final essay of this section returns the reader to an earlier theme, that of the breakdown or disintegration of the unity of the subject or thought. Baugh explains that Deleuze takes the possibilities of literature farther than the modernist death of the reader, insisting that reading is a matter of increasing the impersonal power within us and, thus, "getting lost" from one's self. Rather than identifying with the characters and strengthening the unity of the ego, the Deleuzian imperative is to encounter the intensities of affect and perception released by the characters (136). Art, in breaching our limits, lets the intensive in, exposing our bodies to

imperceptible forces and powers that lead to the transformation of thought and action.

The fourth section, a markedly longer section of the book, addresses Deleuze's oft-contested and more often misunderstood impact on the ethical and political. The significance of the disproportional allotment of space to this section warrants further scrutiny and suggests to this reader a refreshing preoccupation in current Deleuze studies, that of the confrontation between the ontological and the political and the folding of the theoretical and the practical that Deleuze makes possible. Though, according to Phillip Mengue's essay in the section, this is just what has been lacking in the conventional interpretations of micropolitics practicality and political efficacy. Mengue's essay performs a double reduction, reducing past formulations of micropolitics to "anti-capitalist ethics" and reducing its revival to the doxic free market of democracy (172). His analysis relies upon some problematic twists, interpreting becoming as return. Making revolution a matter of coming back to ones own conditions allows Mengue to then assert his agenda: "what makes the 'revolutionary' of the revolution is the climbing back or the coming back—the rememoration of the condition of being together with people to the very void of knowing what society should be" (166) and "peoples revolutionary becoming is internal to democracy" (168). The public space of discussion and contestation internal to democracy is thus what Deleuze has been looking for all along. The doxic plane acts as the plane of immanence. This has the benefit, for Mengue, of rendering diffusion and contamination, processes that Deleuze maintains to be organic, chemical, affective processes, intelligible as an *authentic* politics by making contagion "pass through speech and discourse" (174). Yet Deleuze's point in critiquing the hegemony of semiotic/linguistic systems in favor of enunciative assemblages is to underscore the level of the affective/intensive /force that exceeds the human and even the organic, thus complicating the analysis of nomadological engagements. Mengue acknowledges that his reading is against the Deleuzian grain, but thinks that he is providing a means by which micropolitics can be a legitimate pol-

itics. Beaulieu's "Gilles Deleuzes Politics" is helpful in providing a counter point in that he emphasizes the peculiarity of nomadism, that it may never be legitimate, complete, or institutionalized (210). Mengue's final analysis is that "otherworldly nomadism" just cannot be politics; it is too diaphanous and dispersed, yet his alignment of Deleuze's own position concerning nomadism and an overly idealistic postmodern vision of the abolition of all borders (absolute deterritorialization) strikes me as one of the reductive gestures that this book seeks to root out. Patton's "Deleuze's Practical Philosophy" offers just such a rejoinder, presenting a more nuanced view of the values of kinds of deterritorializing forces and thus illustrating that Deleuze's nomadological path is not as nebulous as some have supposed. In most of the essays of this section, the prospects of a practical Deleuze are gauged to be brighter. Several, like Braidotti's "Affirmation versus Vulnerability," argue that the foundation from which we think ethics and politics, as well as the subjects involved, shifts with nomadology, micropolitics and the intensive ontology underlying them both. Braidotti focuses on the intensive subject, as a locale of variations, connections and limitations. The point of ethics is to explore this locale, the body, and push it to its limits. As with Baugh's position concerning the loss of self in the process of reading, the experience of loss and vulnerability is an occasion for transformation and leads to the interesting and topical concept of multi-locality, the mindset of the diasporic and nomadic. These transformative processes not only "rework the consciousness of social injustice and discrimination but also produce a more adequate cartography of our real-life condition" (150). Holland's "Affirmative Nomadology and the War Machine" is noteworthy in that it maintains allegiance to Deleuze's thought while offering real examples of how to apply it. The war machine is only the reactive, destructive part of nomadism. There is also affirmative nomadism; this is his focus. In the final essay, Villani introduces the idea of pairing at a distance, which suggests that the space opened up in the writing of philosophy is determined by the ability to sustain contraries or extremes. According to Villani, this is what Deleuze likes in past

philosophers such as Kant, Spinoza, Nietzsche; one could say that this is also what he creates in his own—an intensive ontology of differentiation that contains all differences and infinitely unfolds upon itself. The philosophical leap to which Villani refers characterizes the creative engagement of thought that is celebrated in these pages.

The overall aim of the book to extend Deleuze in several directions and break from the sedimentation of his thought is accomplished to a greater or lesser degree throughout. The book succeeds in linking the diverse fields of Deleuze's thought to the intensive, proving a worthwhile contribution to the elucidation and extension of his work.

Andrea Janae Sholtz
Alvernia University, Reading, Pennsylvania

The Five Senses: A Philosophy of Mingled Bodies
By Michel Serres
Continuum, 2009. Pp.vii + 348. ISBN 978-0-8264-5985-5. Pbk
£19.99 ($29.95).

The English translation of *Les Cinq Sens* has been a long time coming. After publication in 1985, *Les Cinq Sens* was awarded the *Prix Médicis* in Paris. Since then, Michel Serres has grown in popularity and standing. Some may claim that Serres's works are impossible to translate due to their complex word play, neologisms and erratic style. Despite this, Margaret Sankey and Peter Cowley should be commended for their mammoth efforts and superb translation. The translation has certainly done justice to the rhythm of the French work and the subtle associations embedded throughout; the countless inter and cross-textual references.

