PHIL 300: INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY



Christian Bauer
Folsom Lake College

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PHIL 300: Introduction to Philosophy (Bauer)

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1.1.1: What is an Argument?

This is an introductory textbook in logic and critical thinking. Both logic and critical thinking centrally involve the analysis and assessment of arguments. “Argument” is a word that has multiple distinct meanings, so it is important to be clear from the start about the sense of the word that is relevant to the study of logic. In one sense of the word, an argument is a heated exchange of differing views as in the following:

> Sally: Abortion is morally wrong and those who think otherwise are seeking to justify murder!
>
> Bob: Abortion is not morally wrong and those who think so are right-wing bigots who are seeking to impose their narrow-minded views on all the rest of us!

Sally and Bob are having an argument in this exchange. That is, they are each expressing conflicting views in a heated manner. However, that is not the sense of “argument” with which logic is concerned. Logic concerns a different sense of the word “argument.” An argument, in this sense, is a reason for thinking that a statement, claim or idea is true. For example:

> Sally: Abortion is morally wrong because it is wrong to take the life of an innocent human being, and a fetus is an innocent human being.

In this example Sally has given an argument against the moral permissibility of abortion. That is, she has given us a reason for thinking that abortion is morally wrong. The **conclusion** of the argument is the first four words, “abortion is morally wrong.” But whereas in the first example Sally was simply asserting that abortion is wrong (and then trying to put down those who support it), in this example she is offering a reason for why abortion is wrong.

We can (and should) be more precise about our definition of an argument. But before we can do that, we need to introduce some further terminology that we will use in our definition. As I’ve already noted, the conclusion of Sally’s argument is that abortion is morally wrong. But the reason for thinking the conclusion is true is what we call the **premise**. So we have two parts of an argument: the premise and the conclusion. Typically, a conclusion will be supported by two or more premises. Both premises and conclusions are statements. A **statement** is a type of sentence that can be true or false and corresponds to the grammatical category of a “declarative sentence.” For example, the sentence,

> The Nile is a river in northeastern Africa

is a statement. Why? Because it makes sense to inquire whether it is true or false. (In this case, it happens to be true.) But a sentence is still a statement even if it is false. For example, the sentence,

> The Yangtze is a river in Japan

is still a statement; it is just a false statement (the Yangtze River is in China). In contrast, none of the following sentences are statements:

> Please help yourself to more casserole
>
> Don’t tell your mother about the surprise
>
> Do you like Vietnamese pho?

The reason that none of these sentences are statements is that it doesn’t make sense to ask whether those sentences are true or false (rather, they are requests or commands, and questions, respectively).

So, to reiterate: all arguments are composed of premises and conclusions, which are both types of statements. The premises of the argument provide a reason for thinking that the conclusion is true. And arguments typically involve more than one premise. A standard way of capturing the structure of an argument is by numbering the premises and conclusion. For example, recall Sally’s argument against abortion:

> Abortion is morally wrong because it is wrong to take the life of an innocent human being, and a fetus is an innocent human being.

We could capture the structure of that argument like this:

1. It is morally wrong to take the life of an innocent human being
2. A fetus is an innocent human being
3. Therefore, abortion is morally wrong

By convention, the last numbered statement (also denoted by the "therefore") is the conclusion and the earlier numbered statements are the premises. This is what we call putting an argument into **standard argument form**. We can now give a more precise definition of an argument. An **argument** is a set of statements, some of which (the premises) attempt to provide a reason for thinking that some other statement (the conclusion) is true. Although arguments are typically given in order to convince or persuade someone of the conclusion, the argument itself is independent of one's attempt to use it to convince or persuade. For example, I have just given you this argument not in an attempt to convince you that abortion is morally wrong, but as an illustration of what an argument is. Later on in this chapter and in this book we will learn some techniques of evaluating arguments, but for now the goal is to learn to identify an argument, including its premises and conclusion(s). It is important to be able to identify arguments and understand their structure, whether or not you agree with conclusion of the argument. In the next section I will provide some techniques for being able to identify arguments.

Exercise

Which of the following sentences are statements and which are not?

1. No one understands me but you.
2. Alligators are on average larger than crocodiles.
3. Is an alligator a reptile or a mammal?
4. An alligator is either a reptile or a mammal.
5. Don't let any reptiles into the house.
6. You may kill any reptile you see in the house.
7. East Africans are not the best distance runners.
8. Obama is not a Democrat.
9. Some humans have wings.
10. Some things with wings cannot fly.
11. Was Obama born in Kenya or Hawaii?
12. Oh no! A grizzly bear!
13. Meet me in St. Louis.
14. We met in St. Louis yesterday.
15. I do not want to meet a grizzly bear in the wild.

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1.1.2: Identifying Arguments

The best way to identify whether an argument is present is to ask whether there is a statement that someone is trying to establish as true by basing it on some other statement. If so, then there is an argument present. If not, then there isn't. Another thing that can help in identifying arguments is knowing certain keywords or phrases that are premise indicators or conclusion indicators. For example, recall Sally's abortion argument:

> Abortion is morally wrong because it is wrong to take the life of an innocent human being, and a fetus is an innocent human being.

The word "because" here is a premise indicator. That is, "because" indicates that what follows is a reason for thinking that abortion is morally wrong. Here is another example:

I know that the student plagiarized since I found the exact same sentences on a website and the website was published more than a year before the student wrote the paper.

In this example, the word "since" is a **premise indicator** because what follows it is a statement that is clearly intended to be a reason for thinking that the student plagiarized (i.e., a premise). Notice that in these two cases, the premise indicators "because" and "since" are interchangeable: I could have used "because" in place of "since" or "since" in the place of "because" and the meaning of the sentences would have been the same. In addition to premise indicators, there are also conclusion indicators. Conclusion indicators mark that what follows is the conclusion of an argument. For example,

> Bob-the-arsonist has been dead for a year, so Bob-the-arsonist didn't set the fire at the East Lansing Starbucks last week.

In this example, the word "so" is a **conclusion indicator** because what follows it is a statement that someone is trying to establish as true (i.e., a conclusion). Here is another example of a conclusion indicator:

A poll administered by Gallup (a respected polling company) showed candidate x to be substantially behind candidate y with only a week left before the vote, therefore candidate y will probably not win the election.

In this example, the word "therefore" is a conclusion indicator because what follows it is a statement that someone is trying to establish as true (i.e., a conclusion). As before, in both of these cases the conclusion indicators "so" and "therefore" are interchangeable: I could have used "so" in place of "therefore" or "therefore" in the place of "so" and the meaning of the sentences would have been the same.

Table 1 contains a list of some common premise and conclusion indicators:

Premise Indicators	Conclusion Indicators
since	therefore
because	so
for	hence
as	thus
given that	implies that
seeing that	consequently
for the reason that	it follows that
is shown by the fact that	we may conclude that

Although these words and phrases can be used to identify the premises and conclusions of arguments, they are not failsafe methods of doing so. Just because a sentence contains them does not mean that you are dealing with an argument. This can easily be shown by examples like these:

> I have been running competitively since 1999.

> I am so happy to have finally finished that class.

Although “since” can function as a premise indicator and although “so” can function as a conclusion indicator, neither one is doing so here. This shows that you can’t simply mindlessly use occurrences of these words in sentences to show that there is an argument being made. Rather, we have to rely on our understanding of the English sentence in order to determine whether an argument is being made or not. Thus, the best way to determine whether an
argument is present is by asking the question: Is there a statement that someone is trying to establish as true or explain why it is true by basing it on some other statement? If so, then there is an argument present. If not, then there isn’t. Notice that if we apply this method to the above examples, we will see that there is no argument present because there is no statement that someone is trying to establish as true by basing it on some other statement. For example, the sentence “I have been running competitively since 1999” just contains one statement, not two. But arguments always require at least two separate statements—one premise and one conclusion, so it cannot possibly be an argument.

Another way of explaining why these occurrences of “so” and “since” do not indicate that an argument is present is by noting that both premise indicators and conclusion indicators are, grammatically, conjunctions. A grammatical conjunction is a word that connects two separate statements. So, if a word or term is truly being used as a premise or conclusion indicator, it must connect two separate statements. Thus, if “since” were really functioning as a premise indicator in the above example then what followed it would be a statement. But “1999” is not a statement at all. Likewise, in the second example “so” is not being used as a conclusion indicator because it is not conjoining two separate statements. Rather, it is being used to modify the extent of “happy.” In contrast, if I were to say “Tom was sleeping, so he couldn’t have answered the phone,” then “so” is being used as a conclusion indicator. In this case, there are clearly two separate statements (“Tom was sleeping” and “Tom couldn’t have answered the phone”) and one is being used as the basis for thinking that the other is true.

If there is any doubt about whether a word is truly a premise/conclusion indicator or not, you can use the substitution test. Simply substitute another word or phrase from the list of premise indicators or conclusion indicators and see if the resulting sentence still makes sense. If it does, then you are probably dealing with an argument. If it doesn’t, then you probably aren’t. For example, we can substitute “it follows that” for “so” in the Bob-the-arsonist example:

> Bob-the-arsonist has been dead for a year, it follows that Bob-the-arsonist didn’t set the fire at the East Lansing Starbucks last week.

However, we cannot substitute “because” for “so” in the so-happy-I-finished-that-class example:

> I am because happy to have finally finished that class.

Obviously, in the latter case the substitution of one conclusion indicator for another makes the sentence meaningless, which means that the “so” that occurred originally wasn’t functioning as a conclusion indicator.

Exercise

Which of the following are arguments? If it is an argument, identify the conclusion of the argument.

1. The woman in the hat is not a witch since witches have long noses and she doesn’t have a long nose.
2. I have been wrangling cattle since before you were old enough to tie your own shoes.
3. Albert is angry with me so he probably won’t be willing to help me wash the dishes.
4. First I washed the dishes and then I dried them.
5. If the road wasn’t icy, the car wouldn’t have slid off the turn.
6. Albert isn’t a fireman and he isn’t a fisherman either.
7. Are you seeing that rhinoceros over there? It is huge!
8. The fact that obesity has become a problem in the U.S. is shown by the fact that obesity rates have risen significantly over the past four decades.
9. Bob showed me a graph with the rising obesity rates and I was very surprised to see how much they’ve risen.
10. Albert isn’t a fireman because Albert is a Greyhound, which is a kind of dog, and dogs can’t be firemen.
11. Charlie and Violet are dogs and since dogs don’t sweat, it is obvious that Charlie and Violet don’t sweat.
12. The reason I forgot to lock the door is that I was distracted by the clown riding a unicycle down our street while singing Lynyrd Skynyrd’s “Simple Man.”
13. What Bob told you is not the real reason that he missed his plane to Denver.

14. Samsung stole some of Apple's patents for their smartphones, so Apple stole some of Samsung's patents back in retaliation.
15. No one who has ever gotten frostbite while climbing K2 has survived to tell about it, therefore no one ever will.

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1.1.3: Arguments vs. Explanations

So far I have defined arguments in terms of premises and conclusions, where the premises are supposed to provide a reason (support, evidence) for accepting the conclusion. Many times the goal of giving an argument is simply to establish that the conclusion is true. For example, when I am trying to convince someone that obesity rates are rising in the U.S. I may cite evidence such as studies from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the National Institute of Health (NIH). The studies I cite would function as premises for the conclusion that obesity rates are rising. For example:

> We know that obesity is on the rise in the U.S. because multiple studies carried out by the CDC and NIH have consistently shown a rise in obesity over the last four decades.

We could put this simple argument into standard form like this:

1. Multiple studies by the CDC and NIH have consistently shown a rise in obesity over the last four decades.
2. Therefore, obesity is on the rise in the U.S.

The standard form argument clearly distinguishes the premise from the conclusion and shows how the conclusion is supposed to be supported by the evidence offered in the premise. Again, the goal of this simple argument would be to convince someone that the conclusion is true. However, sometimes we already know that a statement or claim is true and we are trying to establish why it is true rather than that it is true. An argument that attempts to show why its conclusion is true is an **explanation**. Contrast the previous example with the following:

> The reason that the rate of obesity is on the rise in the U.S. is that the foods we most often consume over the past four decades have increasingly contained high levels of sugar and low levels of dietary fiber. Since eating foods high in sugar and low in fiber triggers the insulin system to start storing those calories as fat, it follows that people who consume foods high in sugar and low in fiber will tend to store more of the calories consumed as fat.

This passage gives an explanation for why obesity is on the rise in the U.S. Unlike the earlier example, here it is taken for granted that obesity is on the rise in the U.S. That is the claim whose truth we are trying to explain. We can put the obesity explanation into standard form just like any other argument. In order to do this, I will make some paraphrases of the premises and conclusion of the argument (for more on how to do this, see section 1.5 below).

1. Over the past four decades, Americans have increasingly consumed foods high in sugar and low in fiber.
2. Consuming foods high in sugar and low in fat triggers the insulin system to start storing those calories as fat.
3. When people store more calories as fat, they tend to become obese.
4. Therefore, the rate of obesity is on the rise in the U.S.

Notice that in this explanation the premises (1-3) attempt to give a reason for why the conclusion is true, rather than a reason for thinking that the conclusion is true. That is, in an explanation we assume that what we are trying to explain (i.e., the conclusion) is true. In this case, the premises are supposed to show why we should expect or predict that the conclusion is true. Explanations often give us an understanding of why the conclusion is true. We can think of explanations as a type of argument, we just have to distinguish two different types of argument: those that attempt to establish that their conclusion is true (arguments), and those that attempt to establish why their conclusion is true (explanations).

Exercise

Which of the following is an explanation and which is an argument? Identify the main conclusion of each argument or explanation. (Remember if the premise(s) seems to be establishing that the conclusion is true, it is an argument, but if the premise(s) seems to be establishing why the conclusion is true, it is an explanation.)

1. Wanda rode the bus today because her car was in the shop.
2. Since Wanda doesn't have enough money in her bank account, she has not yet picked up her car from the shop.
3. Either Bob or Henry rode the bus to work today. But it wasn't Henry because I saw him riding his bike to work. Therefore, it was Bob.
4. It can't be snowing right now since it only snows when it is 32 degrees or below and right now it is 40 degrees.
5. The reason some people with schizophrenia hear voices in their head is that the cognitive mechanism that monitors their own

self-talk is malfunctioning and they attribute their own self-talk to some external source.
6. Fracking should be allowed because, although it does involve some environmental risk, it reduces our dependence on foreign oil and there is much greater harm to the environment due to foreign oil drilling than there is due to fracking.
7. Wanda could not have ridden the bus today because today is a city-wide holiday and the bus service is not operating.
8. The Tigers lost their star pitcher due to injury over the weekend, therefore the Tigers will not win their game against the Pirates.
9. No one living in Pompeii could have escaped before the lava from Mt. Vesuvius hit. The reason is simple: the lava was flowing too fast and there was nowhere to go to escape it in time.
10. The reason people's allergies worsen when they move to Cincinnati is that the pollen count in Cincinnati is higher than almost anywhere else in the surrounding area.

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1.1.4: More Complex Argument Structures

So far we have seen that an argument consists of a premise (typically more than one) and a conclusion. However, very often arguments and explanations have a more complex structure than just a few premises that directly support the conclusion. For example, consider the following argument:

No one living in Pompeii could have survived the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius. The reason is simple: the lava was flowing too fast and there was nowhere to go to escape it in time. Therefore, this account of the eruption, which claims to have been written by an eyewitness living in Pompeii, was not actually written by an eyewitness.

The **main conclusion** of this argument—the statement that depends on other statements as evidence but doesn't itself provide any evidence for any other statement—is:

A. This account of the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius was not actually written by an eyewitness.

However, the argument's structure is more complex than simply having a couple of premises that provide evidence directly for the conclusion. Rather, some statement provides evidence directly for the main conclusion, but that statement itself is supported by another statement. To determine the structure of an argument, we must determine which statements support which. We can use our premise and conclusion indicators to help with this. For example, the passage contains the phrase, "the reason is..." which is a premise indicator, and it also contains the conclusion indicator, "therefore." That conclusion indicator helps us to identify the main conclusion, but the more important thing to see is that statement A does not itself provide evidence or support for any of the other statements in the argument, which is the clearest reason why statement A is the main conclusion of the argument. The next question we must answer is: which statement most directly supports A? What most directly supports A is:

B. No one living in Pompeii could have survived the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius.

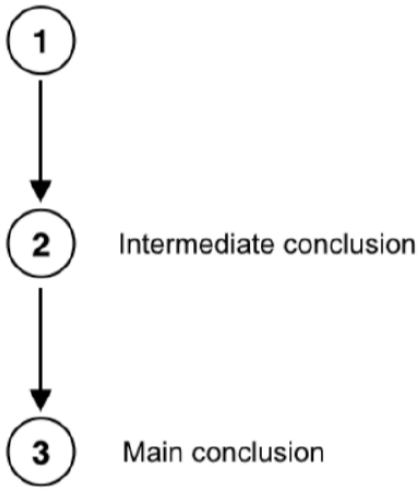
However, there is also a reason offered in support of B. That reason is that:

C. The lava from Mt. Vesuvius was flowing too fast and there was nowhere for someone living in Pompeii to go in order to escape it in time.

So the main conclusion (A) is directly supported by B, and B is supported by C. Since B acts as a premise for the main conclusion but is also itself the conclusion of further premises, we refer to B as an intermediate conclusion. The important thing to recognize here is that one and the same statement can act as both a premise and a conclusion. Statement B is a premise that supports the main conclusion (A), but it is also itself a conclusion that follows from C. Here is how we would put this complex argument into standard form (using numbers this time, as we always do when putting an argument into standard form):

1. The lava from Mt. Vesuvius was flowing too fast and there was nowhere for someone living in Pompeii to go in order to escape it in time.
2. Therefore, no one living in Pompeii could have survived the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius. (from 1)
3. Therefore, this account of the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius was not actually written by an eyewitness. (from 2)

Notice that at the end of statement 2 I have written in parentheses "from 1" (and likewise at the end of statement 3 I have written "from 2"). This is a shorthand way of saying: "this statement follows from statement 1." We will use this convention as a way of keeping track of the structure of the argument. It may also help to think about the structure of an argument spatially, as figure 1 shows:



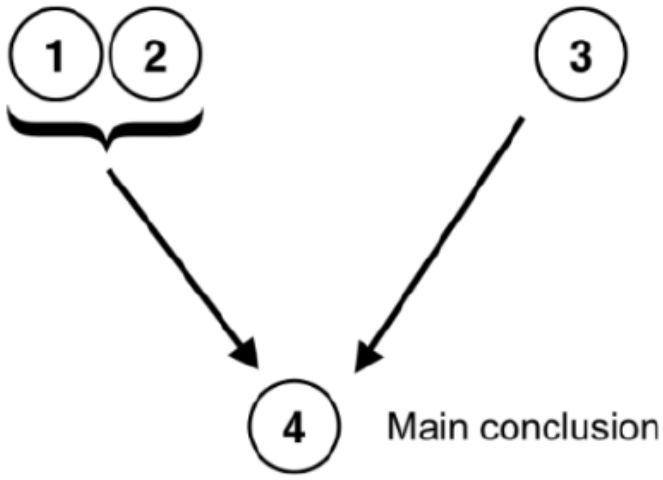
The main argument here (from 2 to 3) contains a subargument, in this case the argument from 1 to 2. A **subargument**, as the term suggests, is a part of an argument that provides indirect support for the main argument. The **main argument** is simply the argument whose conclusion is the main conclusion.