In *The Five Senses*, Serres's aim is to show that the development of language has both veiled and overtaken the primacy of the senses; or in the translators' words, the "glories of our initial sensuous perception of the world" (xi). The cataloging nature of science and information technology has marginalised our relationship with the empirical and the authenticity of the experiential. Similarly, in certain philosophical circles, especially within the analytic tradition, the philosophy of language currently dominates over phenomenological accounts. Serres believes that the goal of philosophical inquiry is not to develop formal languages. This does not mean that logic is a useless endeavour, rather that it is not what constitutes philosophy as a whole. In this sense, Serres's work is a defence of the empirical, the qualitative, and a rejection of the reductive tendency of logic. In an interview in 1991, Serres stated that he "would go so far as to say that a form of knowledge has been lost, an empirical form, blotted out by the linguistic and virtually algebraic revolution". (Raoul Mortley, *French philosophers in conversation: Levinas, Schneider, Serres, Irigaray, Le Doeuff, Derrida*, Routledge, 1991, 54–5. "Interview" from here on).

The Five Senses is a not only a reaction against the importance of the philosophical question of language, but against language itself. "The linguistic school is a school with no sense of smell, and no taste" (Interview, 53). But this is more literal than figurative. "We refer to a thing, but there is no name for the smell" (Interview, 53). This is one of Serres's main points about human beings—we have forgotten that as *Homo sapiens* we are "he who knows how to taste. Sagacious: he who knows how to smell. All of these things are vanishing under the weight of logic and grammar" (235).

The Five Senses is a work heavily laden with metaphors and allegories. Serres's command of literature and mythology is extensive, he references antiquity, modernity, science and myths; from Orpheus to Socrates, the Last Supper to the *Odyssey*. He incorporates these links because, for Serres, "the difference between philosophy and literature is a product of the University" (Interview, 48). Serres argues that the "foundation of philosophy is the encyclopaedic, and its goal is synthesis" (Interview, 59).

In *Conversations on Science, Culture and Time* with Bruno Latour, (University of Michigan Press, 1995), Serres speaks of his contempt for phenomenology and hermeneutics. He is especially critical of Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception*.

> At the outset of the study of perception, we find in language the notion of sensation ... What you can decipher in this book is a nice ethnology of city dwellers, who are hypertechnicalized, intellectualized, chained to their library chairs, and tragically stripped of any tangible experience. Lots of phenomenology and no sensation— everything via language ... My book *Les Cinq Sens* cries out at the empire of signs.
> (*Conversations on Science, Culture and Time*, 131-2)

In *The Five Senses*, Serres is attempting to save the body from the addiction of language—the transformation of the world into one governed by the word. For Serres, the body is not simply an extended object. It is a fleeting experience and something which can

remake itself through the avenues of the senses. Serres wants to separate out the senses but also show how they interconnect. He knots them together as mingled bodies. Each sense, in a sense, contains the essences of the others. *The Five Senses* which Serres describes are moulded into unorthodox categories with familiar correlates— Veils, Boxes, Tables, Visit and Joy. A brief description of these five categories is necessary in order to understand Serres's metaphorical argument. Indeed, the complexity of the work requires some elucidation here.

In the chapter "Veils" Serres primarily examines touch. He parodies the Cartesian question concerning the location of the soul. For Serres, "the soul resides at the point where the I is decided" (20). This gives the impression that the soul is located in the contingencies of the body and its relation to the environment. Skin is the principle of contingence; a mediator. For example, the pilot of the ship feels at one with the vessel; the driver cruises down the freeway with the feel of his fingers. "Body and soul are not separate but blend inextricably, even on the skin. Thus two mingled bodies do not form a separate subject and object" (26).

The chapter "Boxes" critiques sound and hearing. The hard is, for Serres, the given, the physical. The soft refers to cultural and conceptual constructions. For this reason, the metaphorical link with hardware and software in computer terminology is revealing. In hearing, we take the hard (the given sound waves) and convert it into the soft (sentences with meaning). This conversion is the domain of information—sensations are converted by the senses and the black boxes in between, into sensory information. That is, we make sense of the senses through transformations. "A black box is ignorance, interrupting a chain of knowledge or creating a void in a transparent volume" (138). Hearing is the knotting together of these processes. The notion of silence is underscored as an important facet of thinking. "Solitude releases silence from the control of language" (88). "Linguistic philosophy overlooks this to the extent that thinking, in this perspective, is the same as speaking. Thinking in my view is first and foremost being silent" (Interview, 56). For

this reason, Serres has much respect for silence as opposed to the word.

The idea that language contaminates our senses runs throughout the text. Although "language gave us the sciences, and they made possible a thousand different techniques", language generates "so much noise that we can finally say that the world is riotous with language" (88). Both language and knowledge are treated as drugs. "Language dictates. We are addicted" (92). Language is "the hardest of hard drugs" (59). Serres offers the anecdote of being stung by a hornet while lecturing, he gallantly continued on—such is the anaesthetising nature of language.

In the chapter "Tables", taste and smell are considered at the same time, through the example of the appreciation of a bottle of 1947 Château d'Yquem. "Fine wine works on the tongue, awakening it from its narcotic slumber" (155). Serres argues that this is because these senses are the most despised by language. From Plato's symposium, to the Last Supper, and the banquet of Don Giovanni, the idea of the word-become-flesh is posited and subsequently entertained. The point here is that, when drinking or eating, we should actually taste, rather than read what is on the label. "Smell and taste differentiate, whereas language, like sight and hearing, integrates" (156). As a general principle, Serres propounds that we need to "return to the immediacy of the senses" (169). He tries to describe the sensations of the glass of wine to "show how defective language is in the case of sensation" (Interview, 54).

Sight is treated in the chapter "Visit", but this sense is more about voyaging; it becomes related to direction. The French verb *visiter*, although meaning sight or seeing also refers to the idea of traveling over some distance. *Visiter* can mean seeing or viewing something or someone, or simply to 'visit' like the English counterpart. Serres emphasizes this distance aspect because human beings are never static. We travel around the world, but also constantly move as the earth turns, and the galaxy rotates, and so on. We are mobile, navigating and orientating ourselves.