Another type of structure that arguments can have is when two or more premises provide direct but independent support for the conclusion. Here is an example of an argument with that structure: I know that Wanda rode her bike to work today because when she arrived at work she had her right pant leg rolled up (which cyclists do in order to keep their pants legs from getting caught in the chain). Moreover, our coworker, Bob, who works in accounting, saw her riding towards work at 7:45 am.

The conclusion of this argument is “Wanda rode her bike to work today” and there are two premises that provide independent support for it: the fact that Wanda had her pant leg cuffed and the fact that Bob saw her riding her bike. Here is the argument in standard form:

1. Wanda arrived at work with her right pant leg rolled up.
2. Cyclists often roll up their right pant leg.
3. Bob saw Wanda riding her bike towards work at 7:45.
4. Therefore, Wanda rode her bike to work today. (from 1-2, 3 independently)

Again, notice that next to statement 4 of the argument I have written the premises from which that conclusion follows. In this case, in order to avoid any ambiguity, I have noted that the support for the conclusion comes independently from statements 1 and 2, on the one hand, and from statement 3, on the other hand. It is important to point out that an argument or subargument can be supported by one or more premises. We see this in the present argument since the conclusion (4) is supported jointly by 1 and 2, and singly by 3. As before, we can represent the structure of this argument spatially, as figure 2 shows:



There are endless different argument structures that can be generated from these few simple patterns. At this point, it is important to understand that arguments can have these different structures and that some arguments will be longer and more complex than others. Determining the structure of very complex arguments is a skill that takes some time to master. Even so, it may help to remember that any argument structure ultimately traces back to some combination of these.

Exercise

Write the following arguments in standard form and show how the argument is structured using a diagram like the ones I have used in this section.

1. There is nothing wrong with prostitution because there is nothing wrong with consensual sexual and economic interactions between adults. Moreover, since there's no difference between a man who goes on a blind date with a woman, buys her dinner and then has sex with her and a man who simply pays a woman for sex, that is another reason for why there is nothing wrong with prostitution.
2. Prostitution is wrong because it involves women who have typically been sexually abused as children. We know that most of these women have been abused from multiple surveys done with women who have worked in prostitution and that show a high percentage of self-reported sexual abuse as children.
3. There was someone in this cabin recently because there was warm water in the tea kettle and because there was wood still smoldering in the fireplace. But the person couldn't have been Tim because Tim has been with me the whole time. Therefore, there must be someone else in these woods.
4. It is possible to be blind and yet run in the Olympic Games since Marla Runyan did it at the 2000 Sydney Olympics.
5. The train was late because it had to take a longer, alternate route since the bridge was out.
6. Israel is not safe if Iran gets nuclear missiles since Iran has threatened multiple times to destroy Israel and if Iran had nuclear missiles it would be able to carry out this threat. Moreover, since Iran has been developing enriched uranium, they have the key component needed for nuclear weapons—every other part of the process of building a nuclear weapon is simple compared to that. Therefore, Israel is not safe.
7. Since all professional hockey players are missing front teeth and Martin is a professional hockey player, it follows that Martin is missing front teeth. And since almost all professional athletes who are missing their front teeth have false teeth, it follows that Martin probably has false teeth.
8. Anyone who eats the crab rangoon at China Food restaurant will probably have stomach troubles afterward. It has happened to me every time, which is why it will probably happen to other people as well. Since Bob ate the crab rangoon at China Food restaurant, he will probably have stomach troubles afterward.
9. Albert and Caroline like to go for runs in the afternoon in Hyde Park. Since Albert never runs alone, we know that any time Albert is running, Caroline is running too. But since Albert looks like he has just run (since he is panting hard), it follows that Caroline must have ran too.
10. Just because Jeremy's prints were on the gun that killed Tim and the gun was registered to Jeremy, it doesn't follow that Jeremy killed Tim since Jeremy's prints would certainly be on his own gun and someone else could have stolen Jeremy's gun and used it to kill Tim.

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1.1.5: Using Your Own Paraphrases of Premises and Conclusions to Reconstruct Arguments in Standard Form

Although sometimes we can just lift the premises and conclusion verbatim from the argument, we cannot always do this. Paraphrases of premises or conclusions are sometimes needed in order to make the standard form argument as clear as possible. A **paraphrase** is the use of different words to capture the same idea in a clearer way. There will always be multiple ways of paraphrasing premises and conclusions and this means that there will never be just one way of putting an argument into standard form. In order to paraphrase well, you will have to rely on your understanding of English to come up with what you think is the best way of capturing the essence of the argument. Again, typically there is no single right way to do this, although there are certainly better and worse ways of doing it. For example, consider the following argument:

Just because Jeremy's prints were on the gun that killed Tim and the gun was registered to Jeremy, it doesn't follow that Jeremy killed Tim since Jeremy's prints would certainly be on his own gun and someone else could have stolen Jeremy's gun and used it to kill Tim.

What is the conclusion of this argument? (Think about it before reading on.) Here is one way of paraphrasing the conclusion:

The fact that Jeremy's prints were on the gun that killed Tim and the gun was registered to Jeremy doesn't mean that Jeremy killed Tim.

This statement seems to capture the essence of the main conclusion in the above argument. The premises of the argument would be:

1. Jeremy's prints would be expected to be on a gun that was registered to him
2. Someone could have stolen Jeremy's gun and then used it to kill Tim

Notice that while I have paraphrased the first premise, I have left the second premise almost exactly as it appeared in the original paragraph. As I've said, paraphrases are needed in order to try to make the standard form argument as clear as possible and this is what I've tried to do in capturing premise 1 as well as the conclusion of this argument. So here is the reconstructed argument in standard form:

1. Jeremy's prints would be expected to be on a gun that was registered to him
2. Someone could have stolen Jeremy's gun and then used it to kill Tim
3. Therefore, the fact that Jeremy's prints were on the gun that killed Tim and the gun was registered to Jeremy doesn't mean that Jeremy killed Tim. (from 1-2)

However, as I have just noted, there is more than one way of paraphrasing the premises and conclusion of the argument. To illustrate this, I will give a second way that one could accurately capture this argument in standard form. Here is another way of expressing the conclusion:

We do not know that Jeremy killed Tim.

That is clearly what the above argument is trying to ultimately establish and it is a much simpler (in some ways) conclusion than my first way of paraphrasing the conclusion. However, it also takes more liberties in interpreting the argument than my original paraphrase. For example, in the original argument there is no occurrence of the word "know." That is something that I am introducing in my own paraphrase. That is a totally legitimate thing to do, as long as introducing new terminology helps us to clearly express the essence of the premise or conclusion that we're trying to paraphrase.[1] Since my second paraphrase of the conclusion differs from my first paraphrase, you can expect that my premises will differ also. So how shall I paraphrase the premises that support this conclusion? Here is another way of paraphrasing the premises and putting the argument into standard form:

1. Tim was killed by a gun that was registered to Jeremy and had Jeremy's prints on it.
2. It is possible that Jeremy's gun was stolen from him.
3. If Jeremy's gun was stolen from him, then Jeremy could not have killed Tim.
4. Therefore, we do not know that Jeremy killed Tim. (from 1-3)

Notice that this standard form argument has more premises than my first reconstruction of the standard form argument (which consisted of only three statements). I have taken quite a few liberties in interpreting and paraphrasing this argument, but what I have tried to do is to get down to the most essential logic of the original argument. The paraphrases of the premises I have used are quite different from the wording that occurs in the original paragraph. I have introduced phrases such as "it is possible that" as well as **conditional statements** (if...then statements), such as premise 3. Nonetheless, this reconstruction seems to get at the essence of the logic of the original argument. As long as your paraphrases help you to do that, they are good paraphrases. Being able to reconstruct arguments like this takes many years of practice in order to do it well, and much of the material that we will learn later in the text will help you to better understand how to capture an argument in standard form, but for now it is important to recognize that there is never only one way of correctly capturing the standard form of an argument. And the reason for this is that there are multiple, equally good, ways of paraphrasing the premises and conclusion of an argument.

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1 How do we know that a paraphrase is accurate? Unfortunately, there is no simple way to answer this question. The only answer is that you must rely on your mastery and understanding of English in order to determine for yourself whether the paraphrase is a good one or not. This is one of those kinds of skills that is difficult to teach, apart from just improving one's mastery of the English language.

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1.1.6: Validity

So far we have discussed what arguments are and how to determine their structure, including how to reconstruct arguments in standard form. But we have not yet discussed what makes an argument good or bad. The central concept that you will learn in logic is the concept of validity. Validity relates to how well the premises support the conclusion, and it is the golden standard that every argument should aim for. A valid argument is an argument whose conclusion cannot possibly be false, assuming that the premises are true. Another way of putting this is as a conditional statement: A valid argument is an argument in which if the premises are true, the conclusion must be true. Here is an example of a valid argument:

1. Violet is a dog
2. Therefore, Violet is a mammal (from 1)

You might wonder whether it is true that Violet is a dog (maybe she's a lizard or a buffalo—we have no way of knowing from the information given). But, for the purposes of validity, it doesn't matter whether premise 1 is actually true or false. All that matters for validity is whether the conclusion follows from the premise. And we can see that the conclusion, Violet is a mammal, does seem to follow from the premise, Violet is a dog. That is, given the truth of the premise, the conclusion has to be true. This argument is clearly valid since if we assume that "Violet is a dog" is true, then, since all dogs are mammals, it follows that "Violet is a mammal" must also be true. As we've just seen, whether or not an argument is valid has nothing to do with whether the premises of the argument are actually true or not. We can illustrate this with another example, where the premises are clearly false:

1. Everyone born in France can speak French
2. Barack Obama was born in France
3. Therefore, Barak Obama can speak French (from 1-2)

This is a valid argument. Why? Because when we assume the truth of the premises (everyone born in France can speak French, Barack Obama was born in France) the conclusion (Barack Obama can speak French) must be true. Notice that this is so even though none of these statements is actually true. Not everyone born in France can speak French (think about people who were born there but then moved somewhere else where they didn't speak French and never learned it) and Obama was not born in France, but it is also false that Obama can speak French. So we have a valid argument even though neither the premises nor the conclusion is actually true. That may sound strange, but if you understand the concept of validity, it is not strange at all. Remember: validity describes the relationship between the premises and conclusion, and it means that the premises imply the conclusion, whether or not that conclusion is true. In order to better understand the concept of validity, let's look at an example of an invalid argument:

1. George was President of the United States
2. Therefore, George was elected President of the United States (from 1)

This argument is **invalid** because it is possible for the premise to be true and yet the conclusion false. Here is a counterexample to the argument. Gerald Ford was President of the United States but he was never elected president, since Ford Replaced Richard Nixon when Nixon resigned in the wake of the Watergate scandal.[2] So it doesn't follow that just because someone is President of the United States that they were elected President of the United States. In other words, it is possible for the premise of the argument to be true and yet the conclusion false. And this means that the argument is invalid. If an argument is invalid it will always be possible to construct a counterexample to show that it is invalid (as I have done with the Gerald Ford scenario). A **counterexample** is simply a description of a scenario in which the premises of the argument are all true while the conclusion of the argument is false.

In order to determine whether an argument is valid or invalid we can use what I'll call the **informal test of validity**. To apply the informal test of validity ask yourself whether you can imagine a world in which all the premises are true and yet the conclusion is false. If you can imagine such a world, then the argument is invalid. If you cannot imagine such a world, then the argument is valid. Notice: it is possible to imagine a world where the premises are true even if the premises aren't, as a matter of actual fact, true. This is why it doesn't matter for validity whether the premises (or conclusion) of the argument are actually true. It will help to better understand the concept of validity by applying the informal test of validity to some sample arguments.

1. Joan jumped out of an airplane without a parachute
2. Therefore, Joan fell to her death (from 1)

To apply the informal test of validity we have to ask whether it is possible to imagine a scenario in which the premise is true and yet the conclusion is false (if so, the argument is invalid). So, can we imagine a world in which someone jumped out of an airplane without a parachute and yet did not fall to her death? (Think about it carefully before reading on.) As we will see, applying the informal test of validity takes some creativity, but it seems clearly possible that Joan could jump out of an airplane without a parachute and not die—she could be perfectly fine, in fact. All we have to imagine is that the airplane was not operating and in fact was on the ground when Joan jumped out of it. If that were the case, it would be a) true that Joan jumped out of an airplane without a parachute and yet b) false that Joan fell to her death. Thus, since it is possible to imagine a scenario in which the premise is true and yet the conclusion is false, the argument is invalid. Let's slightly change the argument, this time making it clear that the plane is flying:

1. Joan jumped out of an airplane travelling 300 mph at a height of 10,000 ft without a parachute
2. Joan fell to her death (from 1)

Is this argument valid? You might think so since you might think that anyone who did such a thing would surely die. But is it possible to not die in the scenario described by the premise? If you think about it, you'll realize that there are lots of ways someone could survive. For example, maybe someone else who was wearing a parachute jumped out of the plane after them, caught them and attached the parachute-less person to them, and then pulled the ripcord and they both landed on the ground safe and sound. Or maybe Joan was performing a stunt and landed in a giant net that had been set up for that purpose. Or maybe she was just one of those people who, although they did fall to the ground, happened to survive (it has happened before). All of these scenarios are consistent with the information in the first premise being true and also consistent with the conclusion being false. Thus, again, any of these counterexamples show that this argument is invalid. Notice that it is also possible that the scenario described in the premises ends with Joan falling to her death. But that doesn't matter because all we want to know is whether it is possible that she doesn't. And if it is possible, what we have shown is that the conclusion does not logically follow from the premise alone. That is, the conclusion doesn't have to be true, even if we grant that the premise is. And that means that the argument is not valid (i.e., it is invalid).

Let's switch examples and consider a different argument.

1. A person can be President of the United States only if they were born
in the United States.
2. Obama is President of the United States.
3. Kenya is not in the United States.
4. Therefore, Obama was not born in Kenya (from 1-3)

In order to apply the informal test of validity, we have to ask whether we can imagine a scenario in which the premises are both true and yet the conclusion is false. So, we have to imagine a scenario in which premises 1, 2, and 3 are true and yet the conclusion ("Obama was not born in Kenya") is false. Can you imagine such a scenario? You cannot. The reason is that if you are imagining that it is a) true that a person can be President of the United States only if they were born in the United States, b) true that Obama is president and c) true that
Kenya is not in the U.S., then it must be true that Obama was not born in Kenya. Thus we know that on the assumption of the truth of the premises, the conclusion must be true. And that means the argument is valid. In this example, however, premises 1, 2, and 3 are not only assumed to be true but are actually true. However, as we have already seen, the validity of an argument does not depend on its premises actually being true. Here is another example of a valid argument to illustrate that point.

1. A person can be President of the United States only if they were born in Kenya
2. Obama is President of the United States
3. Therefore, Obama was born in Kenya (from 1-2)

Clearly, the first premise of this argument is false. But if we were to imagine a scenario in which it is true and in which premise 2 is also true, then the conclusion ("Obama was born in Kenya") must be true. And this means that the argument is valid. We cannot imagine a scenario in which the premises of the argument are true and yet the conclusion is false. The important point to recognize here—a point I've been trying to reiterate throughout this section—is that the validity of the argument does not depend on whether or not the premises (or conclusion) are actually true. Rather, validity depends only on the logical relationship between the premises and the conclusion. The actual truth of the premises is, of course, important to the quality of the argument, since if the premises of the argument are false, then the argument doesn't provide any reason for accepting the conclusion. In the next section we will address this topic.

Exercise

Determine whether or not the following arguments are valid by using the informal test of validity. If the argument is invalid, provide a counterexample.

1. Katie is a human being. Therefore, Katie is smarter than a chimpanzee.
2. Bob is a fireman. Therefore, Bob has put out fires.
3. Gerald is a mathematics professor. Therefore, Gerald knows how to teach mathematics.
4. Monica is a French teacher. Therefore, Monica knows how to teach French.
5. Bob is taller than Susan. Susan is taller than Frankie. Therefore, Bob is taller than Frankie.
6. Craig loves Linda. Linda loves Monique. Therefore, Craig loves Monique.
7. Orel Hershizer is a Christian. Therefore, Orel Hershizer communicates with God.
8. All Muslims pray to Allah. Muhammad is a Muslim. Therefore, Muhammad prays to Allah.
9. Some protozoa are predators. No protozoa are animals. Therefore, some predators are not animals.
10. Charlie only barks when he hears a burglar outside. Charlie is barking. Therefore, there must be a burglar outside.

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[2] As it happens, Ford wasn't elected Vice President either since he was confirmed by the Senate, under the twenty fifth amendment, after Spiro Agnew resigned. So Ford wasn't ever elected by the Electoral College—as either Vice President or President.

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1.1.7: Soundness

A good argument is not only valid, but also sound. Soundness is defined in terms of validity, so since we have already defined validity, we can now rely on it to define soundness. A **sound argument** is a valid argument that has all true premises. That means that the conclusion of a sound argument will always be true. Why? Because if an argument is valid, the premises transmit truth to the conclusion on the assumption of the truth of the premises. But if the premises are actually true, as they are in a sound argument, then since all sound arguments are valid, we know that the conclusion of a sound argument is true. Compare the last two Obama examples from the previous section. While the first argument was sound, the second argument was not sound, although it was valid. The relationship between soundness and validity is easy to specify: all sound arguments are valid arguments, but not all valid arguments are sound arguments.

Although soundness is what any argument should aim for, we will not be talking much about soundness in this book. The reason for this is that the only difference between a valid argument and a sound argument is that a sound argument has all true premises. But how do we determine whether the premises of an argument are actually true? Well, there are lots of ways to do that, including using Google to look up an answer, studying the relevant subjects in school, consulting experts on the relevant topics, and so on. But none of these activities have anything to do with logic, per se. The relevant disciplines to consult if you want to know whether a particular statement is true is almost never logic! For example, logic has nothing to say regarding whether or not protozoa are animals or whether there are predators that aren't in the animal kingdom. In order to learn whether those statements are true, we'd have to consult biology, not logic. Since this is a logic textbook, however, it is best to leave the question of what is empirically true or false to the relevant disciplines that study those topics. And that is why the issue of soundness, while crucial for any good argument, is outside the purview of logic.

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1.1.8: Deductive vs. Inductive Arguments

The concepts of validity and soundness that we have introduced apply only to the class of what are called “deductive arguments”. A **deductive argument** is an argument whose conclusion is supposed to follow from its premises with absolute certainty, thus leaving no possibility that the conclusion doesn’t follow from the premises. For a deductive argument to fail to do this is for it to fail as a deductive argument. In contrast, an **inductive argument** is an argument whose conclusion is supposed to follow from its premises with a high level of probability, which means that although it is possible that the conclusion doesn’t follow from its premises, it is unlikely that this is the case. Here is an example of an inductive argument:

Tweets is a healthy, normally functioning bird and since most healthy, normally functioning birds fly, Tweets probably flies.

Notice that the conclusion, Tweets probably flies, contains the word “probably.” This is a clear indicator that the argument is supposed to be inductive, not deductive. Here is the argument in standard form:

1. Tweets is a healthy, normally functioning bird
2. Most healthy, normally functioning birds fly
3. Therefore, Tweets probably flies

Given the information provided by the premises, the conclusion does seem to be well supported. That is, the premises do give us a strong reason for accepting the conclusion. This is true even though we can imagine a scenario in which the premises are true and yet the conclusion is false. For example, suppose that we added the following premise:

Tweets is 6 ft tall and can run 30 mph.

Were we to add that premise, the conclusion would no longer be supported by the premises, since any bird that is 6 ft tall and can run 30 mph, is not a kind of bird that can fly. That information leads us to believe that Tweets is an ostrich or emu, which are not kinds of birds that can fly. As this example shows, inductive arguments are **defeasible arguments** since by adding further information or premises to the argument, we can overturn (defeat) the verdict that the conclusion is well-supported by the premises. Inductive arguments whose premises give us a strong, even if defeasible, reason for accepting the conclusion are called, unsurprisingly, **strong inductive arguments**. In contrast, an inductive argument that does not provide a strong reason for accepting the conclusion are called **weak inductive arguments.**

Whereas strong inductive arguments are defeasible, valid deductive arguments aren’t. Suppose that instead of saying that most birds fly, premise 2 said that all birds fly.

1. Tweets is a healthy, normally function bird.
2. All healthy, normally functioning birds can fly.
3. Therefore, Tweets can fly.

This is a valid argument and since it is a valid argument, there are no further premises that we could add that could overturn the argument’s validity. (True, premise 2 is false, but as we’ve seen that is irrelevant to determining whether an argument is valid.) Even if we were to add the premise that Tweets is 6 ft tall and can run 30 mph, it doesn’t overturn the validity of the argument. As soon as we use the **universal generalization**, “all healthy, normally function birds can fly,” then when we assume that premise is true and add that Tweets is a healthy, normally functioning bird, it has to follow from those premises that Tweets can fly. This is true even if we add that Tweets is 6 ft tall because then what we have to imagine (in applying our informal test of validity) is a world in which all birds, including those that are 6 ft tall and can run 30 mph, can fly. Although inductive arguments are an important class of argument that are commonly used every day in many contexts, logic texts tend not to spend as much time with them since we have no agreed upon standard of evaluating them. In contrast, there is an agreed upon standard of evaluation of deductive arguments. We have already seen what that is; it is the concept of validity. In chapter 2 we will learn some precise, formal methods of evaluating deductive arguments. There are no such agreed upon formal methods of evaluation for inductive arguments. This is an area of ongoing research in philosophy. In chapter 3 we will revisit inductive arguments and consider some ways to evaluate inductive arguments.

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1.1.9: Arguments with Missing Premises

Quite often, an argument will not explicitly state a premise that we can see is needed in order for the argument to be valid. In such a case, we can supply the premise(s) needed in order so make the argument valid. Making missing premises explicit is a central part of reconstructing arguments in standard form. We have already dealt in part with this in the section on paraphrasing, but now that we have introduced the concept of validity, we have a useful tool for knowing when to supply missing premises in our reconstruction of an argument. In some cases, the missing premise will be fairly obvious, as in the following:

Gary is a convicted sex-offender, so Gary is not allowed to work with children. The premise and conclusion of this argument are straightforward:

1. Gary is a convicted sex-offender
2. Therefore, Gary is not allowed to work with children (from 1)

However, as stated, the argument is invalid. (Before reading on, see if you can provide a counterexample for this argument. That is, come up with an imaginary scenario in which the premise is true and yet the conclusion is false.) Here is just one counterexample (there could be many): Gary is a convicted sex-offender but the country in which he lives does not restrict convicted sex-offenders from working with children. I don't know whether there are any such countries, although I suspect there are (and it doesn't matter for the purpose of validity whether there are or aren't). In any case, it seems clear that this argument is relying upon a premise that isn't explicitly stated. We can and should state that premise explicitly in our reconstruction of the standard form argument. But what is the argument's missing premise? The obvious one is that no sex-offenders are allowed to work with children, but we could also use a morecarefully statement like this one:

Where Gary lives, no convicted sex-offenders are allowed to work with children.

It should be obvious why this is a more "careful" statement. It is more careful because it is not so universal in scope, which means that it is easier for the statement to be made true. By relativizing the statement that sex-offenders are not allowed to work with children to the place where Gary lives, we leave open the possibility that other places in the world don't have this same restriction. So even if there are other places in the world where convicted sex-offenders are allowed to work with children, our statements could still be true since in this place (the place where Gary lives) they aren't. (For more on strong and weak statements, see section 1.10). So here is the argument in standard form:

1. Gary is a convicted sex-offender.
2. Where Gary lives, no convicted sex-offenders are allowed to work with children.
3. Therefore, Gary is not allowed to work with children. (from 1-2)

This argument is now valid: there is no way for the conclusion to be false, assuming the truth of the premises. This was a fairly simple example where the missing premise needed to make the argument valid was relatively easy to see. As we can see from this example, a missing premise is a premise that the argument needs in order to be as strong as possible. Typically, this means supplying the statement(s) that are needed to make the argument valid. But in addition to making the argument valid, we want to make the argument plausible. This is called "the principle of charity." The principle of charity states that when reconstructing an argument, you should try to make that argument (whether inductive or deductive) as strong as possible. When it comes to supplying missing premises, this means supplying the most plausible premises needed in order to make the argument either valid (for deductive arguments) or inductively strong (for inductive arguments).

Although in the last example figuring out the missing premise was relatively easy to do, it is not always so easy. Here is an argument whose missing premises are not as easy to determine:

Since children who are raised by gay couples often have psychological and emotional problems, the state should discourage gay couples from raising children.

The conclusion of this argument, that the state should not allow gay marriage, is apparently supported by a single premise, which should be recognizable from the occurrence of the premise indicator, "since." Thus, our initial reconstruction of the standard form argument looks like this:

1. Children who are raised by gay couples often have psychological and emotional problems.

2. Therefore, the state should discourage gay couples from raising children.

However, as it stands, this argument is invalid because it depends on certain missing premises. The conclusion of this argument is a **normative statement**—a statement about whether something ought to be true, relative to some standard of evaluation. Normative statements can be contrasted with **descriptive statements**, which are simply factual claims about what is true. For example, "Russia does not allow gay couples to raise children" is a descriptive statement. That is, it is simply a claim about what is in fact the case in Russia today. In contrast, "Russia should not allow gay couples to raise children" is a normative statement since it is not a claim about what is true, but what ought to be true, relative to some standard of evaluation (for example, a moral or legal standard). An important idea within philosophy, which is often traced back to the Scottish philosopher David Hume (1711-1776), is that statements about what ought to be the case (i.e., normative statements) can never be derived from statements about what is the case (i.e., descriptive statements). This is known within philosophy as the **is-ought gap**. The problem with the above argument is that it attempts to infer a normative statement from a purely descriptive statement, violating the is-ought gap. We can see the problem by constructing a counterexample. Suppose that in society x it is true that children raised by gay couples have psychological problems. However, suppose that in that society people do not accept that the state should do what it can to decrease harm to children. In this case, the conclusion, that the state should discourage gay couples from raising children, does not follow. Thus, we can see that the argument depends on a missing or assumed premise that is not explicitly stated. That missing premise must be a normative statement, in order that we can infer the conclusion, which is also a normative statement. There is an important general lesson here: Many times an argument with a normative conclusion will depend on a normative premise which is not explicitly stated. The missing normative premise of this particular argument seems to be something like this:

The state should always do what it can to decrease harm to children.

Notice that this is a normative statement, which is indicated by the use of the word "should." There are many other words that can be used to capture normative statements such as: good, bad, and ought. Thus, we can reconstruct the argument, filling in the missing normative premise like this:

1. Children who are raised by gay couples often have psychological and emotional problems.
2. The state should always do what it can to decrease harm to children.
3. Therefore, the state should discourage gay couples from raising children. (from 1-2)

However, although the argument is now in better shape, it is still invalid because it is still possible for the premises to be true and yet the conclusion false. In order to show this, we just have to imagine a scenario in which both the premises are true and yet the conclusion is false. Here is one counterexample to the argument (there are many). Suppose that while it is true that children of gay couples often have psychological and emotional problems, the rate of psychological problems in children raised by gay couples is actually lower than in children raised by heterosexual couples. In this case, even if it were true that the state should always do what it can to decrease harm to children, it does not follow that the state should discourage gay couples from raising children. In fact, in the scenario I've described, just the opposite would seem to follow: the state should discourage heterosexual couples from raising children.

But even if we suppose that the rate of psychological problems in children of gay couples is higher than in children of heterosexual couples, the conclusion still doesn't seem to follow. For example, it could be that the reason that children of gay couples have higher rates of psychological problems is that in a society that is not yet accepting of gay couples, children of gay couples will face more teasing, bullying and general lack of acceptance than children of heterosexual couples. If this were true, then the harm to these children isn't so much due to the fact that their parents are gay as it is to the fact that their community does not accept them. In that case, the state should not necessarily discourage gay couples from raising children. Here is an analogy: At one point in our country's history (if not still today) it is plausible that the children of black
Americans suffered more psychologically and emotionally than the children of white Americans. But for the government to discourage black Americans from raising children would have been unjust, since it is likely that if there was a higher incidence of psychological and emotional problems in black Americans, then it was due to unjust and unequal conditions, not to the black parents, per se. So, to return to our example, the state should only discourage gay couples from raising children if they know that the higher incidence of psychological problems in children of gay couples isn't the result of any kind of injustice, but is due to the simple fact that the parents are gay.

Thus, one way of making the argument (at least closer to) valid would be to add the following two missing premises:

A. The rate of psychological problems in children of gay couples is higher than in children of heterosexual couples.
B. The higher incidence of psychological problems in children of gay couples is not due to any kind of injustice in society, but to the fact that the parents are gay.

So the reconstructed standard form argument would look like this:

1. Children who are raised by gay couples often have psychological and emotional problems.
2. The rate of psychological problems in children of gay couples is higher than in children of heterosexual couples.
3. The higher incidence of psychological problems in children of gay couples is not due to any kind of injustice in society, but to the fact that the parents are gay.
4. The state should always do what it can to decrease harm to children.
5. Therefore, the state should discourage gay couples from raising children. (from 1-4)

In this argument, premises 2-4 are the missing or assumed premises. Their addition makes the argument much stronger, but making them explicit enables us to clearly see what assumptions the argument relies on in order for the argument to be valid. This is useful since we can now clearly see which premises of the argument we may challenge as false. Arguably, premise 4 is false, since the state shouldn't always do what it can to decrease harm to children. Rather, it should only do so as long as such an action didn't violate other rights that the state has to protect or create larger harms elsewhere.

The important lesson from this example is that supplying the missing premises of an argument is not always a simple matter. In the example above, I have used the principle of charity to supply missing premises. Mastering this skill is truly an art (rather than a science) since there is never just one correct way of doing it (cf. section 1.5) and because it requires a lot of skilled practice.

Exercise

Supply the missing premise or premises needed in order to make the following arguments valid. Try to make the premises as plausible as possible while making the argument valid (which is to apply the principle of charity).

1. Ed rides horses. Therefore, Ed is a cowboy.
2. Tom was driving over the speed limit. Therefore, Tom was doing something wrong.
3. If it is raining then the ground is wet. Therefore, the ground must be wet.
4. All elves drink Guinness, which is why Olaf drinks Guinness.
5. Mark didn't invite me to homecoming. Instead, he invited his friend Alexia. So he must like Alexia more than me.
6. The watch must be broken because every time I have looked at it, the hands have been in the same place.
7. Olaf drank too much Guinness and fell out of his second story apartment window. Therefore, drinking too much Guinness caused Olaf to injure himself.
8. Mark jumped into the air. Therefore, Mark landed back on the ground.
9. In 2009 in the United States, the net worth of the median white household was $113,149 a year, whereas the net worth of the median black household was $5,677. Therefore, as of 2009, the United States was still a racist nation.
10. The temperature of the water is 212 degrees Fahrenheit. Therefore, the water is boiling.
11. Capital punishment sometimes takes innocent lives, such as the lives of individuals who were later found to be not guilty. Therefore, we should not allow capital punishment.
12. Allowing immigrants to migrate to the U.S. will take working-class jobs away from working-class folks. Therefore, we should not allow immigrants to migrate to the U.S.
13. Prostitution is a fair economic exchange between two consenting adults. Therefore, prostitution should be allowed.
14. Colleges are more interested in making money off of their football athletes than in educating them. Therefore, college football ought to be banned.
15. Edward received an F in college Algebra. Therefore, Edward should have studied more.

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1.1.10: Assuring, guarding, and Discounting

As we have seen, arguments often have complex structures including subarguments (recall that a subargument is an argument for one of the premises of the main argument). But in practice people do not always give further reasons or argument in support of every statement they make. Sometimes they use certain rhetorical devices to cut the argument short, or to hint at a further argument without actually stating it. There are three common strategies for doing this:

Assuring: informing someone that there are further reasons although one is not giving them now

Guarding: weakening one's claims so that it is harder to show that the claims are false

Discounting: anticipating objections that might be raised to one's claim or argument as a way of dismissing those objections.[3]

We will discuss these in order, starting with assuring. Why would we want to assure our audience? Presumably when we make a claim that isn't obvious and that the audience may not be inclined to believe. For example, if I am trying to convince you that the United States is one of the leading producers of CO2 emissions, then I might cite certain authorities such as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) as saying so. This is one way of assuring our audience: by citing authorities. There are many ways to cite authorities, some examples of which are these:

Dentists agree that...

Recent studies have shown...

It has been established that...

Another way of assuring is to comment on the strength of one's own convictions. The rhetorical effect is that by commenting on how sure you are that something is true, you imply, without saying, that there must be very strong reasons for what you believe—assuming that the audience believes you are a reasonable person, of course. Here are some ways of commenting on the strength of one's beliefs:

I'm certain that...

I'm sure that...

I can assure you that...

Over the years, I have become convinced that...

I would bet a million dollars that...

Yet another way of assuring one's audience is to make an audience member feel that it would be stupid, odd, or strange to deny the claim one is making. One common way to do this is by implying that every sensible person would agree with the claim. Here are some examples:

Everyone with any sense agrees that...

Of course, no one will deny that...

There is no question that...

No one with any sense would deny that...

Another common way of doing this is by implying that no sensible person would agree with a claim that we are trying to establish as false:

It is no longer held that...

No intelligent person would ever maintain that...

You would have to live under a rock to think that...

Assurances are not necessarily illegitimate, since the person may be right and may in fact have good arguments to back up the claims, but the assurances are not themselves arguments and a critical thinker will always regard them as somewhat suspect. This is especially so when the claim isn't obviously true.

Next, we will turn to guarding. Guarding involves weakening a claim so that it is easier to make that claim true. Here is a simple contrast that will make the point. Consider the following claims:

A. All U.S. Presidents were monogamous
B. Almost all U.S. Presidents were monogamous
C. Most U.S. Presidents were monogamous
D. Many U.S. Presidents were monogamous
E. Some U.S. Presidents were monogamous

The weakest of these claims is E, whereas the strongest is A and each claims descending from A-E is increasingly weaker. It doesn't take very much for E to be true: there just has to be at least one U.S. President who was monogamous. In contrast, A is much less likely than E to be true because it require every U.S. President to have been monogamous. One way of thinking about this is that any time A is true, it is also true that B-E is true, but B-E could be true without A being true. That is what it means for a claim to be stronger or weaker. A **weak claim** is more likely to be true whereas a **strong claim** is less likely to be true. E is much more likely to be true than A. Likewise, D is somewhat more likely to be true than C, and so on.

So, guarding involves taking a stronger claim and making it weaker so there is less room to object to the claim. We can also guard a claim by introducing a probability clause such as, "it is possible that..." and "it is arguable that..." or by reducing our level of commitment to the claim, such as moving from "I know that x" to "I believe that x." One common use of guarding is in reconstructing arguments with missing premises using the principle of charity (section 1.9). For example, if an argument is that "Tom works for Merrill Lynch, so Tom has a college degree," the most charitable reconstruction of this argument would fill in the missing premise with "most people who work for Merrill Lynch have college degrees" rather than "everyone who works for Merrill Lynch has a college degree." Here we have created a more charitable (plausible) premise by weakening the claim from "all" to "most," which as we have seen is a kind of guarding.

Finally, we will consider discounting. Discounting involves acknowledging an objection to the claim or argument that one is making, while dismissing that same objection. The rhetorical force of discounting is to make it seem as though the argument has taken account of the objections—especially the ones that might be salient in a person's mind. The simplest and most common way of discounting is by using the "A but B" locution. Contrast the following two claims:

A. The worker was inefficient, but honest.
B. The worker was honest, but inefficient.

Although each statement asserts the same facts, A seems to be recommending the worker, whereas B doesn't. We can imagine A continuing: "And so the manager decided to keep her on the team." We can imagine B continuing:

"Which is why the manager decided to let her go." This is what we can call the "A but B" locution. The **"A but B" locution** is a form of discounting that introduces what will be dismissed or overridden first and then follows it by what is supposed to be the more important consideration. By introducing the claim to be dismissed, we are discounting that claim. There are many other words that can be used as discounting words instead of using "but." Table 2 below gives a partial list of words and phrases that commonly function as discounting terms.

although	even if	but	nevertheless
though	while	however	nonetheless
even though	whereas	yet	still

Exercise

Which rhetorical techniques (assuring, guarding, discounting) are being using in the following passages?

1. Although drilling for oil in Alaska will disrupt some wildlife, it is better than having to depend on foreign oil, which has the tendency to draw us into foreign conflicts that we would otherwise not be involved in.
2. Let there be no doubt: the entity that carried out this attack is a known terrorist organization, whose attacks have a characteristic style—a style that is seen in this attack today.
3. Privatizing the water utilities in Detroit was an unprecedented move that has garnered a lot of criticism. Nonetheless, it is helping Detroit to recover from bankruptcy.
4. Most pediatricians agree that the single most important factor in childhood obesity is eating sugary, processed foods, which have become all too common in our day and age.
5. Although not every case of AIDS is caused by HIV, it is arguable that most are.
6. Abraham Lincoln was probably our greatest president since he helped keep together a nation on the brink of splintering into two.
7. No one with any sense would support Obamacare.
8. Even if universal healthcare is expensive, it is still the just thing to do.
9. While our country has made significant strides in overcoming explicit racist policies, the wide disparity of wealth, prestige and influence that characterize white and black Americans shows that we are still implicitly a racist country.
10. Recent studies have show that there is no direct link between vaccines and autism.