The chapter "Joy" details the ecstasy experienced by the body as a whole, as a type of sixth sense. Serres examines the pleasures of running, swimming, dancing and the trampoline, amongst other things. The body is mingling, a complexity, a multifaceted mixture of sensations. However, "We have lost, without recourse, the memory of a heard, seen, perceived world, experienced by a body devoid of language" (339).

Serres finishes by stating that, in recent times, language is no longer paramount. Information/data has superseded it. Scientific codification has "gobbled up" language (341). This does not mean that language has been completely destroyed, rather that another form of codification and categorisation, perhaps more sophisticated than mere words, is conditioning our experience of the world. For example, the body is now a genetic body, well codified.

> Language is threefold dominant: administrations rule through the performative dimension of the word; the media dominate through its seductive dimension; the sciences enjoy mastery through its truth dimension. Trismegistic language produces an abstract dominant class, drunk on codes: legislative, computerized, rigorous, thrice efficient, and in this manner producing a whole world (234)

Language has been superseded, the word has died, and *The Five Senses* is a celebration of this fact.

Now there is a new imperative for a new way of knowing. Language has finally become redundant. This gives us new possibilities for our relationship to the world. The world is opened up to us as the word is closed off. For Serres, our senses are once again able to play in the phenomenal experiences and primordially giveness of the world in their original, authentic manner. "The adventure of philosophy is beginning anew, in exactly the same place from which it has always sprung." (343).

The Five Senses intends to provoke a sense of the radical possibilities open to us when we overcome the constraints of language. Serres's motif seems to parallel Nietzsche's in *Daybreak*. However, the erratic nature of Serres's work elicits a Nietzschean charge: "Those who know they are deep strive for clarity. Those who would like to seem deep to the crowd strive for obscurity. For the crowd takes everything whose ground it cannot see to be deep: it is so timid and reluctant to go into the water." (*The Gay Science*, Cambridge, 2001, §173). Nevertheless, on closer reflection, Serres's method is closer to Nietzsche's own—one of disjointed aphoristic writing with common rubrics interweaved throughout. Serres wants to subvert the form of philosophical discourse that progresses logically to certain conclusions.

Serres's work aims to defy the usual laws of literature, of causality, of understandability. Furthermore, his use of language is meant to illustrate just how inadequate language is. However, some will see this line of argument as inherently paradoxical. His language is purposefully provocative, harsh, unclear at times and rhythmic, in an effort to manipulate the toxicity of the word in its most sterile form. It is a deliberate effort to both show and attempt to overcome the limits of language. Unfortunately, Serres waywardness can, at times, hinder rather than enrich the text. This may well be his original intention, but it will not convince all readers. It may draw the reader away from the thrust of the message, a message which may only become clear to some if they explore other works by Serres, such as *Hermes: Literature, Science, Philosophy and The Parasite*.

Another problematic aspect of Serres's work can be found in his discussion of fine wine. His essential idea is to remove the linguistic mediation veiling our experience. Thus, it should not matter whether we are drinking an underdeveloped clean-skin over-dosed with tartaric acid as opposed to a 1947 Château d'Yquem, so long as we are open to the purity of the sensations. But for Serres, "anyone who drinks one of those industrial concoctions which are flooding the market and the planet, is swallowing terminology" (221). "It moves through the mouth like a language: written on a small

label" (221–2). Here, it seems that Serres is implicitly belittling the lower echelons of society in their choice of alcoholic beverage. In the very description of such mass-produced, homogeneity, Serres goes against the grain of his argument—that substances of taste should not be mediated by the veil of linguistic descriptions. Serres could be charged with offering an insidious hierarchy of taste. Regardless of their quality, all beverages should be drunk blindly. Furthermore, Serres employs language itself to great effect here, offering rich descriptions of fine wine in stark comparison to its less prestigious counterparts. For example, the mingling in the cellar ensures that "alcohol and acid are balanced against sweet-smelling ester, suspended in water and sugars" (158).

Many new questions have been raised since the publication *Les Cinq Sens* in 1985. Serres states that "Language has taken the place of the given, science is taking that of language" (333). This prophetic trajectory is evidenced by the overarching grasp of technology today. It also provokes many new questions for the legitimacy of sensation. Is the permeated internet the new drug that is dulling experience? Is the ubiquitous nature of internet porn a degenerate struggle of the senses to regain their lost antique grace? Are commuters escaping their senses by listening to music on their headphones on the train, or returning to them?

It is difficult to say where the senses should be placed; the extent to which they are primordial and before time. Nevertheless, the five senses must be considered holistically, as a complex, interwoven web of multifaceted hybridity. As Serres has written elsewhere:

> Once words come to dominate flesh and matter, which were previously innocent, all we have left is to dream of the paradisiacal times in which the body was free and could run and enjoy sensations at leisure. If a revolt is to come, it will have to come from the five senses!
> (*Angels: A Modern Myth*, Flammarion, 1995, 71)

Now, freed from the constraints of the linguistic world, free from the categorisation of the word, it is time for a rejuvenation.

Jacob Vivian Pearce
University of Melbourne

Ideology: Comparative and Cultural Status
Edited by Mostafa Rejai.
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> The change in Western political life reflects the fact that the fundamental political problems of the industrial revolution have been solved: the workers have achieved industrial and political citizenship; the conservatives have accepted the welfare state; and the democratic left has recognized that an increase in overall state power carries with it more dangers to freedom than solutions to social problems.
> (Seymour Martin Lipset, 50)

Even a brief survey of the constant stream of publications on the topic of ideology since Karl Mannheim's 1929 *Ideologie und Utopie* reveals that ideology theory has been one of most long-standing and most widely attractive intellectual pursuits in the twentieth century to the present day. Typically, the persistent popularity of "ideology" has been attributed to the concept's inherent ambiguity and plasticity. More than one commentator has remarked that it may well be the most vexing and hotly contested idea in the human sciences (Teun van Dijk, *Ideology: A Multidisciplinary Approach*, 1998). It is therefore not surprising that Transaction Publisher should reissue a 1975 edited volume on the subject of the so-called "end of ideology debate," a controversy that made big waves in the 1960's and has since become an integral point of reference both in the social sciences and in the humanities. Because of the unabated interest in the question of ideology and its many lives, Mostafa Rejai's collection of original contributions to the school of thought that predicted ideology's impending death remains a valuable resource for teachers and students alike.

Originally published in 1975, *Ideology: Cultural and Comparative Status* offers the contemporary reader a preliminary overview of the discourse that ensued after the publication of Daniel Bell's 1960 now seminal work *The End of Ideology: On the Exhaustion of Political Ideas in the Fifties*. Mostafa Rejai is Distinguished Professor Emeritus of political science at Miami University, Ohio and has written extensively on the concept of leadership. In an attempt to introduce his audience to the discussion about the thesis of the "decline of ideology," Rejai brings together in this volume 13 papers originally published between 1960 and 1970. The tripartite division is meant to take us from the basic theoretical premises to the empirical evidence and finally to the critical assessment of both. While it is evident that the book is intended as a general introduction to be used in sociology or political science classes, it is equally clear that the editor himself is not a neutral commentator. Rejai's opening essay and his "introductory notes," which preface each of the three sections of the book, are written from the perspective of a supporter of the Bell/Lipset hypothesis (fellow political sociologist Seymour Martin Lipset as the other key architect). This reading is encouraged further by the fact that the critical objections included in the text are directly attacked and rejected by the editor himself; for example, in Part III, ostensibly devoted to the "Critique," one finds an essay by Rejai, W.L. Mason, and D. C. Beller that seeks to invalidate the "Dissenting View" of Joseph La Palombara.

Students of ideology theory will find this book useful primarily from a historical standpoint. If the articles are not meant to be representative of the debate as a whole, they do give the reader a good sense of the way in which it emerged and unfolded specifically in the social sciences. The purpose of this collection is to acquaint us with the political and intellectual context, the basic philosophical precepts, and the methodological discussions that developed out of the American post-war academic optimism about the de facto triumph of Western liberal democracy. This hope, it has turned out, was at best a premature projection and at worst merely another ideological maneuver. Raymond Aron, who predicted as early as 1955

the "Fin de l'âge idologique" (in T. W. Adorno and W. Dirks, eds., *Sociologica*, 1955), prefigured the "decline of ideology" thesis in his argument that the liberal welfare state of the industrialized countries was in the process of assuming global dominance as the most successful social order and in its course bring about the gradual fading of ideological struggles. The developing world, it was argued, required additional time but would ultimately catch up with modern civilization. The assumption was that advanced capitalist societies would inevitably raise people's material conditions, which would, equally inevitably, lessen political differences and strife by making large-scale fundamental criticism obsolete. Today, more than half a century later, the bankruptcy of the majority of Western states in the middle of the deepest economic crisis since 1929 cannot but strike one as rather hasty or even naïve.

There are in the main two kinds of criticism that have since been raised against the end of ideology thesis. One of these is the perspective prevalent in cultural theory and is exemplified perhaps by Slavoj Žižek, who routinely maintains that the very essence of ideology is the assumption of an outside of ideology. That is, the notion of a post-ideological time or place constitutes the ideological gesture *per se*. This argument, however, is usually employed in conjunction with a definition of ideology that is so expansive as to include all forms of symbolic mediation, which is notably not the concept used by the end-of-ideology theorists. Drawing on a more common notion of ideology, Bell and Lipset, along with their supporters, had in mind something fairly specific when they diagnosed the weakening of ideology: communism. In his 1966 essay, included in Rejais collection, Joseph La Palombara astutely remarks on this identification of ideology with Marxism (248). Further, Rejai, following Bell and Lipset would not accept Žižek's charge on the basis of the fact that by "the end of ideology" they never meant the complete vanishing of resistance and dissent but rather only its "decline." (This distinction has not, however, remained important in the contemporary discourse.)

The other criticism is the traditional Marxist position that the confidence in the historical victory of the existing social system is merely the ideal legitimation of the underlying capitalist mode of production and its central institution: bourgeois private property. Marx himself had defined ideology (in *The German Ideology*) as the philosophical denial of the role of class struggle in capitalism and therefore as the intellectual *apologia* of the *status quo*. According to this view, ideology is a necessary byproduct of capitalist society and finds its ultimate confirmation precisely in the prognosis advanced by the end-of-ideology theorists, namely that "class politics," i.e. revolutionary practice, has withered away. It is expressly the denial of the continued reality of class that serves the interests of one particular class, namely that of the ruling class. The Marxian approach, therefore, presents a direct attack on the Bell/Lipset hypothesis, whose advocates claim that their sociology is independent of any particular political agenda. While avowing to subscribe to the basic premise that economic conditions shape ideal mediations, these end-of-ideology thinkers ultimately deny the continued determining role of capitalist relations in the formation of discursive practices, including their own theories no doubt because they do not acknowledge the fundamental basis of capitalism: the reality of class. Curiously, then, Bell and Lipset's materialism turns out to be a rather unprincipled one. In this respect, more recent end-of-history philosophies, such as that of Francis Fukuyama (*The End of History and the Last Man*, 1992) are not very different.