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[3] This characterization and discussion draws heavily on chapter 3, pp. 48-53 of Sinnott- Armstrong and Fogelin's Understanding Arguments, 9th edition (Cengage Learning).

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1.1.11: Evaluating Language

Yet another rhetorical technique that is commonly encountered in argumentation is the use of evaluative language to influence one's audience to accept the conclusion one is arguing for. Evaluative language can be contrasted with descriptive language. Whereas **descriptive language** simply describes a state of affairs, without passing judgment (positive or negative) on that state of affairs, **evaluative language** is used to pass some sort of judgment, positive or negative, on something. Contrast the following two statements:

Bob is tall.

Bob is good.

"Tall" is a descriptive term since being tall is, in itself, neither a good nor bad thing. Rather, it is a **purely descriptive term** that does not pass any sort of judgment, positive or negative, on the fact that Bob is tall. In contrast, "good" is a **purely evaluative term**, which means that the only thing the word does is make an evaluation (in this case, a positive evaluation) and doesn't carry any descriptive content. "Good," "bad," "right," and "wrong" are examples of purely evaluative terms. A more interesting kind of term is one that is partly descriptive and partly evaluative. For example:

Bob is nosy.

"Nosy" is a negatively evaluative term since to call someone nosy is to make a negative evaluation of them—or at least of that aspect of them. But it also implies a descriptive content, such as that Bob is curious about other people's affairs. We could re-describe Bob's nosiness using purely descriptive language:

Bob is very curious about other people's affairs.

Notice that while the phrase "very curious about other people's affairs" does capture the descriptive sense of "nosy," it doesn't capture the evaluative sense of nosy, since it doesn't carry with it the negative connotation that "nosy" does.

Evaluative language is rife in our society, perhaps especially so in political discourse. This isn't surprising since by using evaluative language to describe certain persons, actions, or events we can influence how people understand and interpret the world. If you can get a person to think of someone or some state of affairs in terms of a positively or negatively evaluative term, chances are you will be able to influence their evaluation of that person or state of affairs. That is one of the rhetorical uses of evaluative language. Compare, for example,

Bob is a rebel.

Bob is a freedom fighter.

Whereas "rebel" tends to be a negatively evaluative term, "freedom fighter," at least for many Americans, tends to be a positively evaluative term. Both words, however, have the same descriptive content, namely, that Bob is someone who has risen in armed resistance to an existing government. The difference is that whereas "rebel" makes a negative evaluation, "freedom fighter" makes a positive evaluation. Table 3 below gives a small sampling of some evaluative terms.

beautiful	dangerous	wasteful	sneaky	cute
murder	prudent	courageous	timid	nosy
sloppy	smart	capable	insane	curt

English contains an interesting mechanism for turning positively evaluative terms into negative evaluative ones. All you have to do is put the word "too" before a positively evaluative terms and it will all of a sudden take on a negative connotation. Compare the following:

John is honest.

John is too honest.

Whereas “honest” is a positively evaluative term, “too honest” is a negatively evaluative term. When someone describes John as “too honest,” we can easily imagine that person going on to describe how John’s honesty is actually a liability or negative trait. Not so when he is simply described as honest. Since the word “too” indicates an excess, and to say that something is an excess is to make a criticism, we can see why the word “too” changes the valence of an evaluation from positive to negative.

Like assuring and discounting (section 1.10), using evaluative language to try to influence one’s audience is a rhetorical technique. As such, it is more concerned with non-rational persuasion than it is with giving reasons. Non-rational persuasion is ubiquitous in our society today, not the least of which because advertising is ubiquitous and advertising today almost always uses non-rational persuasion. Think of the last time you saw some commercial present evidence for why you should buy their product (i.e., never) and you will realize how pervasive this kind of rhetoric is. Philosophy has a complicated relationship with rhetoric—a relationship that stretches back to Ancient Greece. Socrates disliked those, such as the Sophists, who promised to teach people how to effectively persuade someone of something, regardless of whether that thing was true. Although some people might claim that there is no essential difference between giving reasons for accepting a conclusion and trying to persuade by any means, most philosophers, including the author of this text, think otherwise. If we define rhetoric as the art of persuasion, then although argumentation is a kind of rhetoric (since it is a way of persuading), not all rhetoric is argumentation. The essential difference, as already hinted at, is that argumentation attempts to persuade by giving reasons whereas rhetoric attempts to persuade by any means, including non-rational means. If I tell you over and over again (in creative and subliminal ways) to drink Beer x because Beer x is the best beer, then I may very well make you think that Beer x is the best beer, but I have not thereby given you an argument that Beer x is the best beer. Thinking of it rationally, the mere fact that I’ve told you lots of times that Beer x is the best beer gives you no good reason for believing that Beer x is in fact the best beer.

The rhetorical devices surveyed in the last two sections—especially assuring, discounting and the use of evaluative language—may be effective ways of persuading people, but they are not the same thing as offering an argument. And if we attempt to see them as arguments, they turn out to be typically pretty poor arguments. One of the many things that psychologists study is how we are persuaded to believe or do things. As an **empirical science**, psychology attempts to describe and explain the way things are, in this case, the processes that lead us to believe or act as we do. Logic, in contrast, is not an empirical science. Logic is not trying to tell us how we do think, but what good thinking is and, thus, how we ought think. The study of logic is the study of the nature of arguments and, importantly, of what distinguishes a good argument from a bad one. “Good” and “bad” are what philosophers call **normative concepts** because they involve standards of evaluation.[4] Since logic concerns what makes something a good argument, logic is sometimes referred to as a **normative science**. They key standard of evaluation of arguments that we have seen so far is that of validity. In chapter 2 we will consider some more precise, formal methods of understanding validity. Other “normative sciences” include ethics (the study of what a good life is and how we ought to live) and epistemology (the study of what we have good reason to believe).

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[4] We encountered normative concepts when discussing normative statements in section 1.9.

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1.1.12: Evaluating a Real-Life Argument

In this section I will analyze a real-life argument—an excerpt from President Obama's September 10, 2013 speech on Syria. I will use the concepts and techniques that have been introduced in this chapter to analyze and evaluate Obama's argument. It is important to realize that regardless of one's views— whether one agrees with Obama or not—one can still analyze the structure of the argument and even evaluate it by applying the informal test of validity to the reconstructed argument in standard form. I will present the excerpt of Obama's speech and then set to work analyzing the argument it contains. In addition to creating the excerpt, the only addition I have made to the speech is numbering each paragraph with Roman numerals for ease of referring to specific places in my analysis of the argument.

I. My fellow Americans, tonight I want to talk to you about Syria, why it matters and where we go from here. Over the past two years, what began as a series of peaceful protests against the repressive regime of Bashar al-Assad has turned into a brutal civil war. Over a hundred thousand people have been killed. Millions have fled the country. In that time, America has worked with allies to provide humanitarian support, to help the moderate opposition and to shape a political settlement.

II. But I have resisted calls for military action because we cannot resolve someone else's civil war through force, particularly after a decade of war in Iraq and Afghanistan.

III. The situation profoundly changed, though, on Aug. 21st, when Assad's government gassed to death over a thousand people, including hundreds of children. The images from this massacre are sickening, men, women, children lying in rows, killed by poison gas, others foaming at the mouth, gasping for breath, a father clutching his dead children, imploring them to get up and walk. On that terrible night, the world saw in gruesome detail the terrible nature of chemical weapons and why the overwhelming majority of humanity has declared them off limits, a crime against humanity and a violation of the laws of war.

IV. This was not always the case. In World War I, American GIs were among the many thousands killed by deadly gas in the trenches of Europe. In World War II, the Nazis used gas to inflict the horror of the Holocaust. Because these weapons can kill on a mass scale, with no distinction between soldier and infant, the civilized world has spent a century working to ban them. And in 1997, the United States Senate overwhelmingly approved an international agreement prohibiting the use of chemical weapons, now joined by 189 governments that represent 98 percent of humanity.

V. On Aug. 21st, these basic rules were violated, along with our sense of common humanity.

VI. No one disputes that chemical weapons were used in Syria. The world saw thousands of videos, cellphone pictures and social media accounts from the attack. And humanitarian organizations told stories of hospitals packed with people who had symptoms of poison gas.

VII. Moreover, we know the Assad regime was responsible. In the days leading up to Aug. 21st, we know that Assad's chemical weapons personnel prepared for an attack near an area where they mix sarin gas. They distributed gas masks to their troops. Then they fired rockets from a regime-controlled area into 11 neighborhoods that the regime has been trying to wipe clear of opposition forces.

VIII. Shortly after those rockets landed, the gas spread, and hospitals filled with the dying and the wounded. We know senior figures in Assad's military machine reviewed the results of the attack. And the regime increased their shelling of the same neighborhoods in the days that followed. We've also studied samples of blood and hair from people at the site that tested positive for sarin.

IX. When dictators commit atrocities, they depend upon the world to look the other way until those horrifying pictures fade from memory. But these things happened. The facts cannot be denied.

X. The question now is what the United States of America and the international community is prepared to do about it, because what happened to those people, to those children, is not only a violation of international law, it's also a danger to our security.

XI. Let me explain why. If we fail to act, the Assad regime will see no reason to stop using chemical weapons.

XII. As the ban against these weapons erodes, other tyrants will have no reason to think twice about acquiring poison gas and using them. Over time our troops would again face the prospect of chemical warfare on the battlefield, and it could be easier for terrorist organizations to obtain these weapons and to use them to attack civilians.

XIII. If fighting spills beyond Syria's borders, these weapons could threaten allies like Turkey, Jordan and Israel.

XIV. And a failure to stand against the use of chemical weapons would weaken prohibitions against other weapons of mass destruction and embolden Assad's ally, Iran, which must decide whether to ignore international law by building a nuclear weapon or to take a more peaceful path.

XV. This is not a world we should accept. This is what's at stake. And that is why, after careful deliberation, I determined that it is in the national security interests of the United States to respond to the Assad regime's use of chemical weapons through a targeted military strike. The purpose of this strike would be to deter Assad from using chemical weapons, to degrade his regime's ability to use them and to make clear to the world that we will not tolerate their use. That's my judgment as commander in chief.

The first question to ask yourself is: What is the main point or conclusion of this speech? What conclusion is Obama trying to argue for? This is no simple question and in fact requires a good level of reading comprehension in order to answer it correctly. One of the things to look for is conclusion or premise indicators (section 1.2). There are numerous conclusion indicators in the speech, which is why you cannot simply mindlessly look for them and then assume the first one you find is the conclusion. Rather, you must rely on your comprehension of the speech to truly find the main conclusion. If you carefully read the speech, it is clear that Obama is trying to convince the American public of the necessity of taking military action against the Assad regime in Syria. So the conclusion is going to have to have something to do with that. One clear statement of what looks like a main conclusion comes in paragraph 15 where Obama says:

And that is why, after careful deliberation, I determined that it is in the national security interests of the United States to respond to the Assad regime's use of chemical weapons through a targeted military strike.

The phrase, “that is why,” is a conclusion indicator which introduces the main conclusion. Here is my paraphrase of that conclusion:

Main conclusion: It is in the national security interests of the United States to respond to Assad’s use of chemical weapons with military force.

Before Obama argues for this main conclusion, however, he gives an argument for the claim that Assad did use chemical weapons on his own civilians. This is what is happening in paragraphs 1-9 of the speech. The reasons he gives for how we know that Assad used chemical weapons include:

- images of the destruction of women and children (paragraph VI)
- humanitarian organizations’ stories of hospitals full of civilians suffering from symptoms of exposure to chemical weapons (paragraph VI)
- knowledge that Assad’s chemical weapons experts were at a site where sarin gas is mixed just a few days before the attack (paragraph VII)
- the fact that Assad distributed gas masks to his troops (paragraph VII)
- the fact that Assad’s forces fired rockets into neighborhoods where there were opposition forces (paragraph VII)
- senior military officers in Assad’s regime reviewed results of the attack(paragraph VIII)
- the fact that sarin was found in blood and hair samples from people at the site of the attack (paragraph VIII)

These premises do indeed provide support for the conclusion that Assad used chemical weapons on civilians, but it is probably best to see this argument as a strong inductive argument, rather than a deductive argument. The evidence strongly supports, but does not compel, the conclusion that Assad was responsible. For example, even if all these facts were true, it could be that some other entity was trying to set Assad up. Thus, this first subargument should be taken as a strong inductive argument (assuming the premises are true, of course), since the truth of the premises would increase the probability that the conclusion is true, but not make the conclusion absolutely certain.

Although Obama does give an argument for the claim that Assad carried out chemical weapon attacks on civilians, that is simply an assumption of the main argument. Moreover, although the conclusion of the main argument is the one I have indicated above, I think there is another, intermediate conclusion that Obama argues for more directly and that is that if we don’t respond to Assad’s use of chemical weapons, then our own national security will be put at risk. We can clearly see this conclusion stated in paragraph 10. Moreover, the very next phrase in paragraph 11 is a premise indicator, “let me explain why.” Obama goes on to offer reasons for why failing to respond to Assad’s use of chemical weapons would be a danger to our national security. Thus, the conclusion Obama argues more directly for is:

Intermediate conclusion: A failure to respond to Assad’s use of chemical weapons is a threat to our national security.

So, if that is the conclusion that Obama argues for most directly, what are the premises that support it? Obama gives several in paragraphs 11-14:

A. If we don't respond to Assad's use of chemical weapons, then Assad's regime will continue using them with impunity. (paragraph 11)
B. If Assad's regime uses chemical weapons with impunity, this will effectively erode the ban on them. (implicit in paragraph 12)
C. If the ban on chemical weapons erodes, then other tyrants will be more likely to attain and use them. (paragraph 12)
D. If other tyrants attain and use chemical weapons, U.S. troops will be more likely to face chemical weapons on the battlefield (paragraph 12)
E. If we don't respond to Assad's use of chemical weapons and if fighting spills beyond Syrian borders, our allies could face these chemical weapons. (paragraph 13)
F. If Assad's regime uses chemical weapons with impunity, it will weaken prohibitions on other weapons of mass destruction. (paragraph 14)
G. If prohibitions on other weapons of mass destruction are weakened, this will embolden Assad's ally, Iran, to develop a nuclear program. (paragraph 14)

I have tried to make explicit each step of the reasoning, much of which Obama makes explicit himself (e.g., premises A-D). The main threats to national security that failing to respond to Assad would engender, according to Obama, are that U.S. troops and U.S. allies could be put in danger of facing chemical weapons and that Iran would be emboldened to develop a nuclear program. There is a missing premise that is being relied upon for these premises to validly imply the conclusion. Here is a hint as to what that missing premise is: Are all of these things truly a threat to national security? For example, how is Iran having a nuclear program a threat to our national security? It seems there must be an implicit premise—not yet stated—that is to the effect that all of these things are threats to national security. Here is one way of construing that missing premise:

Missing premise 1: An increased likelihood of U.S. troops or allies facing chemical weapons on the battlefield or Iran becoming emboldened to develop a nuclear program are all threats to U.S. national security interests.

We can also make explicit within the standard form argument other intermediate conclusions that follow from the stated premises. Although we don't have to do this, it can be a helpful thing to do when an argument contains multiple premises. For example, we could explicitly state the conclusion that follows from the four conditional statements that are the first four premises:

1. If we don't respond to Assad's use of chemical weapons, then Assad's regime will continue using them with impunity.
2. If Assad's regime uses chemical weapons with impunity, this will effectively erode the ban on them.
3. If the ban on chemical weapons erodes, then other tyrants will be more likely to attain and use them.
4. If other tyrants attain and use chemical weapons, U.S. troops will be more likely to face chemical weapons on the battlefield.
5. Therefore, if we don't respond to Assad's use of chemical weapons, U.S. troops will be more likely to face chemical weapons on the battlefield. (from 1-4)

Premise 5 is an intermediate conclusion that makes explicit what follows from premises 1-4 (which I have represented using parentheses after that intermediate conclusion). We can do the same thing with the inference that follows from premises, 1, 7, and 8 (i.e., line 9). If we add in our missing premises then we have a reconstructed argument for what I earlier called the "intermediate conclusion" (i.e., the one that Obama most directly argues for):

1. If we don't respond to Assad's use of chemical weapons, then Assad's regime will continue using them with impunity.
2. If Assad's regime uses chemical weapons with impunity, this will effectively erode the ban on them.
3. If the ban on chemical weapons erodes, then other tyrants will be more likely to attain and use them.
4. If other tyrants attain and use chemical weapons, U.S. troops will be more likely to face chemical weapons on the battlefield.
5. Therefore, if we don't respond to Assad's use of chemical weapons, U.S. troops will be more likely to face chemical weapons on the battlefield. (from 1-4)
6. If we don't respond to Assad's use of chemical weapons and if fighting spills beyond Syrian borders, our allies could face these chemical weapons.
7. If Assad's regime uses chemical weapons with impunity, it will weaken prohibitions on other weapons of mass destruction.
8. If prohibitions on other weapons of mass destruction are weakened, this will embolden Assad's ally, Iran, to develop a nuclear program.
9. Therefore, if we don't respond to Assad's use of chemical weapons, this will embolden Assad's ally, Iran, to develop a nuclear program. (from 1, 7-8)
10. An increased likelihood of U.S. troops or allies facing chemical weapons on the battlefield or Iran becoming emboldened to develop a nuclear program are threats to U.S. national security interests.
11. Therefore, a failure to respond to Assad's use of chemical weapons is a threat to our national security. (from 5, 6, 9, 10)

As always, in this standard form argument I've listed in parentheses after the relevant statements which statements those statements follow from. The only thing now missing is how we get from this intermediate conclusion to what I earlier called the main conclusion. The main conclusion (i.e., that it is in national
security interests to respond to Assad with military force) might be thought to follow directly. But it doesn't. It seems that Obama is relying on yet another unstated assumption. Consider: even if it is true that we should respond to a threat to our national security, it doesn't follow that we should respond with military force. For example, maybe we could respond with certain kinds of economic sanctions that would force the country to submit to our will. Furthermore, maybe there are some security threats such that responding to them with military force would only create further, and worse, security threats. Presumably we wouldn't want our response to a security threat to create even bigger security threats. For these reasons, we can see that Obama's argument, if it is to be valid, also relies on missing premises such as these:

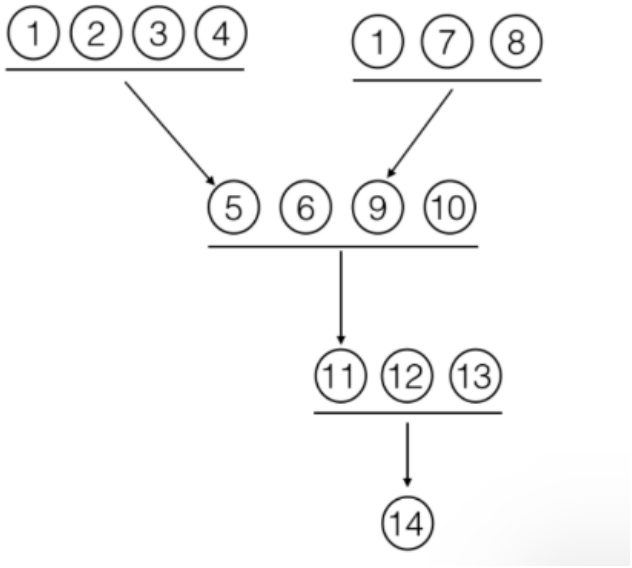
Missing premise 2: The only way that the United States can adequately respond to the security threat that Assad poses is by military force.

Missing premise 3: It is in the national security interests of the United States to respond adequately to any national security threat.

These are big assumptions and they may very well turn out to be mistaken. Nevertheless, it is important to see that the main conclusion Obama argues for depends on these missing premises—premises that he never explicitly states in his argument. So here is the final, reconstructed argument in standard form. I have italicized each missing premise or intermediate conclusion that I have added but that wasn't explicitly stated in Obama's argument.

1. If we don't respond to Assad's use of chemical weapons, then Assad's regime will continue using them with impunity.
2. If Assad's regime uses chemical weapons with impunity, this will effectively erode the ban on them.
3. If the ban on chemical weapons erodes, then other tyrants will be more likely to attain and use them.
4. If other tyrants attain and use chemical weapons, U.S. troops will be more likely to face chemical weapons on the battlefield.
5. Therefore, if we don't respond to Assad's use of chemical weapons, U.S. troops will be more likely to face chemical weapons on the battlefield. (from 1-4)
6. If we don't respond to Assad's use of chemical weapons and if fighting spills beyond Syrian borders, our allies could face these chemical weapons.
7. If Assad's regime uses chemical weapons with impunity, it will weaken prohibitions on other weapons of mass destruction.
8. If prohibitions on other weapons of mass destruction are weakened, this will embolden Assad's ally, Iran, to develop a nuclear program.
9. Therefore, if we don't respond to Assad's use of chemical weapons, this will embolden Assad's ally, Iran, to develop a nuclear program. (from 1, 7-8)
10. An increased likelihood of U.S. troops or allies facing chemical weapons on the battlefield or Iran becoming emboldened to develop a nuclear program are threats to U.S. national security interests.
11. Therefore, a failure to respond to Assad's use of chemical weapons is a threat to our national security. (from 5, 6, 9, 10)
12. The only way that the United States can adequately respond to the security threat that Assad poses is by military force.
13. It is in the national security interests of the United States to respond adequately to any national security threat.
14. Therefore, it is in the national security interests of the United States to respond to Assad's use of chemical weapons with military force. (from 11-13)

In addition to showing the structure of the argument by use of parentheses which show which statements follow from which, we can also diagram the arguments spatially as we did in section 1.4 like this:



This is just another way of representing what I have already represented in the standard form argument, using parentheses to describe the structure. As is perhaps even clearer in the spatial representation of the argument's structure, this argument is complex in that it has numerous subarguments. So while statement 11 is a premise of the main argument for the main conclusion (statement 14), statement 11 is also itself a conclusion of a subargument whose premises are statements 5, 6, 9, and 10. And although statement 9 is a premise in that argument, it itself is a conclusion of yet another subargument whose premises are statements 1, 7 and 8. Almost any interesting argument will be complex in this way, with further subarguments in support of the premises of the main argument. This chapter has provided you the tools to be able to reconstruct arguments like these. As we have seen, there is much to consider in reconstructing a complex argument. As with any skill, a true mastery of it requires lots of practice. In many ways, this is a skill that is more like an art than a science. The next chapter will introduce you to some basic formal logic, which is perhaps more like a science than an art.

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1.2: Arguments

When we give reasons for holding a view or reaching a conclusion, the process is intrinsically articulate. Giving reasons requires language, concepts and skill with words, not just a simple ability to talk. For two (or more) people to share their reasoning requires a kind of reflective articulateness, an ability to express reasoning in a way that is intelligible to a particular audience. . . . What we will call "argument" here is meant to capture everything we make explicit when we give reasons for a view or proposition. . . . Much of the difficulty in reasoning together comes from simply not understanding each other's arguments—from not understanding the significance of the words to express reasons and the views they support.

—LARRY WRIGHT1

The Importance of Arguments

I am in an unusual career, where arguments dominate my professional life. I am paid to teach my students what philosophers have had to say on a great array of topics. Almost always, these philosophers, whether they are the historical "biggies" or contemporary thinkers, support their theories with arguments. Obviously, if I am going to do my job, I need to help my students sort out the good arguments from the bad. As a professor, I also participate in what is called "shared governance," and as a consequence, I am required to vote and help decide policies, curricula, and other matters of university importance. Administrators and my colleagues consistently defend positions of great significance to the institution with impassioned arguments. Since I take this part of my profession very seriously, I find it essential to decide which of these arguments I find most persuasive.

Most of us are not simply consumers of arguments, we are producers as well. In my own professional work, I present and defend theories about privacy, the Constitution, the death penalty, the existence of God, and a number of other philosophically, politically, and legally controversial topics. As an active participant in shared governance, I take sides, advocate positions, and occasionally lead the charge for particular causes. All this demands that I defend my views. In these cases, it is my name on the argument, and there is a heightened sense not just of ownership but of personal and professional responsibility. I need my arguments to be as strong as they can be not just convincing but plausible and hopefully pointing in the right direction.

Your life may not be as argument-intensive as mine, but if you stop to reflect a bit, I think you'll find arguments all around you. Advertisers make arguments for why you should buy their products and politicians for why they deserve your vote. You may need the advice from accountants and economists, hopefully backed up with arguments, to plan for a major business investment or your retirement. And you are a producer of arguments as well. That memo you wrote to your boss for a change in the way things are done or the case you just made to your partner about the need to buy a new car is an argument.

This book is about arguments and a suggested technique for distinguishing good arguments from bad ones. These general hints are intended to be of use both when you find yourself in the position of the consumer of an argument and when you must make some decision about the quality of its evidence as well as when you are the producer of the argument and desire to present the strongest evidence you can. I don't claim to have a magic bullet that will automatically show the truth about complicated issues. But I think you will be pleasantly surprised at how often this technique proves useful for thinking through these issues, finding out where you stand, and even beginning the process of formulating your own arguments about them.

What Is an Argument?

One potentially misleading aspect in some of my previous examples is that when it comes to controversial issues such as abortion or the death penalty, tempers can be high. And trust me, debates about curriculum or university policy can be just as emotionally explosive. There is a perfectly fine use of the word *argument* that basically means a verbal fight. Joe and Sally got into a terrible argument about his failure to do his share of the house cleaning. That is not what we will mean by the term, however. Sure, there will be times when arguments are very important, and disagreements about their strength or weakness will touch our emotions as much as our reason. There will be many other times, however, when arguments are simply there for our consideration, and we can assess them free of any passion or personal commitment. Indeed, as much as is possible, I would recommend adopting the more dispassionate approach, even when you feel strongly about what is at issue.

It is useful to see an argument as a complex arrangement of three quite different things. There will be what logicians call a *conclusion*—some theory, hypothesis, or position that the argument seeks to defend. There will be *premises*—facts, data, or

evidence that the argument uses to support the conclusion. And there will be a relationship between the premises and conclusion whereby the conclusion *follows from* the premises. We can schematically represent an argument as follows:

e_1. Premise

e_2. Premise

e_3. Premise

. . .

e_n. Premise

---

t_0. Conclusion

Let's begin at the bottom. Every argument will have a *conclusion*—that's part of the definition of an argument. When we put an argument in what we will be calling its *schematic form*, it will always come at the end, under the big, heavy line. But in the real world of arguments, we should treat the term *conclusion* as technical jargon. Conclusions don't always come at the conclusion of a person's argument. Sometimes they come at the beginning.

> Dick's cheating on Jane. *He told her he had to work late, but Sally saw his car at Joe's Bar. Not only that, he leers at other women, and the last three times she called him, he didn't answer.*

Sometimes they come in the middle.

> *Charlie's take-home exam was word-for-word identical to Sarah's. Clearly,* Charlie copied it from Sarah. *The guy's a loser, never comes to class, and doesn't know how to write very well.*

And, of course, some of the time, they are at the end.

> *The light from virtually every galaxy is "red-shifted." This shows that every galaxy is moving away from every other galaxy. Therefore,* the physical universe is expanding.

I have used the lowercase letter *t* in my schematic representation to stand for *theory*. The subscript "0" is used to do two jobs. Although there is only one theory defended in the argument's conclusion (though that single conclusion can be complicated and composed of many parts—"therefore, Jake did it or helped plan it, or someone read his diary"), we will need to keep track of other possible theories besides the one defended in the argument. So "0" can be understood as the number zero and starting a sequence of numbered theories. But the "0" can also be read as the letter *o* and standing for *original*—the original theory or conclusion in the argument.

To standardize things, we will use the lowercase letter *e* to stand for an individual bit of *evidence*. There are no set numbers of premises, or pieces of the evidence, in an argument. Sometimes there will be just a single datum, and sometimes, there will be quite a bit of supporting data. The previous examples illustrate not just that conclusions can come in many places in the statement of an argument but that the same holds true the statements of the evidence.

Let's recast our schematized argument in terms of evidence for a theory:

e_1. Evidence (datum)

e_2. Evidence (another datum)

e_3. Evidence (another datum)

. . .

e_n. Evidence (another datum)

---

t_0. Theory

Logical Connection

We've said a bit about the top and the bottom in our schematic representation of an argument. What about that conspicuous, big, fat line? In good arguments, the conclusion *follows from* the premises; the evidence *supports* the theory. What exactly is this relationship of support or following from? That turns out to be a very controversial issue in both philosophy and mathematical logic.

In some cases, the relationship is *semantic*. If we just understood enough about the meanings of all the words in the premises, we would see that the conclusion has to be true. Often the examples are pretty trivial.

e_1. The number is even.

e_2. The number is greater than seventeen.

---

t_0. The number is not prime.

Other times, however, there's quite a bit of information hiding in the premises, and the conclusions are a little surprising and quite significant.

e_1. The figure is a plane triangle.

---

t_0. The interior angles of the figure equal exactly 180°.

Arguments of the previous type have a technical name. They are called *deductive arguments*. In a successful deductive argument, the relationship between the premises and conclusion (it's artificial here to call them evidence and theory) is a very special one. Logicians call it *validity*. Valid arguments are ones where *if* the premises are true, the conclusion *has to be true*. Many colleges and universities have whole courses on deductive (or symbolic) logic. Very sophisticated techniques are developed for determining validity. We will not spend time reviewing this material because as interesting (and just plain fun) as it is, one almost never finds deductive arguments being put forward outside of academic philosophy and mathematics.

A second way of connecting premises to conclusions relies on the technical fields of mathematics and statistics. We cannot as conveniently ignore these arguments, since they play huge roles in contemporary science. Our approach to them, however, will be a little indirect. Rather than going through the basics of *probability theory* and then developing statistical tests for making sense of numerical data, we will treat these arguments as special cases of *inductive arguments*. This latter jargon simply means that the argument claims that the conclusion *follows from* the premises but *not* deductively—that is, it is possible for the premises to be true, yet the conclusion turns out to be false. Now, of course, it should be relatively rare that in good inductive arguments, the premises would be true and the conclusion false; otherwise these arguments will not be very useful. It is a matter of great controversy in logic, philosophy, and even the sciences as to how we describe this relationship between evidence and theories. The rest of this book is devoted to showing you one way of characterizing this relationship.

Inference to the Best Explanation

Consider the three short examples mentioned previously. We had purported evidence that Dick was unfaithful—the leering, the excuse about being sick, the car outside the bar, and the missed phone calls. We had purported evidence about the copied take-home exam—the word-for-word identical submissions, Charlie's chronic absences, and his failures as a writer. Finally, we had the evidence about the expanding universe—the red-shifted light from distant galaxies. In each of these cases, the suggested theory *explains* significant parts of our evidence. Charlie being a cheater doesn't explain his bad writing, but it sure helps us understand how the two exams ended up being the same. Dick's cheating (in a very different way) would explain why he was at the bar when he said he was sick. And an expanding universe explains the Doppler shift we observe in the light from galaxies.

This suggests a generalization. Suppose we treat the theory being defended in an inductive argument as an explanation of the data (at least some of the data) contained in the evidence. We get the following very symmetrical picture of an argument:

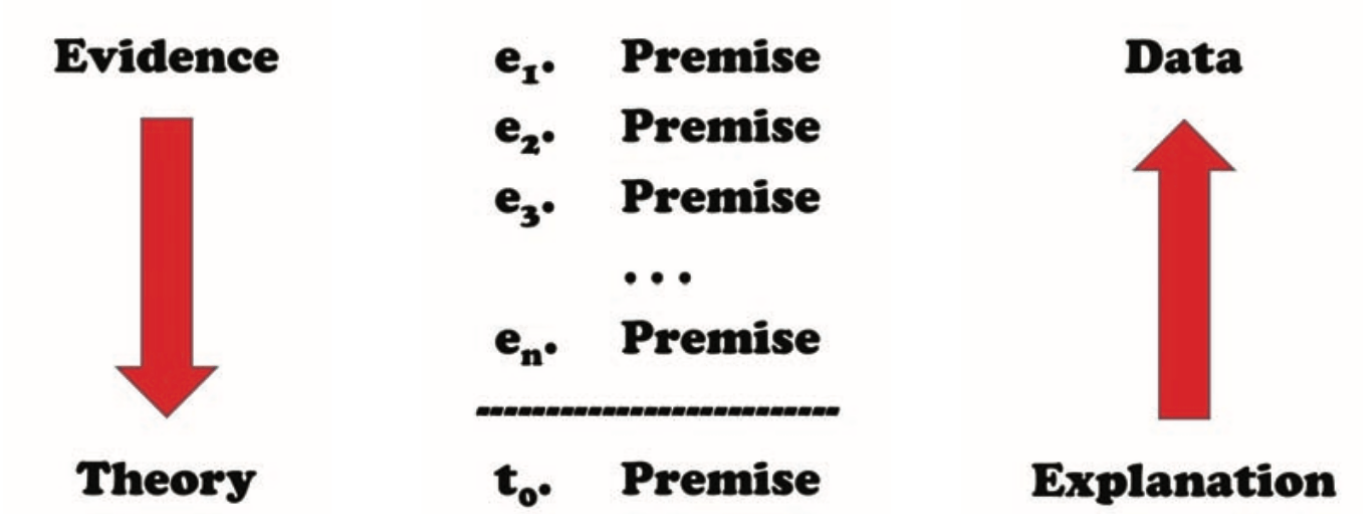


Figure 1.2.1

Inference to the best explanation assumes this general picture of inductive arguments. The relationship of *support* or *following from* becomes one of good explanation. Evidence for a theory is strong, or good or sound, if and only if, the theory *best explains* the relevant data that is being offered as evidence. This definition of good evidence gives us a very useful device for testing the quality of purported evidence.

In the next chapter, I intend to lay out a kind of practical test for answering questions about the strength of arguments, about the quality of evidence. Does Connie have *good evidence* that her boyfriend was smooching Mary Jane during his absence at the record hop? Is there a *strong argument* that Charlie copied the take-home exam? Do astronomers *really know* that the physical universe is expanding? We can only begin to answer these questions when we are in absolute agreement about what the argument is in the first place.

A Couple of Arguments from Sherlock Holmes

Let's look at a couple of examples of evidence that lead to some conclusions for Sherlock Holmes.

> *Here are the missing links of the very simple chain: 1. You had chalk between your left finger and thumb when you returned from the club last night. 2. You put chalk there when you play billiards, to steady the cue. 3. You never play billiards except with Thurston. 4. You told me, four weeks ago, that Thurston had an option on some South African property which would expire in a month, and which he desired you to share with him. 5. Your check book is locked in my drawer, and you have not asked for the key. 6. You do not propose to invest your money in this manner.*2

The beginning of *The Adventure of the Dancing Men* begins with a little case study in Sherlock Holmes's "deductive" method. Holmes's method, of course, is not deductive in the formal logician's sense but inductive, or better, abductive. It is an inference to the best explanation. Holmes possesses a fair amount of data.

e_1. Watson had chalk between his left finger and thumb.

e_2. He uses the chalk when he plays billiards.

e_3. He only plays billiards with Thurston.

e_4. He told Holmes four weeks ago that Thurston had an option on some South African property, which would expire in a month.

e_5. Watson's checkbook is locked in Holmes's drawer.

e_6. Watson has not asked for the key.

Holmes explains all this with the hypothesis that Watson has decided against the investment. Holmes goes on to explicate his

reasoning with the metaphor of a chain.

> *You see, my dear Watson . . . it is not really difficult to construct a series of inferences, each dependent on its predecessor and each simple in itself. If, after doing so, one simply knocks out all the central inferences and presents one's audience with the starting-point and the conclusion, one may produce a startling, though possibly a meretricious, effect. Now, it was not really difficult, by an inspection of the groove between your left forefinger and thumb, to feel sure that you did not propose to invest your small capital in the gold fields.*3

Although I think it is clear that Holmes exaggerates when he claims that the inferences follow in sequential lockstep, the insight that explanatory reasoning often proceeds in steps is important. Here is how I would schematize Holmes's inference.

e_1. Watson had chalk between his left finger and thumb.

e_2. He uses the chalk when he plays billiards.

e_3. He only plays billiards with Thurston.

$t'_{\emptyset}$. Watson played billiards with Thurston last night.

e_4. He told Holmes four weeks ago that Thurston had an option on some South African property, which would expire in a month.

e_5. Watson's checkbook is locked in Holmes's drawer.

e_6. Watson has not asked for the key.

$t''_{\emptyset}$. Watson has decided against the investment.

Each of these inferences is to an "alleged" best explanation. $t'_{\emptyset}$ explains the chalk on his hand and is consistent with Holmes's background knowledge of Watson's preferences in playing partners. $t''_{\emptyset}$ explains the lack of a request for the key and is consistent with Holmes's knowledge of what Watson told him four weeks ago and the location of the checkbook.

But *The Adventure of the Dancing Men* is not really about chalk and South African investments; it's ultimately about murder and a couple of other mysteries that lead to the murder and its solution.