Another critical angle that helps shed light on the work of the decline-of-ideology writers is one which explores the tensions internal to the conceptual apparatus developed by Bell and Lipset. Rejai summarizes this set of ideas in his introductory essay "Political Ideology: Theoretical and Comparative Perspectives." (This essay was reprinted in the first part of Rejais 1991 book *Political Ideologies: A Comparative Approach*, second edition 1995.) Explaining, as has since become common-place, that "definitions of ideology are legion"(2), he explores the cognitive, affective, evaluative, programmatic, and social-base "dimension" of the concept in order to offer

what he maintains is a neutral approach but actually shares much with the negative or pejorative one. According to Rejai, ideology is that which is not logical, not true, not complex, not descriptive but prescriptive, not free from particular interests, non-intellectual: "By political ideology is understood an emotion-laden, myth-saturated, action-related system of beliefs and value, about man and society, legitimacy and authority, acquired as a matter of routine and habitual reinforcement. The myths and values of ideology are communicated through symbols in a simplified, economical, and efficient manner. Ideological beliefs are more or less coherent, more or less articulate, more or less open to new evidence and information. Ideologies have a high potential for mass mobilization, manipulation, and control; in that sense, they are mobilized belief systems" (10). Predictably, he views fascism and communism as closely related representatives of such "mobilized belief systems" and describes the supposed liberal middle ground as inherently less susceptible to, or even lacking, such "extremism." With this framework, it is clear from the outset that the imagined hegemony of the non-ideological must entail the erosion of the ideological. One might therefore argue that there is a truism at the heart of the decline-of-ideology thesis.

More damagingly, today's reader cannot fail to notice that the book's heavy reliance on empirical validation undermines many of its own central claims. Many of the articles and the editor operate on the assumption that the thesis of the decline of ideology can be verified or disproved through empirical studies that can accurately measure the relative strength of ideological activity in different countries. Thus, Section II consists for the most part of statistical analyses that, while adding a series of qualifications, mostly provide support for the thesis of the waning of ideological conflict. Census data is marshaled, for example, to assess "degrees of consensus" (214) in a 1965 paper by Masaaki Takane, who equates the retreat of communism in Japan with a professionalization of academia. This tendency to conceive liberalism as non-political and realistic (as opposed to utopian) is, of course, not unique, and betrays the fact, expressed by Michael Novak in an 1968 essay (chapter 12), that "pragmatism,

too, has the characteristics and effects of an ideology" (302). The real limits of such a positivist trust in empirical evidence, however, become visible in historical retrospect. The Communist Party in Japan, for example, has witnessed a noticeable increase in popularity over the last few years, even since before the economic "downturn," and there has been a renewed interest in Karl Marx's writings. This, interestingly, is true of many the Western countries.

A. Hoogerwerf's 1965 paper on the Netherlands in chapter 5 is not as exuberant as some of the other essays in Part II. Hoogerwerf compares the election programs of the major parties to show that between 1948 and 1963 the major parties have moved steadily closer to a general agreement over fundamental questions such as the responsibility of government towards the public welfare. At the same time, his research demonstrates that there are still considerable differences in the ways the electorate perceives key issues such as income distribution, and these differences manifest themselves in the election programs and stand in contrast to the politicians' practical policy decisions. Hoogerwerf attributes this last finding to political alienation, which he in turn determines to be a product of a disjuncture between the technocracy and the people. He sees this tension as a threat to democracy, but his confidence that resolution might be in sight is relatively muffled.

Chapter 4, on the other hand, explores what is explicitly described as an exception to the real trend of the decline of ideology. Erik Allardt's paper on Finland (1964) corroborates Lipset's ideas about a general decrease of class struggle but offers Finland and its persistently strong Communist party as a "deviant case." The argument here is that the particular history of Finland and the specific role that the Communist party has traditionally played in the political landscape accounts for the fact that Leftist ideas continue to have a strong pull in Finland, while these Leftist ideas are also allegedly less radical than they once were. Allardt approaches the problem from two sides, claiming that communist ideology is both a mainstay in the country and an increasingly well-integrated political platform that has lost much of its former ideological force. This

allows him to maintain that Finland, after all, is not as exceptional as it may seem and actually conforms to the tendency of ideological decay, thus corroborating the Bell/Lipset thesis.

Of interest for the American readership is chapter 6, Robert E. Lane's 1965 article on "The United States: Politics of Affluence." This piece stands out mainly for its obvious misjudgments regarding the economic development under capitalism, in particular its reliance on the assumption that there is "no reason to anticipate a reversal of . . . [the continual economic growth]" (166). However, not only is the crisis of 1929 portrayed as the last serious economic crash, Lane also looks forward to an ever-increasing rapprochement between the citizens and the government as well as a lessening of religious and political differences. Indicators cited are an apparent rise in inter-personal trust and personal happiness as well as an increase in the individual's sense of control, and the receding of all forms of dogmatism. On the basis of opinion polls and surveys, he makes his case while discarding any counter-evidence with almost amusing elusiveness and pathos: "The headlines will not show this consensus, nor will the demonstrations at city hall or on the campus, but the ordinary man in the Age of Affluence is beginning to find some greater sense of hope and peace and self-assurance expressed in a less acrimonious political style" (204). Reading this, one might remark that the celebration of empirical evidence seems to end exactly where the data fails to confirm the hypothesis.

In this reviewer's assessment, the book's value is primarily historical. That is to say, the theory of the decline of radical politics and of the actualization of the promise of democracy and prosperity for all is not borne out in reality. However, this does not make a text like this irrelevant. The striking insight one gleans from its content is that the validity of an interpretation ultimately depends on the theoretical framework within which social facts are explained. The proponents of the theory were responding to actual developments such as the rise in real wages in the US at the time. However, their conclusion that capitalism properly regulated by the welfare state would continue automatically to produce growth that benefits ev-

eryone was not only mistaken but mistaken because it grew out of a mode of analysis that does not take economic structures as its starting point. It would be wrong to view the advocates of the thesis of the decline of ideology as nothing but academic mouthpieces of the liberal establishment or of the apotheosis of capitalism "with a human face" because what they perceived was an actual weakening of radicalism among the intelligentsia in the wake of the New Left and especially throughout the 1980's and 90's. Thus, when Lipset pronounced in 1960 that ideology, defined as a body of doctrines and as opposed to popular resistance, he responded to a real phenomenon, namely the distancing of the Western Left from Stalinism and traditional Marxism. However, his political biases and allegiances turned these trends into props for the justification of post-New Deal liberalism and the celebration of the existing society as "the good society itself in operation". He read the increase in the power of labor in the US as a lasting achievement and failed to anticipate the swinging of the pendulum since 1970, the return of laissez-faire capitalism and the far-reaching debilitation of US trade unions today. Lipset and Bell believed that "the ideological issues dividing left and right had been reduced to a little more than or a little less government ownership and economic planning" (48) and that "the democratic struggle will continue, but it will be a fight without ideologies, without red flags, without May Day parades" (ibid.). Mannheim, it seems, had distinguished correctly between ideology and utopia: ideas that serve to defend the status quo and ideas that seek to transcend it. The end-of-ideology theorists were most certainly not utopians.