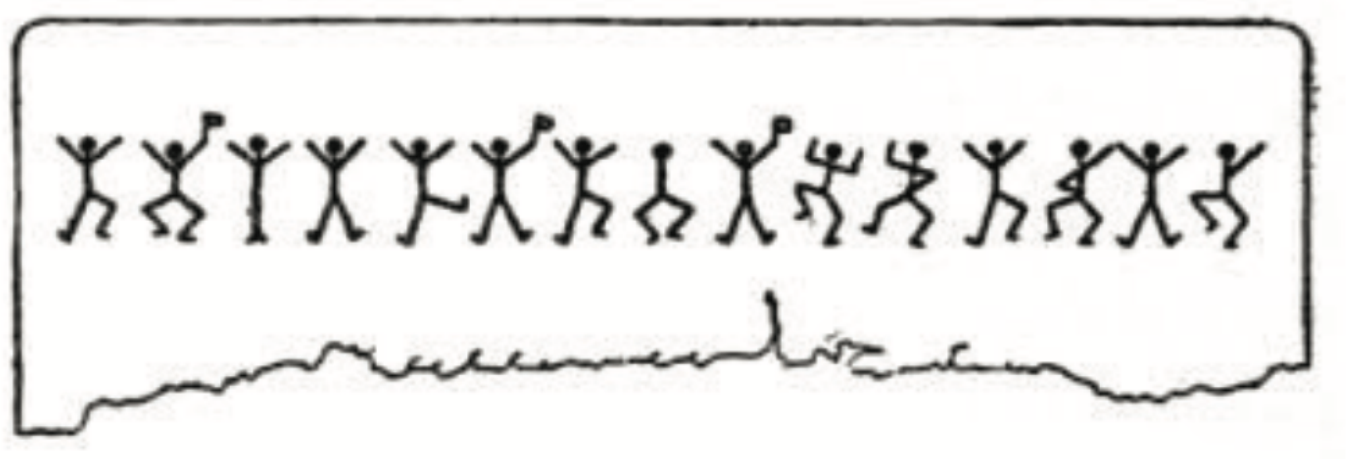


Figure 1.2.2: Dancing men cypher

Retrieved from Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, The Return of Sherlock Holmes, http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/108 (accessed June 26, 2018).

You'll enjoy the story, and it would be great practice if you paused here for a while and tried your hand at schematizing Holmes's argument for what happened at Ridling Thorpe Manor.

Consider, first, the mystery that gives the story its name. Holmes shows Watson a piece of paper with the above pencil markings.4

This is our first piece of evidence.

e_1. The dancing men document

Watson immediately offers an account: "Why, Holmes, it is a child's drawing." Holmes thinks otherwise. The dancing men drawings "have a meaning," but they might be "arbitrary" (think "one if by land and two if by sea") or they might be "systematic" (a cipher). Holmes bets on the latter. His client, Mr. Cubitt, has provided more data:

e_2. Mr. Cubitt's wife, Elsie, received a letter from America that very much upset her.

e_3. Other dancing men inscriptions, on both paper and chalk applied to buildings, have turned up at Ridling Thorpe Manor.

e_4. Holmes has knowledge of the relative frequency of letters in the English language.

---

t'_0. The dancing men figures stand for letters. And the messages are in English.

Holmes breaks the code. He is now able to translate the different messages that have turned up.

This leads to the second mystery: Why is Elsie so reticent to tell her husband about her past? Why is she so upset and frightened by the dancing men messages? Why did she stop her husband from confronting the stranger they caught in the act of scrawling one of the messages? Holmes is in a position to answer many of these questions simply by decoding the messages he has. In addition, Holmes explains Elsie's reticence and fear in terms of some connection to criminal activities in her past, and he knows that the correspondent is named Abe Slaney. A cable to a colleague in the States confirms that Slaney is "the most dangerous crook in Chicago." Slaney is imploring Elsie to return to him and finally threatening her. Holmes and Watson have plenty of evidence that necessitates hurrying to the Norfolk countryside.

e_5. The contents of the messages

e_6. Slaney is the most dangerous crook in Chicago.

e_7. Slaney's threat to Elsie

---

t''_0. Elsie, and perhaps Mr. Cubitt's, lives are in danger.

Sadly, they are too late. Immediately upon their arrival at the train station, they learn of the tragedy.

> *"It's a terrible business," said the stationmaster. "They are shot, both Mr. Hilton Cubitt and his wife. She shot him and then herself—so the servants say. He's dead and her life is despaired of."*5

The stationmaster has, of course, not only introduced crucial new evidence but also offered an explanation. Holmes proceeds to the murder scene, interviews two servants, and examines the room where the bodies have been found.

e_8. Cubitt is shot dead, and Elsie is gravely wounded with a gunshot to the head.

e_9. A revolver is found, still containing four bullets.

e_{10}. The servants report several things:

- • Both were awakened by the sound of a loud gunshot.
- • A short while later, they heard a second shot.
- • The victims were downstairs in the study.
- • A strong smell of gun smoke in the study.

- • The study window was shut and fastened.
- • The house was locked from the inside, and no one could have left.
- • They were both conscious of the smell of powder from the time they awakened upstairs.

There are still several pages to go in *The Adventures of the Dancing Men*, but Holmes has now basically solved the case. His reasoning is classic inference to the best explanation (IBE). How and why did Mr. Cubitt and Elsie come to be shot? Why were the servants conscious of the smell of powder while upstairs? And what about the mysterious Slaney?

Holmes is particularly fascinated by the powder aroma upstairs—"I commend that fact very carefully to your attention."6 Holmes's provisional hypothesis is that the window must have been open and the draft carried the smell. Careful examination of the study produces one last crucial bit of evidence.

e_{11}. A third bullet is discovered in the window sash.

A third bullet! Someone else is involved! They examine outside the window and discover important new data.

e_{12}. Trampled flowers, large masculine footprints, and a spent cartridge

But why only the sound of two gunshots? The first one was extremely loud. Might it "have been two shots fired almost at the same instant"?7 Holmes concludes "it was undoubtedly so."8

Holmes proceeds to entrap Slaney, and he confirms that he was one of the authors of the dancing men messages and that he and Mr. Cubitt exchanged gunshots through the window. The story never tells us precisely what happened to Elsie, but we know, just as Holmes knew.

t_0. Slaney sought to win Elsie back and was refused. He came to the manor and exchanged almost simultaneous gunshots with Cubitt. Elsie closed the window and either heartbroken at the death of her husband, guilt-ridden and feeling partial responsibility, or misguidedly seeking to preserve her husband's good name, shot herself in the head.

Schematizing the Argument

Let me state something explicitly. *The single hardest part of argument analysis or the IBE recipe may often be simply identifying what the argument is in the first place*. There are a number of reasons for this. First and foremost, people aren't always as clear as the might be when they state their arguments. But there are other complicating factors as well. My guess is that Conan Doyle would have said he wasn't presenting an argument at all but simply telling a story. Still, I think it's clear that the story is about Holmes's following the evidence and coming to a conclusion about what happened. Add to all that some arguments touch on deeply divisive moral and political issues and few of us read them and set our personal politics to the side. These unavoidable biases that we all carry with us will often tempt us to simply misread what the argument is. Finally, as we get a hint of in this short story but becomes daunting when an argument is developed over the course of a whole book, the sheer number of words, thoughts, and sentences makes it extremely challenging to keep the structure of the argument clearly in mind.

Granted all this, the first step in the IBE procedure that we will develop in the next chapter is not only the most difficult; it is the most important. If we misrepresent what the argument is, then all our work in analyzing it will be a waste of time. Who cares if you show "the argument" to be a spectacular success or a dismal failure if it wasn't the real argument in the first place?

Useful schematization requires three virtues, all of which defy simple characterization. First and foremost, as we have just emphasized, you should strive for *copy fidelity*. Your task is to characterize "the other person's argument," a representation of his or her evidence. You may think of better ways to make the argument, or you may even think that the evidence points in a different direction. That's all fine and good and will be useful in later steps. Right now, however, your job is to faithfully represent the argument as it was stated. You want to also strive for *brevity*. We just saw how an argument might take up several pages of a short story but just imagine when we look in a later chapter at Darwin's "abstract" of his theory in *On the Origin of Species*9 and try to keep straight all the evidence presented in more than four hundred pages. In order for your schematization to be useful to you, you will need to keep your representation of the evidence down to, say, no more than a page. Finally, and most difficult of all, you should strive for *charity* in your schematized arguments. You want to present the argument in the strongest form you can. This is not because you are being nice or discounting the previous virtue of copy fidelity. It is because you want to avoid at all costs weakening the evidence in the way you choose to schematize it. This is particularly important when you are dealing with arguments with which you disagree. If you come to the judgment that the evidence is weak, you need to make darn sure that you've given the evidence its best shot.

Start at the Bottom (Find the Conclusion)

We've already discussed the fact that *conclusions* may come anywhere in a statement of an argument. Still, in the s*chematic form* I am urging on you, they always come at the bottom; they are always are identified as t_0 ("0" to start a sequence of explanations and *o* as a reminder that this explanation is the original one), and they are always *explanations* of the data, not simply statements of the data. I strongly suggest that you begin your schematizing of the argument by trying to identify its conclusion.

Oftentimes, you will find hints in the statement that will guide you to the argument's conclusion. There are many words and phrases that are commonly used to alert readers or listeners that an inference is being drawn. Some of the classics you will find in any introductory logic book are as follows: "therefore," "hence," "so," "it follows that," and many others. But at other times, you are simply expected to pick out what the theory is that is supposed to be supported by the evidence. The best advice in these latter cases is simply to ask yourself something very general and vague such as "What's the point of all this?" or, as suggested previously, "What the heck is going on?" Once you have a candidate, now see whether it explains some of the data in the argument. If it doesn't seem to, you might want to look for another candidate as the argument's conclusion.

Two other general comments are appropriate here. First, don't get discouraged. This is hard stuff. It will get easier and more natural as you get more experience using the recipe. And second, there will be times when you fail to discover a conclusion to begin your schematization because the passage of prose in front of you is not an argument in the first place. We obviously use language do lots of things—make simple assertions, push people's buttons, or simply vent—stating an argument is only one use of language.

Find the Relevant Evidence

In *The Adventure of the Dancing Men*, we learned a lot of stuff. Holmes enjoyed playing with Watson's head. Mr. Cubitt was "a tall, ruddy, clean shaven gentleman." And that Inspector Martin was a "dapper little man, with a quick, alert manner and a waxed moustache." This is just good literary technique. There's also the important information at the end of the story when Slaney is arrested and confesses. But these data are only tangential to solving the murder. The data in e_1 through e_{12}, however, are crucial to understanding what happened, and all of it should be included in a complete schematization of the argument.

Another Brokenhearted Teenager

Here's a sad story.

Lyrics to "It's My Party" can be found here: https://genius.com/Lesley-gore-its-my-party-lyrics, and Lesley Gore performing her song can be found here: https://youtu.be/acRMALrg1t4.

Lesley is in tears, and she assures us we would be too if something similar happened to us. So what the heck happened? She doesn't spell it out, but she knows and so do we. Take some time, now, and schematize Lesley's argument. What is her evidence that Johnny is no longer hers and has taken up with Judy?

EXERCISES

1. 1. What is an argument? What are the three components of any argument?
2. 2. How can you have a big argument, with lots of name-calling, without either party presenting an argument for why they feel aggrieved?
3. 3. What do you think of the quality of Holmes's evidence for his theory that Watson had decided not to go ahead with the investment? Why?

QUIZ FOUR

The following article comes from the *New York Times*. Your task is to schematize the argument for the conclusion that William Henry Harrison died from enteric fever. The article "What Really Killed William Henry Harrison?" by Jan McHugh and Philip A. Mackowiak, March 31, 2014, is available here: https://www.nytimes.com/2014/04/01/science/what-really-killed-william-henry-harrison.html

Notes

1. Larry Wright, *Critical Thinking* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), ix.

2. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, “The Adventure of the Dancing Men,” in *The Return of Sherlock Holmes* (New York: W. R. Caldwell, 1905), http://www.gutenberg.org/files/108/108-h/108-h.htm.

3. Doyle.

4. Doyle.

5. Doyle.

6. Doyle.

7. Doyle.

8. Doyle.

9. Charles Darwin, *On the Origin of Species: A Facsimile of the First Edition* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001).

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1.3: Deductive and Inductive Arguments

As we noted earlier, there are different logics—different approaches to distinguishing good arguments from bad ones. One of the reasons we need different logics is that there are different kinds of arguments. In this section, we distinguish two types: deductive and inductive arguments.

Deductive Arguments

First, deductive arguments. These are distinguished by their aim: a **deductive argument** attempts to provide premises that guarantee, necessitate its conclusion. Success for a deductive argument, then, does not come in degrees: either the premises do in fact guarantee the conclusion, in which case the argument is a good, successful one, or they don't, in which case it fails. Evaluation of deductive arguments is a black-and-white, yes-or-no affair; there is no middle ground.

We have a special term for a successful deductive argument: we call it **valid**. Validity is a central concept in the study of logic. It's so important, we're going to define it three times. Each of these three definitions is equivalent to the others; they are just three different ways of saying the same thing:

An argument is **valid** just in case...
(i) its premises guarantee its conclusion; i.e.,
(ii) IF its premises are true, then its conclusion must also be true; i.e., (iii) it is impossible for its premises to be true and its conclusion false.

Here's an example of a valid deductive argument:

All humans are mortal.
Socrates is a human.
Therefore, Socrates is mortal.

This argument is valid because the premises do in fact guarantee the conclusion: if they're true (as a matter of fact, they are), then the conclusion must be true; it's impossible for the premises to be true and the conclusion false.

Here's a surprising fact about validity: what makes a deductive argument valid has nothing to do with its content; rather, validity is determined by the argument's **form**. That is to say, what makes our Socrates argument valid is not that it says a bunch of accurate things about Socrates, humanity, and mortality. The content doesn't make a difference. Instead, it's the form that matters—the pattern that the argument exhibits.

Later, when undertake a more detailed study of deductive logic, we will give a precise definition of logical form.[6] (Definitions, actually. We'll study two different deductive logics, each with its own definition of form.) For now, we'll use this rough gloss: the form of an argument is what's left over when you strip away all the non-logical terms and replace them with blanks. [7] (What counts as a "logical term," you're wondering? Unhelpful answer: it depends on the logic; different logics count different terms as logical. Again, this is just a rough gloss. We don't need precision just yet, but we'll get it eventually.)

Here's what that looks like for our Socrates argument:

All A are B.
x is A.
Therefore, x is B.

The letter are the blanks: they're placeholders, variables. As a matter of convention, we're using capital letters to stand for groups of things (humans, mortals) and lower case letters to stand for individual things (Socrates).

The Socrates argument is a good, valid argument because it exhibits this good, valid form. Our third way of wording the definition of validity helps us see why this is a valid form: it's impossible for the premises to be true and the conclusion false, in that it's impossible to plug in terms for A, B, and x in such a way that the premises come out true and the conclusion comes out false.

A consequence of the fact that validity is determined entirely by an argument's form is that, given a valid form, every single

argument that has that form will be valid. So any argument that has the same form as our Socrates argument will be valid; that is, we can pick things at random to stick in for A, B, and x, and we're guaranteed to get a valid argument. Here's a silly example:

All apples are bananas.
Donald Trump is an apple.
Therefore, Donald Trump is a banana.

This argument has the same form as the Socrates argument: we simply replaced A with 'apples', B with 'bananas', and x with 'Donald Trump'. That means it's a valid argument. That's a strange thing to say, since the argument is just silly—but it's the form that matters, not the content. Our second way of wording the definition of validity can help us here. The standard for validity is this: IF the premises are true, then the conclusion must be. That's a big 'IF'. In this case, as a matter of fact, the premises are not true (they're silly, plainly false). However, IF they were true—if in fact apples were a type of banana and Donald Trump were an apple—then the conclusion would be unavoidable: Trump would have to be a banana. The premises aren't true, but if they were, the conclusion would have to be—that's validity.

So it turns out that the actual truth or falsehood of the propositions in a valid argument are completely irrelevant to its validity. The Socrates argument has all true propositions and it's valid; the Donald Trump argument has all false propositions, but it's valid, too. They're both valid because they have a valid form; the truth/falsity of their propositions don't make any difference. This means that a valid argument can have propositions with almost any combination of truth- values: some true premises, some false ones, a true or false conclusion. One can fiddle around with the Socrates' argument's form, plugging different things in for A, B, and x, and see that this is so. For example, plug in 'ants' for A, 'bugs' for B, and Beyoncé for x: you get one true premise (All ants are bugs), one false one (Beyoncé is an ant), and a false conclusion (Beyoncé is a bug). Plug in other things and you can get any other combination of truth-values.

Any combination, that is, but one: you'll never get true premises and a false conclusion. That's because the Socrates' argument's form is a valid one; by definition, it's impossible to generate true premises and a false conclusion in that case.

This irrelevance of truth-value to judgments about validity means that those judgments are immune to revision. That is, once we decide whether an argument is valid or not, that decision cannot be changed by the discovery of new information. New information might change our judgment about whether a particular proposition in our argument is true or false, but that can't change our judgment about validity. Validity is determined by the argument's form, and new information can't change the form of an argument. The Socrates argument is valid because it has a valid form. Suppose we discovered, say, that as a matter of fact Socrates wasn't a human being at all, but rather an alien from outer space who got a kick out of harassing random people on the streets of ancient Athens.That information would change the argument's second premise—Socrates is human—from a truth to a falsehood. But it wouldn't make the argument invalid. The form is still the same, and it's a valid one.

It's time to face up to an awkward consequence of our definition of validity. Remember, logic is about evaluating arguments—saying whether they're good or bad. We've said that for deductive arguments, the standard for goodness is validity: the good deductive arguments are the valid ones. Here's where the awkwardness comes in: because validity is determined by form, it's possible to generate valid arguments that are nevertheless completely ridiculous-sounding on their face. Remember, the Donald Trump argument—where we concluded that he's a banana—is valid. In other words, we're saying that the Trump argument is good; it's valid, so it gets the logical thumbs-up. But that's nuts! The Trump argument is obviously bad, in some sense of 'bad', right? It's a collection of silly, nonsensical claims.

We need a new concept to specify what's wrong with the Trump argument. That concept is **soundness**. This is a higher standard of argument-goodness than validity; in order to meet it, an argument must satisfy two conditions.

> An argument is **sound** just in case (i) it's valid, AND (ii) its premises are in fact true. [8] (What about the conclusion? Does it have to be true? Yes: remember, for valid arguments, if the premises are true, the conclusion has to be. Sound arguments are valid, so it goes without saying that the conclusion is true, provided that the premises are.)

The Trump argument, while valid, is not sound, because it fails to satisfy the second condition: its premises are both false. The Socrates argument, however, which is valid and contains nothing but truths (Socrates was not in fact an alien), is sound.