Ariane Fischer
Temple University, Philadelphia

Philosophy of the Social Sciences: Philosophical theory and scientific practice
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Philosophy of the Social Sciences is a collection of essays in which the philosophical issues in the social sciences are examined with particular concern for how practicing social scientists work. The principle novelty of this collection is that the twenty essays form ordered pairs. Each of the ten chapters consists of a pair of essays, the first by a philosopher and the second a reply from a social (or socially minded) scientist. The exception to this is the final chapter where the reply too comes from a philosopher: evidently, the final word must go to the philosophers. The book is divided into three sections; firstly, "The Basic Problems of Sociality" focuses on ontology and agency; secondly, "Laws and Explanation in the Social Sciences" focuses on the metaphysics of social science; and thirdly, "How Philosophy and the Social Sciences Can Enrich Each Other", presents three chapters that discuss co-operation, virtue theory and the hermeneutic circle respectively, instead of having a unifying theme.

   As explained in the book's introduction, the stated rationale for this format is to meet "a real need for interaction between the two communities" (1). However an initial problem would seem to be that the chapters are *ordered* pairs: we always read a social scientist's commentary on the philosopher's essay. There are no chapters where a philosopher comments on a social scientist's offering. Given the aim of the book, it is unclear why the 'interaction' only goes one way.

   Never the less, the key question to ask about this collection is whether the essays in each chapter serve as examples of a productive interaction between the two disciplines. Indeed, how the essays interact with each other is, so far as this review is concerned, of more interest than how we judge them as contributions to the philosophy of social science.

In what follows I discuss the three sections of the book out of order. I examine the first and the third sections before looking at the second section. The reason, which will become apparent, is that while the first and third sections provide examples of successful interaction between philosophers and social scientists, the second section does this less well.

In the first section of the book, which deals with social ontology, the replies make interesting contributions to the agenda as set by the philosophical essays. It is instructive to note how they do this; the first two chapters illustrate different ways in which this contribution can be made.

The first chapter is made up of an essay by John Searle concerning "Language and Social Ontology" and a reply by Mark Turner. Searle presents the kind of arguments that will be immediately recognizable to anyone familiar with his *Construction of Social Reality* (The Free Press, 1995). Searle's substantive conclusion is that institutional facts—facts about social institutions—are created and maintained by declarative speech acts; such as, for example, "I now pronounce you husband and wife" (18), or "Let there be a corporation!" (27). In his reply Turner does not make Searle's conclusion the focus of his argument. Instead he extends what he sees as Searle's main methodological point, namely that we should not take language for granted, that is to say, we should not forget that language is "the fundamental social institution" (25). Turner argues that Searle's contention that it is wrong to take language for granted generalises to encompass a good deal of other aspects of sociality that should not be taken for granted either; including for example, intentionality, personal identity, roles and narrative (30). Turner's claim is that Searle's argument shows us how philosophical work that explores these notions helps us to avoid tempting but fallacious reasoning in the social sciences. What Searle does for language, Turner hopes can be done for other aspects of sociality.

Whether or not we judge Searle or Turner's arguments to be successful, it is more important for this discussion to note that Turner's reply illustrates one way in which philosophy and the social sciences

can interact. Turner draws out and extends a methodological implication of Searle's work: this is clearly valuable, even though Turner does not engage substantively with Searle.

A very different kind of interaction can be seen in the second chapter. In this chapter Michael Bratman discusses "Shared Agency", and the reply is supplied by Pierre Demeulenaere. Bratman's argument begins with the idea that intentional and norm-guided planning is characteristic of individual agents. He extends this idea by arguing that the individual's psychological resources which make such planning possible are sufficient resources out of which to construct a genuine notion of shared intentions and agency for small groups of individuals. The conclusion being that shared intentions and agency is emergent.

Demeulenaere does an excellent job of taking Bratman to task over the plausibility of his argument's assumptions. Demeulenaere explains: "[Bratman's] argument rests on a series of metaphors like 'bottom,' 'level,' 'emergence' and others of similar ilk that oppose the locus of the 'individual' and the locus of the 'social'. Since he intends to examine the nature of both individual and shared intention "under a philosophical microscope" it should be noted straightforwardly that such a microscope has very conceptual lenses that should themselves be examined under a sociological microscope" (60). The argument that Demeulenaere develops is a superb demonstration of how sociological insights can inform philosophical reasoning; helping to avoid unsophisticated, and more importantly, unsound, premises.

Again, the point I wish to make here does not concern the substantive content of Bratman or Demeulenaere's arguments; rather I simply note the way this chapter illustrates a second way that philosophy and the social sciences can fruitfully interact with each other. The general lesson is that philosophical arguments sometimes involve empirical premises, especially if they purport to be relevant to the social sciences and assessing the soundness of such premises is unlikely to be a matter of philosophical expertise.

Much the same can be said about the third chapter in the first section (Diego Rios replies to Philip Pettit's discussion of "The Re-

ality of Group Agents"); Although on this occasion, while Rios does engage very well with the substance of Pettit's argument, too much in the reply is merely gestured towards and not enough is followed up in detail.