The question now naturally arises: if soundness is a higher standard of argument-goodness than validity, why didn't we say that in the first place? Why so much emphasis on validity? The answer is this: we're doing logic here, and as logicians, we have no special insight into the soundness of arguments. Or rather, we should say that as logicians, we have only partial expertise on the question of soundness. Logic can tell us whether or not an argument is valid, but it cannot tell us whether or not it is sound. Logic has no special insight into the second condition for soundness, the actual truth-values of premises. To take an example

from the silly Trump argument, suppose you weren't sure about the truth of the first premise, which claims that all apples are bananas (you have very little experience with fruit, apparently). How would you go about determining whether that claim was true or false? Whom would you ask? Well, this is a pretty easy one, so you could ask pretty much anybody, but the point is this: if you weren't sure about the relationship between apples and bananas, you wouldn't think to yourself, "I better go find a logician to help me figure this out." Propositions make claims about how things are in the world. To figure out whether they're true or false, you need to consult experts in the relevant subject-matter. Most claims aren't about logic, so logic is very little help in determining truth-values. Since logic can only provide insight into the validity half of the soundness question, we focus on validity and leave soundness to one side.

Returning to validity, then, we're now in a position to do some actual logic. Given what we know,we can **demonstrate invalidity**; that is, we can prove that an invalid argument is invalid, and therefore bad (it can't be sound, either; the first condition for soundness is validity, so if the argument's invalid, the question of actual truth-values doesn't even come up). Here's how:

To **demonstrate the invalidity** of an argument, one must write down a new argument with the same form as the original, whose premises are in fact true and whose conclusion is in fact false. This new argument is called a **counterexample**.

Let's look at an example. The following argument is invalid:

Some mammals are swimmers.
All whales are swimmers.
Therefore, all whales are mammals.

Now, it's not really obvious that the argument is invalid. It does have one thing going for it: all the claims it makes are true. But we know that doesn't make any difference, since validity is determined by the argument's form, not its content. If this argument is invalid, it's invalid because it has a bad, invalid form. This is the form:

Some A are B.
All C are B.
Therefore, all C are A.

To prove that the original whale argument is invalid, we have to show that this form is invalid. For a valid form, we learned, it's impossible to plug things into the blanks and get true premises and a false conclusion; so for an invalid form, it's **possible** to plug things into the blanks and get that result. That's how we generate our counterexample: we plug things in for A, B, and C so that the premises turn out true and the conclusion turns out false. There's no real method here; you just use your imagination to come up with an A, B, and C that give the desired result. [9] (Possibly helpful hint: universal generalizations (All ___ are ____) are rarely true, so if you have to make one true, as in this example, it might be good to start there; likewise, particular claims (Some ___ are ___) are rarely false, so if you have to make one false—you don't in this particular example, but if you had one as a conclusion, you would—that would be a good place to start.) Here's a counterexample:

Some lawyers are American citizens.
All members of Congress are American citizens.
Therefore, all members of Congress are lawyers.

For A, we inserted 'lawyers', for B we chose 'American citizens', and for C, 'members of Congress'. The first premise is clearly true. The second premise is true: non-citizens aren't eligible to be in Congress. And the conclusion is false: there are lots of people in Congress who are non- lawyers—doctors, businesspeople, etc.

That's all we need to do to prove that the original whale-argument is invalid: come up with one counterexample, one way of filling in the blanks in its form to get true premises and a false conclusion. We only have to prove that it's *possible* to get true premises and a false conclusion, and for that, you only need one example.

What's far more difficult is to prove that a particular argument is valid. To do that, we'd have to show that its form is such that it's *impossible* to generate a counterexample, to fill in the blanks to get true premises and a false conclusion. Proving that it's possible is easy; you only need one counterexample. Proving that it's impossible is hard; in fact, at first glance, it looks impossibly hard! What do you do? Check all the possible ways of plugging things into the blanks, and make sure that none of them turn out to have true premises and a false conclusion? That's nuts! There are, literally, infinitely many ways to fill in the blanks in an argument's form. Nobody has the time to check infinitely many potential counterexamples.

Well, take heart; it's still early. For now, we're able to do a little bit of deductive logic: given an invalid argument, we can

demonstrate that it is in fact invalid. We're not yet in the position we'd like to be in, namely of being able to determine, for any argument whatsoever, whether it's valid or not. Proving validity looks too hard based on what we know so far. But we'll know more later: in chapters 3 and 4 we will study two deductive logics, and each one will give us a method of deciding whether or not any given argument is valid. But that'll have to wait. Baby steps.

Inductive Reasoning

That's all we'll say for now about deductive arguments. On to the other type of argument we're introducing in this section: **inductive arguments**. These are distinguished from their deductive cousins by their relative lack of ambition. Whereas deductive arguments aim to give premises that guarantee/necessitate the conclusion, inductive arguments are more modest: they aim merely to provide premises that make the conclusion more probable than it otherwise would be; they aim to support the conclusion, but without making it unavoidable.

Here is an example of an inductive argument:

I'm telling you, you're not going die taking a plane to visit us. Airplane crashes happen far less frequently than car crashes, for example; so you're taking a bigger risk if you drive. In fact, plane crashes are so rare, you're far more likely to die from slipping in the bathtub. You're not going to stop taking showers, are you?

The speaker is trying to convince her visitor that he won't die in a plane crash on the way to visit her. That's the conclusion: you won't die. This claim is supported by the others—which emphasize how rare plane crashes are—but it is not guaranteed by them. After all, plane crashes sometimes do happen. Instead, the premises give reasons to believe that the conclusion—you won't die—is very probable.

Since inductive arguments have a different, more modest goal than their deductive cousins, it would be unreasonable for us to apply the same evaluative standards to both kinds of argument. That is, we can't use the terms 'valid' and 'invalid' to apply to inductive arguments. Remember, for an argument to be valid, its premises must guarantee its conclusion. But inductive arguments don't even try to provide a guarantee of the conclusion; technically, then, they're all invalid. But that won't do. We need a different evaluative vocabulary to apply to inductive arguments. We will say of inductive arguments that they are (relatively) **strong or weak**, depending on how probable their conclusions are in light of their premises. One inductive argument is stronger than another when its conclusion is more probable than the other, given their respective premises.

One consequence of this difference in evaluative standards for inductive and deductive arguments is that for the former, unlike the latter, our evaluations are subject to revision in light of new evidence. Recall that since the validity or invalidity of a deductive argument is determined entirely by its form, as opposed to its content, the discovery of new information could not affect our evaluation of those arguments. The Socrates argument remained valid, even if we discovered that Socrates was in fact an alien. Our evaluations of inductive arguments, though, are not immune to revision in this way. New information might make the conclusion of an inductive argument more or less probable, and so we would have to revise our judgment accordingly, saying that the argument is stronger or weaker. Returning to the example above about plane crashes, suppose we were to discover that the FBI in the visitor's hometown had recently being hearing lots of "chatter" from terrorist groups active in the area, with strong indications that they were planning to blow up a passenger plane. Yikes! This would affect our estimation of the probability of the conclusion of the argument—that the visitor wasn't going to die in a crash. The probability of not dying goes down (as the probability of dying goes up). This new information would trigger a re-evaluation of the argument, and we would say it's now weaker. If, on the other hand, we were to learn that the airline that flies between the visitor's and the speaker's towns had recently upgraded its entire fleet, getting rid of all of its older planes, replacing them with newer, more reliable model, while in addition instituting a new, more thorough and rigorous program of pre- and post-flight safety and maintenance inspections—well, then we might revise our judgment in the other direction. Given this information, we might judge that things are even safer for the visitor as it regards plane travel; that is, the proposition that the visitor won't die is now even more probable than it was before. This new information would strengthen the argument to that conclusion.

Reasonable follow-up question: **how much** is the argument strengthened or weakened by the new information imagined in these scenarios? Answer: how should I know? Sorry, that's not very helpful. But here's the point: we're talking about probabilities here; sometimes it's hard to know what the probability of something happening really is. Sometimes it's not: if I flip a coin, I know that the probability of it coming up tails is 0.5. But how probable is it that a particular plane from Airline X will crash with our hypothetical visitor on board? I don't know. And how much more probable is a disaster on the assumption of increased terrorist chatter? Again, I have no idea. All I know is that the probability of dying on the plane goes up in that case. And in the scenario in which Airline X has lots of new planes and security measures, the probability of a crash goes down. Sometimes, with inductive arguments, all we can do is make *relative* judgments about strength and weakness: in light of these new facts, the conclusion is

more or less probable than it was before we learned of the new facts. Sometimes, however, we can be precise about probabilities and make **absolute** judgments about strength and weakness: we can say precisely how probable a conclusion is in light of the premises supporting it. But this is a more advanced topic. We will discuss inductive logic in chapters 5 and 6, and will go into more depth then. Until then, patience. Baby steps.

Exercises

1. Determine whether the following statements are true or false.

(a) Not all valid arguments are sound.
(b) An argument with a false conclusion cannot be sound.
(c) An argument with true premises and a true conclusion is valid. (d) An argument with a false conclusion cannot be valid.

2. Demonstrate that the following arguments are invalid.

(a) Some politicians are Democrats.
Hillary Clinton is a politician.
Hillary Clinton is a Democrat.

The argument's form is:

Some A are B. x is A
Therefore, x is B.

[where 'A' and 'B' stand for groups of things and 'x' stands for an individual]

(b) All dinosaurs are animals.
Some animals are extinct.
Therefore, all dinosaurs are extinct.

The argument's form is:

All A are B.
Some B are C.
Therefore, all A are C.

[where 'A', 'B', and 'C' stand for groups of things]

3. Consider the following inductive argument (about a made-up person):

Sally Johansson does all her grocery shopping at an organic food co-op. She's a huge fan of tofu. She's really into those week-long juice cleanse thingies. And she's an active member of PETA. I conclude that she's a vegetarian.

(a) Make up a new piece of information about Sally that weakens the argument.
(b) Make up a new piece of information about Sally that strengthens the argument.

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2: EPISTEMOLOGY

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2.1: THE RATIONALISTS

Is all of our knowledge based on the evidence of the senses, or is some of it justified by other means? This epistemological question about the foundations of knowledge is what separates Rationalism and Empiricism. According to **Rationalism** at least some knowledge can be had through reason alone. For rationalists, the paradigm example of knowledge acquired independent of sense experience is mathematics. Once we have the concepts required to understand mathematical propositions (like 2+2=4), no experience is required to be justified in accepting their truth. They seem to be adequately known "through the light of reason." **Empiricism**, on the other hand, takes all of our knowledge to be ultimately grounded in sense experience. Descartes was the first significant rationalist philosopher of the modern classical period. He rejects sense experience as a trustworthy source of knowledge early in his *Meditations*. Following Descartes, a number of other European philosophers develop rationalist philosophical systems. Leibniz and Spinoza are the most notable. Meanwhile, an empiricist tradition gets started in Great Britain. The three major empiricist philosophers are John Locke, Berkeley and David Hume. In this chapter we will focus on Descartes, Spinoza, and Liebniz, and we will take up the empiricists in the next chapter.

2.1.1: Descartes

2.1.2: Spinoza

2.1.3: Leibniz

2.1.4: Review and Discussion Questions

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2.1.1: Descartes

Rene Descartes (1596 – 1650) lived during an intellectually vibrant time. European scholars had supplemented Catholic doctrine with a tradition of Aristotle scholarship, and early scientists like Galileo and Copernicus had challenged the orthodox views of the Scholastics. Surrounded by conflicting yet seemingly authoritative views on many issues, Descartes wants to find a firm foundation on which certain knowledge can be built and doubts can be put to rest. So he proposes to question any belief he has that could possibly turn out to be false and then to methodically reason from the remaining certain foundation of beliefs with the hope of reconstructing a secure structure of knowledge where the truth of each belief is ultimately guaranteed by careful inferences from his foundation of certain beliefs.

When faith and dogma dominate the intellectual scene, "How do we know?" is something of a forbidden question. Descartes dared to ask this question while the influence of Catholic faith was still quite strong. He was apparently a sincere Catholic believer, and he thought his reason-based philosophy supported the main tenants of Catholicism. Still he roused the suspicion of religious leaders by granting reason authority in the justification of our beliefs.

Descartes is considered by many to be the founder of modern philosophy. He was also an important mathematician and he made significant contributions to the science of optics. You might have heard of Cartesian coordinates. Thank Descartes. Very few contemporary philosophers hold the philosophical views Descartes held. His significance lays in the way he broke with prior tradition and the questions he raised in doing so. Descartes frames some of the big issues philosophers continue to work on today. Notable among these are the foundations of knowledge, the nature of mind, and the question of free will. We'll look briefly at these three areas of influence before taking up a closer examination of Descartes' philosophy through his *Meditations of First Philosophy*.

To ask "How do we know?" is to ask for reasons that justify our belief in the things we think we know. Descartes' Meditations provide a classic example of the epistemological project of providing systematic justification for the things we take ourselves to know, and this remains a central endeavor in epistemology. This project carries with it the significant risk of finding that we lack justification for things we think we know. This is the problem of skepticism. *Skepticism* is the view that we can't know. Skepticism comes in many forms depending on just what we doubt we can know. While Descartes hoped to provide solid justification for many of his beliefs, his project of providing a rational reconstruction of knowledge fails at a key point early on. The unintended result of his epistemological project is known as the problem of Cartesian skepticism. We will explain this problem a bit later in this chapter.

Another area where Descartes has been influential is in the philosophy of mind. Descartes defends a metaphysical view known as dualism that remains popular among many religious believers. According to this view, the world is made up of two fundamentally different kinds of substance, matter and spirit (or mind). Material stuff occupies space and time and is subject to strictly deterministic laws of nature. But spiritual things, minds, are immaterial, exist eternally, and have free will. If dualism reminds you of Plato's theory of the Forms, this would not be accidental. Descartes thinks his rationalist philosophy validates Catholic doctrine and this in turn was highly influenced by Plato through St. Augustine.

The intractable problem for Descartes' dualism is that if mind and matter are so different in nature, then it is hard to see how they could interact at all. And yet when I look out the window, an image of trees and sky affects my mind. When I will to go for a walk, my material body does so under the influence of my mind. This problem of mind-body interaction was famously and forcefully raised by one of the all too rare female philosophers of the time, princess Elisabeth of Bohemia.

A whole branch of philosophy, the philosophy of mind, is launched in the wake of problems for substance dualism. Today, the philosophy of mind is merging with neuroscience, cognitive psychology, and information science to create a new science of mind. We are rapidly learning how material brains realize the processes of thought. Once again, Descartes has failed in a most fruitful way. We also see how undeserved philosophy's reputation for failing to answer its questions is. While many distinctively philosophical issues concerning the mind remain, the credit for progress will go largely to the newly minted science of mind. The history of philosophy nicely illustrates how parenthood can be such worthwhile but thankless work. As soon as you produce something of real value, it takes credit for itself. Later in a chapter on the philosophy of mind we will examine some developments in this area since Descartes and get acquainted with a few of its contemporary issues including the nature of consciousness.

The final big issue that Descartes brought enduring attention to is the problem of free will. We all have the subjective sense that when we choose something we have acted freely or autonomously. We think that we made a choice and we could have made a different choice. The matter was entirely up to us and independent of outside considerations. Advertisers count on us

taking complete credit and responsibility for our choices even as they very effectively go about influencing our choices. Is this freedom we have a subjective sense of genuine or illusory? How could we live in a world of causes and effects and yet will and act independent of these? And what are the ramifications for personal responsibility? This is difficult nest of problems that continues to interest contemporary philosophers.

Descartes' is also a scientific revolution figure. He flourished after Galileo and Copernicus and just a generation before Newton. The idea of the physical world operating like a clockwork mechanism according to strict physical laws is coming into vogue. Determinism is the view that all physical events are fully determined by prior causal factors in accordance with strict mechanistic natural laws. Part of Descartes' motivation for taking mind and matter to be fundamentally different substances is to grant the pervasive presence of causation in the material realm while preserving a place for free will in the realm of mind or spirit. This compromise ultimately doesn't work out so well. If every event in the material realm is causally determined by prior events and the laws of nature, this would include the motions of our physical bodies. But if these are causally determined, then there doesn't appear to be any entering wedge for our mental free will to have any influence over out bodily movements.

Now we will turn to Descartes' Meditations and examine how he comes to the positions just outlined. Here is a link to several of Descartes' writings including Meditations on First Philosophy: http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/authors/descartes.html

The *Meditations*

Descartes project in his meditations is to carry out a rational reconstruction of knowledge. Descartes is living during an intellectually vibrant time and he is troubled by the lack of certainty. With the Protestant Reformation challenging the doctrines of the Catholic Church, and scientific thinkers like Galileo and Copernicus applying the empirical methods Aristotle recommends to the end of challenging the scientific views handed down from Aristotle, the credibility of authority was challenged on multiple fronts. So Descartes sets out to determine what can be known with certainty without relying on any authority, and then to see what knowledge can be securely justified based on that foundation.

In the first meditation we are introduced to Descartes' method of doubt. According to this method, Descartes goes through all of his beliefs, not individually but by categories, and asks whether there is any possible way that beliefs of this or that type can be mistaken. If so, they must be set aside as doubtable. Many of these beliefs may ultimately be redeemed as knowledge, but they cannot serve as part of the secure foundation of indubitable beliefs from which his rational reconstruction of knowledge proceeds. Empirical beliefs, things that we believe based on the evidence of our senses, are set aside first. Our senses sometimes deceive us, as when an oar appears bent in water or a stranger in a crowd appears to be a friend. It won't do to say that we can reliably diagnose these cases and correct for mistaken appearances though because we also have experiences just like seemingly reliable sense experiences that are anything but in the case of dreams. How can we be certain that any of our seeming sense experiences of the external world aren't in fact dreams? How can we be certain that our whole life isn't a dream?

So sense experience is set to the side as uncertain and insufficient for justifying knowledge. Descartes then considers things we might know for certain by the light of reason, like mathematical claims. I seem to be about as certain in my belief that 2+2=4 as I can be about anything. Is there any possible way I could be mistaken? Descartes here imagines a powerful demon that could deceive me into always thinking that 2+2=4 when in fact this is not true. Is this a genuine possibility? Descartes allows that it is and considers all such knowledge had through reason doubtable as well.

Does anything remain? Are there any beliefs that can't be doubted, even given the hypothesis of a powerful evil deceiver? Descartes does find at least one. Even an evil deceiver could not deceive Descartes about his belief that he thinks. At least this belief is completely immune from doubt, because Descartes would have to be thinking in order for the evil deceiver to deceive him. In fact there is a larger class of beliefs about the content of one's own mind that can be defended as indubitable even in the face of the evil deceiver hypothesis. When I look at the grey wall behind my desk I form a belief about the external world; that I am facing a grey wall. I might be wrong about this. I might be dreaming or deceived by an evil deceiver. But I also form another belief about the content of my experience. I form the belief that I am having a visual experience of greyness. This belief about the content of my sense experience may yet be indubitable. For how could the evil deceiver trick me into thinking that I am having such an experience without in fact giving me that experience? So perhaps we can identify a broader class of beliefs that are genuinely indubitable. These are our beliefs about the contents of our own mind. We couldn't be wrong about these because we have immediate access to them and not even an evil deceiver could misdirect us.