Similarly, in the third section of the book the chapters (ch. 8–10) are successfully put forward as examples of "How Philosophy and the Social Sciences Can Enrich Each Other". Werner Guth & Hartmut Kliemt's reply to James Woodward's "Why Do People Cooperate as Much as They Do?"; Steven Luke's reply to Ernest Sosa's "Situations Against Virtues" and David-Hillel Ruben's reply to C. Mantzavinos's "What Kind of Problem is the Hermeneutic Circle" all engage with the philosophical essays by challenging the soundness of their assumptions and premises.

It is perhaps to be expected however that the first and third sections of the book succeed in demonstrating—in my opinion very well—how philosophy and the social sciences can interact. The reason is that they take on issues that are directly relevant to the practice of social science. It is no great surprise that essays by philosophers about topics such as group agents or co-operation provide material that social scientists can productively engage with. It is less clear that the same expectation should be held for the second section of the book. The second section, called "Laws and Explanation in the Social Sciences", is concerned with metaphysical issues in social science. And indeed it is this section where some of the essays and replies can be seen to come apart.

The starkest example of this is chapter 4 and concerns David Papineau's essay "Physicalism and the Human Sciences". In this essay Papineau seeks draw out some methodological implications, for the social sciences, of a commitment to physicalism and associated reductionist theses. His worry is that the specific concerns of social scientists regarding their purported laws are independent of whether or not those laws are physically reducible, that is, the question of reducibility just does not seem to affect everyday social scientific practice. As a result he notes that "a purely *in principle requirement of reducibility* to physics would seem to leave plenty of room

for human sciences that *in practice owe nothing to physical theory*" (112, my emphasis).

Despite this worry Papineau goes on to argue that there are implications of physicalism that are practically relevant for social science. He claims that consideration of whether particular reductions are in principle possible "can be a crucial guide to the prospects for further research" (122). The reason being that the in principle question is supposed to inform social scientists about what to look for and what to expect; in particular, whether it is "sensible to seek a nexus of interconnected causal laws" (122). Now it seems to me at least that the interesting question to ask of Papineau's essay is whether thinking through one's metaphysical commitments to physicalism really can be a "crucial guide", given the initial worry that the social sciences "in practice owe nothing to physical theory". The heart of Papineau's argument is that such thinking can.

The unfortunate problem is that Papineau's commentators, Robert G. Shulman and Ian Shapiro, fail to appreciate this. They criticise the claim that reductions to physical theory should be actively sought. Their arguments attack the contention that there have been significant reductive achievements and question whether such reductions could be expected to be helpful, concluding that trying to achieve reductions is, in fact, deeply unhelpful. Quoting Shulman and Shapiro, "the philosophical argument loses relevance for us . . . the relevant reducing theories have not been found and we have no idea what they might be or how they might affect our empirical results. . . . proposed reducing theories . . . are inimical to contemporary research" (127).

While they might make many valid points, their points are directed at the wrong target as Papineau is not advocating the kind of reductive program that they criticise. Shulman and Shapiro's reply fails to engage with Papineau's essay because it misses the point. What is the significance of this?—that it is hard to sell metaphysics to social scientists? That is too patronising. A better interpretation is more like that suggested by Papineau's worry: that social sciences, in practice, owe nothing to metaphysical theory.

That metaphysics is at best only a minor concern for social scientists is I think born out in all the chapters in the second section. For instance, the replies from James Alt and Jack Knight to the respective essays by Sandra Mitchell ("Complexity and Explanation in the Social Sciences") and Daniel Little ("The Heterogeneous Social") both emphasise a re-prioritising of the philosophers' concerns. In the case of Mitchell's essay, Alt's reply suggests focusing on well-defined models rather than admittedly complex actual processes, and, in the case of Little's essay, Knight questions whether social scientists really need to embrace the methodological implications of Little's arguments. In both these chapters the overriding sense is that the philosophers' arguments don't speak to the social scientists' concerns.

However it is the last chapter in section two that best shows how the essay and reply can come apart through differing priorities. Here Gerd Gigerenzer provides a reply to Nancy Cartwright's essay "What Is This Thing Called 'Efficacy'?". The problem Cartwright tackles is about the often undefended assumption that the results from randomised controlled trials (RCTs) genuinely do supply us with evidence that a particular policy (her examples concern education policy) will be effective in particular situations. She argues that, in fact, a significant amount of work needs to be done to justify the assumption that RCT results count as evidence in non-experimental situations. More precisely the work that needs to be done should give us reasons for believing that the experimentally observed effect would endure across changed conditions, that it really is a genuine effect and is not "piggybacking in a misleading way" (199) on the real effect, and that there is an account of the relationship between the magnitudes of the causes and the effect (for example, whether it is linear or plateaus after a certain effect size has been reached). Such reasons, so Cartwright argues, can be supplied by robust theory describing the mechanism of the intervention in question, but without theory results from RCTs are entirely redundant for policy making.

As Cartwright admits, these are hard requirements to meet in a policy context, since it is by no means clear that such theory is available; the mechanisms by which policy interventions have effects are diabolically complex. There are likely to be many causes that may or may not cluster together to produce or negate the effect in non-experimental situations—think of Mackie's INUS conditions. To my mind, social scientists are well placed to offer help with theory building here and to inform and improve policy; but that is not the issue taken up in Gigerenzer's reply.

Gigerenzer describes the way that political interests shape health policy in relation to cancer screening in the US and Germany; the (unfortunate) result being that RCT evidence is ignored. His aim is to highlight the contribution of the sociological factors to policy making, in contrast to Cartwright's focus on the epistemic factors. Clearly the sociology of policy is an interesting issue, especially when particular political factors seem to be acting to undermine the evidence-base of a policy; but equally clearly it is just a different issue from Cartwright's. It is tempting to say that Gigerenzer's reply fails to be a useful contribution, because it fails to engage with Cartwright's essay. However I think it is instructive; it serves to illustrate again the different priorities of social scientists.

To conclude, examples have been given above of chapters where the social scientist's replies engage substantively with the philosophical issues, where they extend and elaborate on the issues and also where they simply miss the point. The Cartwright-Gigerenzer chapter is an example of another kind of relationship, it is an example of the differing priorities of philosophers and social scientists.

In his introduction and epilogue C. Mantzavinos repeats the statement that this book should foster an interaction between philosophy and the social sciences, and that the two benefit from such an interaction. There are many chapters in this book that serve as examples of this certainly the majority of chapters. It is also noteworthy however that this interaction is achieved best when philosophers use their analytical tools to address the social scientists disciplinary

interests. If we take the aim of this book seriously, then we should starting talking about philosophy for social science.

Andrew Turner
University of Nottingham

About the Contributors

Paal Antonsen is a PhD student in philosophy at Trinity College Dublin. Before that he studied philosophy at the University of Bergen, Norway. His main interests are aesthetics and philosophy of language and logic.

Paul Earlie holds a BA in English Literature and French from Trinity College, Dublin. Currently a doctoral student in French at Balliol College, University of Oxford, his thesis examines the relationship between Derrida's reading of Freud and the genesis and evolution of deconstruction across the breadth of his career. Paul is spending the current academic year as a visiting student at the Ecole Normale Supérieure in Paris.

Ariane Fischer is currently Assistant Professor in the Intellectual Heritage Department at Temple University in Philadelphia. Ariane grew up in East Germany (formerly GDR). She received degrees from the Free University of Berlin and The Ohio State University, and her doctorate from the George Washington University in Washington, D.C. Her research interests include critical social theory, German and continental philosophy, cultural theory, Marxism, and feminism. Her publications include: "The Critique of Philosophy *qua* Mental Labor in *The German Ideology*." *Marx-Engels Jahrbuch* 2008: 33-67 (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2008); and "Settling Accounts with the Sociology of Knowledge: The Frankfurt School, Mannheim, and the Marxian Critique of Mental Labor" (*South Atlantic Quarterly* 208, Spring 2009), Special Issue on Intellectual Labor, edited by Timothy Brennan and Keya Ganguly: 331-363.

Jacob Vivian Pearce holds a Bachelor of Arts (Hons, first class) in Philosophy and Social Theory and a Bachelor of Science in Physics, both from the University of Melbourne, Australia. He is currently a PhD Candidate in History and Philosophy of Science at the University of Melbourne. Jacob's research is examining the origins of

modern cosmology in philosophical perspective. His interests include the history and philosophy of science (especially modern physics); the history of philosophy (especially Kant and Nietzsche); and the history of medicine. Jacob also works part-time as a Research Fellow at the Australian Council for Educational Research in the mathematics and science team.

Dr. Janae Sholtz specializes in continental philosophy; feminist philosophy; social and political philosophy; and aesthetics. She is an assistant professor at Alvernia University, Reading, Pennsylvania and taught at Southwestern University, Georgetown, TX for a year prior to her current appointment. Dr. Sholtz obtained her doctorate from University of Memphis in 2009. Her research centers on the themes of art and the political in the work of Martin Heidegger and Gilles Deleuze. She is interested in notions of intersectionality, stemming from her work in feminism, and conceptualizing the Deleuzian notion of affect as the basis for a creative, intersubjective understanding of a people to come.

Erik Sorem is a PhD candidate at UCD School of Philosophy under the supervision of Dr. James OShea. His dissertation is entitled, "An Alternative Explanation of Mind in Nature: Lessons from Searle and Lonergan." Mr. Sorem received his B.A. in Liberal Arts from Thomas Aquinas College in 2003, which included a double major in philosophy and theology and a double minor in mathematics and science. In 2005, he completed his M.A. in philosophy at UCD. He has delivered several papers related to philosophy of mind at numerous conferences, including University of Edinburgh's Philosophy Conference and the American Philosophical Association's Pacific Meeting. Mr. Sorem also had the honor of forming a successful philosophical society in California called *Reason Together*. While in California, he spent a year teaching philosophy and logic as a lecturer at Fullerton College, but has since returned to Ireland to complete his dissertation and to continue tutoring philosophy.

Andrew Stephenson is in the final year of his DPhil, which is on the foundations of Kant's model of the human mind and its relevance for the contemporary debate over the metaphysical constitution and content of mental states. He has been a graduate student at Merton College, Oxford, since 2006, and before that took his undergraduate degree at Cardiff. He is spending the current academic year as a visiting student at the Stiftung Maximilianeum, Munich, and he will take up the Laming Junior Fellowship at the Queen's College, Oxford, in October 2011, which is a post-doctoral research position that will involve spending more time in Germany. Though Andrew's specialism is now Kant and philosophy of mind, he has always had a keen fascination with the neat and logically informed but outrageously ambitious arguments in analytic philosophy of religion, and here he has a modest crack at the big one.

Andrew Turner completed his first degree in philosophy at the University of Nottingham, and then moved into the social science faculty. He is currently a PhD student at the University of Nottingham's Institute for Science & Society, funded by a studentship from the Sociology of Health & Illness Foundation. His research examines aspects of the relationship between scientific evidence and medical knowledge, focusing on placebo effects and the notion of 'evidence-based medicine'.

Timothy Williamson has been the Wykeham Professor of Logic at Oxford since 2000. His books include *Vagueness* (Routledge, 1994), *Knowledge and its Limits* (Oxford, 2000), and *The Philosophy of Philosophy* (Blackwell, 2007). He has also published numerous articles on epistemology, philosophy of language, philosophy of logic and metaphysics. He taught at Trinity College Dublin, from 1980–1988.

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Perspectives Journal
UCD School of Philosophy
Newman Building
Belfield, Dublin 4
Ireland

perpectives@ucd.ie
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