The problem Descartes faces at this point is how to justify his beliefs about the external world based on the very narrow foundation of his indubitable beliefs about the contents of his own mind. And this brings us to one of the more famous arguments in philosophy: Descartes' "Cogito Ergo Sum" or "I think, therefore I exist." Descartes argues that if he knows with certainty that he thinks, then he can know with certainty that he exists as a thinking being. Many philosophers since then have worried about the validity of this inference. Perhaps all we are entitled to infer is that there is thinking going on and we move beyond our indubitable foundation when we attribute that thinking to an existing subject (the "I" in "I exist"). There are issues to explore here. But bigger

problems await Descartes, so we will just note this one and let it pass.

So far Descartes has only adequately justified his beliefs about the contents of his own mind and his own existence as a thinking being. Knowledge about any external reality or even truths of reason like 2+2=4 remain in need of justification. To overcome skepticism about these matters, Descartes sets out to prove that God exists and is not an evil deceiver. Once the evil deceiver hypothesis is in check, Truths of reason and perhaps others may be yet be knowable. Not any argument for God's existence and good nature will do, though. The trick for Descartes' project of a rational reconstruction of knowledge is to prove the existence of a good God by reasoning only from those beliefs that he has identified as indubitable and foundational.

Descartes argument for the existence of a good God goes roughly as follows:

1. I find in my mind the idea of a perfect being.
2. The cause of my idea of a perfect being must have at least as much perfection and reality as I find in the idea.
3. I am not that perfect.
4. Nothing other than a good and perfect God could be the cause of my idea of a perfect being.
5. So, a good and perfect God must exist.

This argument simplifies the rather involved reasoning Descartes goes through in the *Meditations*. But it will do for diagnosing the fatal flaw in Descartes' reasoning. Let us grant the validity of the argument and consider the truth of its premises. Keep in mind that to accord with the method Descartes has set for himself in carrying out a rational reconstruction of well grounded certain knowledge, all of the premises of this argument must be indubitable and foundational. Being a belief about the contents of his own mind, we can grant the certain truth of premise one. Though it is not as clear, premise three might arguably count as a foundational belief about the contents of Descartes' own mind. An evil deceiver, being evil, would lack perfection found in Descartes' idea of a perfect being. So as powerful as such a being could be, the cause of Descartes' idea of a perfect being must be more perfect than any evil deceiver. Perhaps any being so perfect would have to be a good God.

But the fatal flaw for Descartes' rational reconstruction of knowledge is the second premise. What are our grounds for thinking that the cause of something must have at least as much perfection as its effect? The idea of degrees of perfection and the notion that the less perfect can only be explained in terms of the more perfect is an idea that we find in Plato's theory of forms. It will strike many of us as implausible or even incomprehensible. Just what is perfection supposed to mean here? And even once we've spelled this out, why think causes must be more perfect? It seems not at all uncommon for less perfect things to give rise to more perfect things (just consider my son, for instance). In any case, whether the second premise can be explained and defended at all, the fatal flaw for Descartes' project is that it is not foundational. It is not an indubitable belief about the contents of Descartes' own mind, but rather a substantive belief about how things are beyond the bounds of Descartes' own mind. So Descartes' attempt to provide a rational justification for a substantive body of knowledge leaves us with an enduring skeptical problem. All we have immediate intellectual access to is the contents of our own minds. How can we ever have knowledge of anything beyond the contents of our own mind based on this? This is the problem of Cartesian skepticism.

Having diagnosed the fatal flaw in Descartes' project, we should briefly consider how his rational reconstruction of knowledge was to go from there. Given knowledge of God's existence and good nature, we would appeal to this to assure the reliability of knowledge had through reason and later also through the senses. God being the most perfect and good being would rule out the possibility of interference by an evil deceiver. We might still make mistakes in reasoning or be misinformed by the senses. But this would be due to our failure to use these faculties correctly. A good God, however, would not equip us with faculties that could not be trusted to justify our beliefs if used properly. This is a very cursory summary of the later stages of Descartes' attempted rational reconstruction of knowledge in his Meditations. But it will suffice for our purposes.

The mind-body problem

Descartes is a substance dualist. This is the metaphysical view that the world is made up of two fundamentally different kinds of substance: matter and spirit (or mind). In the Second Meditation Descartes motivates this view by arguing that there are distinguishing differences between the mind and the body. In particular, I can doubt the existence of my body but I can't doubt the existence of my mind. Is this a difference that justifies denying that the mind is in some sense identifiable with the body? If something is true of one thing and not of another, then we have conclusive grounds for thinking they are not one and the same thing. So if my favorite bike is red but the bike in my office is yellow, then the bike in my office is not identical to my favorite bike. Does this straightforward line of reasoning apply to the case of the mind and the body? The existence of my body is dubitable, but the existence of my mind is indubitable. Descartes would count this as a reason for denying that my mind is identical with my body. But consider this analogous argument:

1. Mark Twain is such that Joe thinks he is the author of Huckleberry Finn.

2. Samuel Clemens is not such that Joe thinks he is the author of Huckleberry Finn.
3. So, Mark Twain is not identical to Samuel Clemens.

Clearly the conclusion that Mark Twain and Samuel Clemens are not one and the same person does not follow in this case. As the Mark Twain argument looks like it is closely analogous to Descartes' argument for the non-identity of the mind and the body, it looks like Descartes'argument is not valid. The problem here is that the premises of both arguments concern someone's mental states about something. In Descartes' argument we have premises about what he can or can't doubt. In the Mark Twain argument we have premises about what Joe does or doesn't believe. But people can fail to recognize true identity claims. Joe doesn't know that Mark Twain just is Samuel Clemens. Because of this, Joe can believe one thing about Mark Twain and something different about Samuel Clemens. But this doesn't show that Mark Twain and Samuel Clemens aren't identical. Likewise, it may be that the mind is identical with the body or some part of it, but since Descartes doesn't know this, he can believe one thing about the body (that its existence is doubtable) and something else about the mind (that its existence is not doubtable).

So far we have just offered a critical evaluation of one of Descartes' arguments for mind/body dualism. Now we will consider a serious problem for the view. When Descartes' considers how the substance of mind and body differ, he offers a view that should sound familiar from popular religious belief. On this view, the body is a physical object that exists in space and time and is subject to the laws of nature. The mind, being spiritual in nature, exists eternally in an abstract realm rather than existing in the physical realm of space and time. Further, the mind is not bound by mechanistic laws of nature, but it has free will that allows it to will or not will to do one thing or another. Descartes was both a believer in Catholicism and an active participant in the scientific revolution. He was among those who were developing a view of the natural world in which events occur in accordance with strict law-like regularities. A view of the natural world as functioning like a predictable clockwork mechanism was on the rise. And yet Descartes'Christian theology held that as a person created in the image of a divine being, he had free will through which he might choose to do one thing or another, perhaps most notably, to choose to accept the Catholic faith as true and be saved or not. His philosophical view is an attempt to reconcile these conflicting scientific and theological perspectives.

An unfortunate fact of history is that women in Descartes' time were rarely given a thorough education or allowed to participate fully in intellectual life. A notable exception is the case of the Princess Elisabeth of Bohemia. And she was among the first to notice serious difficulties in the substance dualism that Descartes advocated. The central problem has to do with mind-body interaction. Clearly things going on in the physical realm have an influence on the mind. Light reflecting off clouds and trees cause me to have the mental perception of a sunset. And likewise, mental phenomenon cause things to happen in the physical world. When I mentally will to preserve the image of the sunset in a picture, my body causes things to happen in the law governed physical realm. I reach for my camera. But how can a non-physical soul be affected by or effect events in the physical realm? If events in the physical realm are all transfers of physical energy happening at specific places and times, how can it be that the non-physical mind has any role to play in this? The problem gets all the more difficult when we take the physical world to be deterministic, governed by laws where each event is determined to happen by prior events in conjunction with mechanistic laws. Determinism in the physical realm would appear to leave no room for the non-physical mind to influence events at all. Contemporary philosophers who study the nature of the mind generally take these problems to be intractable and to constitute decisive objections to Descartes' substance dualism. More recent philosophy of mind has been mainly taken the mind to be physical. And philosophers, along with neuroscientists and cognitive psychologists, are making tremendous progress in understanding how mental phenomenon can be understood in biological, physical terms. When we take a closer look at more recent developments in the philosophy of mind, however, we will find some arguments for denying that some mental properties, consciousness in particular, can ever be identified with purely physical properties or processes.

Study Questions for Meditations 1-3

1. Explain Descartes' method of doubt. What is Descartes' purpose in exercising this method?
2. Why can't Descartes be certain about beliefs he acquires through the evidence of the senses?
3. Why can't Descartes be certain about mathematical beliefs, like the belief that 2+2=4?
4. What belief(s) does Descartes ultimately identify as indubitable?
5. Why can't an evil deceiver deceive Descartes about his belief that he thinks?
6. How does Descartes build up from the foundation of indubitable beliefs?
7. How does Descartes argue for the existence of God?
8. Given the existence of God, how does Descartes justify his beliefs based on reason and on the senses?

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2.1.2: Spinoza

Spinoza was the most rigorous and systematic of the major rationalist philosophers. Where Descartes was confident that reason would vindicate the main tenets of his Catholic faith, Spinoza dared to follow reason into religiously more treacherous territory. Spinoza is alternately described as the "God intoxicated Jew" and as a heretical atheist. Spinoza's family had fled the Inquisition in Portugal for the relative religious tolerance of Amsterdam. At the age of 23, however, Spinoza was excommunicated from his Jewish synagogue for holding heretical beliefs. Spinoza knew religious persecution both as a member of a community of faith, and then as an individual cast out of a community of faith. Perhaps not surprisingly then, he becomes an early advocate for freedom of conscience and religious belief in his political writings.

Spinoza supported himself as a lens grinder until his early death at the age of 46. While he demonstrated immense courage in the face of excommunication and in philosophically challenging religious doctrines, he led a fairly quiet and reclusive life devoted to study and work in a state of relative poverty. His views were widely considered so threatening to established religion that his considerable influence went largely unacknowledged for a century or two after his death. Still, the next most significant thinker of this period after Descartes, Liebniz, is now seen by some as devising his philosophical system as an attempt to protect religious belief from the intellectual threat of Spinozism.

Descartes' method of doubt sets him on the project of finding epistemological foundations for knowledge. Descartes seeks to identify some knowledge as foundational in the sense of being able to justify the rest of our knowledge. By contrast, we might best understand Spinoza as seeking metaphysical foundations. Suppose the world is intelligible, that its nature can be understood rationally. Assuming this, what must the world be like? We might worry that this approach simply sidesteps epistemological worries about how we can know. But suppose that in exploring the assumption that the world is intelligible we find that all but one view about the nature of the world gets us mired in contradictions or intractable problems. We would then have grounds to accept the one coherent metaphysical account of the nature of the world as an instance of inference to the best (or perhaps, the only) explanation. Seeking coherent systematic explanation can, ultimately, yield justifying reasons.

This is just a suggestion for how to understand what Spinoza is up to in his masterpiece *The Ethics*. This strategy is not made explicit in the work itself. Rather, Spinoza's *Ethics* is written in a geometric style. He begins with a few definitions and axioms and the work proceeds by deductively proving an impressive array of further propositions. The propositions derived from his initial definitions give an account of God, the natural world (these turn out to be the same thing), the self, the nature of human freedom, the nature of the emotions, and the nature of the good life in-so-far as it is attainable for beings like ourselves. We might say of the entire system that it is elegantly consistent. But why accept its starting points? His initial definitions and axioms might strike us as arbitrary or even implausible (though his contemporaries would have found them pretty reasonable). The case for the system as a whole is that it is elegant and consistent while the alternatives are not. The axioms and definitions are not just arbitrarily preferred starting places; they are the starting places that allow us to give a clear coherent picture of God, the world, and the human condition.

It would help to see how Spinoza might make this case by understanding how his view of the world is offered in response to an alternative, Descartes', which did seem to lead to intractable problems. Recall Descartes' dualism, his view that the world contained two fundamentally different kinds of substance: matter and mind. The difficult problem for this view was to give some account of how mind and matter could interact in spite of being so different. But however that problem is to be solved, there is something further to be noticed. Any kind of mind body interaction will perforce involve mutual limitations on each. If through a mental act of will I cause some change in the material realm, then the material realm is limited in that it can't be other than I have willed it. Likewise, if the material world has some effect on my mind, then my mind is similarly limited.

Now consider the idea of God. Spinoza defines God as a being that is infinite, where being infinite entails being unlimited. The only way that any substance could be absolutely unlimited is for there to be no other substances that could possibly limit it. So, argues Spinoza, there is only one substance and it is both God and nature. Every facet of the world is a mere part of this one substance, God/nature. And everything we do and experience is a limited manifestation of the essence of God. Every aspect of our lives, everything we think and do, is an expression of God/nature's essence which is uncaused and necessary. For this reason, nothing we do or experience could possibly be any different. This settles the matter of free will, though not quite it the way Descartes would hope.

Our perception of the world as including many distinct things and minds other than our own is a confusion of ours, or, as Spinoza would put it, an "inadequate idea." The true nature of the world is singular. There is only one thing in existence, and it is both God and all of nature. God/nature being the one existing substance is self-sufficient. Since it depends on nothing and is affected by

nothing, everything about God/nature is necessary. God/nature, being infinite and perfect in all respects, has an infinite number of aspects, or attributes. Our existence as human beings presents us with only two of these, the attribute of thought and the attribution of extension (physical spatio-temporal existence).

While thought and extension, which we experience as mind and body, are attributes of God, our idea that there is some interaction between the two is a further confusion according to Spinoza. The mind and the body are really one and the same. We are limited modification of God/nature. One of the ways we are limited is in only being aware of two of the infinite attributes of God, thought and extension. The idea that the mind and the body are different and interact is a confusion of ours that we suffer due to thinking of ourselves sometimes under one attribute, thought, and at other times under another, extension. In thinking about ourselves, we are in position much like Joe who thought of a particular individual in one way, as Mark Twain, and also in a different way, as Samuel Clemens. Spinoza's view is that mind and body are one and the same limited modification of God, understood on one hand through the attribute of thought and on the other through the attribute of extension. A better way to put this might be to just say that the mind is the idea of the body.

We are finite an imperfect "modes" of the attributes of thought and extension. As such limited and imperfect beings, we see ourselves as separate from many other things. Being ignorant of the causes of things, including the determination of our own wills, we imagine that things might have been otherwise. But everything happens of necessity. So Spinoza's answer to the problem of free will and determinism is to deny that we have free will. This doesn't mean, however, that there is nothing to say about how to live well. Living well, according to Spinoza, involves coming to terms with our limitations and the way things must be as a matter of necessity. And the way to do this is through better understanding ourselves, the world (God/nature) and our position in the world. The good life, for Spinoza, is one organized around the intellectual love of God/nature.

There is one kind of freedom that we might aspire to in all of this, and it is the kind of freedom that can be had through the intellectual love of God/nature. The freedom we can have is freedom from the tyranny of our passions, our emotions. Our hopes and fears are passions that make us anxious and insecure when we fail to understand their causes and our own place in nature. A better understanding of the necessity of all things, which for Spinoza is just the intellectual love of God/nature, is the one therapy open to us in addressing the insecurity and anxiety that comes with human vulnerability and mortality. Knowledge of how to live one's life is established after the manner of a proving a theorem of geometry in Spinoza's Ethics. Coming to understand his demonstration of how to live well will itself be an exercise in living well.

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2.1.3: Leibniz

Among quite a few other things, Leibniz was an important mathematician. He and Newton vied for credit for discovering the calculus of infinitesimals. He was also politically active as an advisor to assorted rulers and aristocrats. Like Descartes, Leibniz was, at least publicly, religious. His grandest political ambition was to see the Christian church re-unified (recall that Protestants had broken off from Catholics over the prior few centuries). Leibniz was arguably the first to have imagined anything like information technology. Among his grand ambitions was to formulate a universal symbolic language for science and philosophy that would be rigorously rule driven and free of all ambiguity. He even got as far as constructing a calculating machine, though not a very reliable one.

Leibniz' metaphysical views seem pretty exotic at first glance. Leibniz took the world to consist of monads. Each monad is simple and indivisible. But monads are not merely physical, like atoms. Each monad would include both a physical aspect and a mental aspect. Physical objects are made up of monads that are also minds, just particularly dim-witted ones. Monads appear to interact with each other. We seem to influence each other and make things happen in the physical world. But according to Leibniz there is no actual interaction between monads. Instead, monads exist in a harmony that is pre-established by God. As a result, like an element in a spectral image or a droplet in a cloud, each monad carries in it a reflection all of creation.

If this seems to be a rather exotic picture of the world, let's review the problems Leibniz is trying to negotiate in the wake of Descartes and Spinoza. The problem of mind/body interaction looms large after Descartes. If mind and body are distinct kinds of substances, then it is very hard to see how either can have any influence on the other. Leibniz metaphysics handles this problem neatly by making his substances, monads, have mind as an integral part. We needn't worry about mind- body interaction if mind and body are already unified. Next, bear in mind the theologically challenging aspects of Spinoza's monism. In taking there to be just one substance, Spinoza identifies God with all of nature and denies that people have any existence distinct from God/nature. God is not personal on this view. God/nature is really nothing like us at all. Spinoza's God is so unlike the traditional God of Christianity that Spinoza is widely deemed to be an atheist. Worse, in taking humans to be mere parts of a self-caused and hence necessary God, we lack free will entirely on Spinoza's view. Leibniz is eager to provide a philosophical route to avoiding Spinoza's atheism and denial of free will. To avoid atheism, and in particular a variety of atheism where people are mere parts of an impersonal God/nature, Liebniz needs to posit a plurality of substances. Monads fit the bill. In order to preserve free will, which is also central to Christian theology, Leibniz needs for the substances that are mind not to be causally determined by other substances. The pre-established harmony of monads is his means of achieving this. But while Leibniz thereby avoids causal determinism, he seems to be saddled with a kind of theological determinism instead. Everything that happens, including every choice you make, will have been determined by God.

Leibniz was both intrigued and repelled by Spinoza's thought. The two met for a few days while Leibniz was ostensibly on a diplomatic mission in Amsterdam. As much as Leibniz abhorred Spinoza's views, he couldn't dismiss Spinoza's carefully reasoned and systematic response to Descartes' thought. As a result, Leibniz devotes a considerable amount of creative intellectual energy to finding some way to avoid Spinoza's heretical conclusions. Such was the influence of the outcast Jew of Amsterdam.

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2.1.4: Review and Discussion Questions

1. Explain Descartes' method of doubt. What is Descartes' purpose in exercising this method?
2. Why can't Descartes be certain about beliefs he acquires through the evidence of the senses?
3. Why can't Descartes be certain about mathematical beliefs like the belief that 2+2=4?
4. What belief(s) does Descartes ultimately identify as indubitable?
5. Why can't an evil deceiver deceive Descartes about his belief that he thinks?
6. How does Descartes build up from the foundation of indubitable beliefs?
7. How does Descartes argue for the existence of a good God?
8. How does Descartes' argument for God fail?
9. Given the existence of a good God, how does Descartes justify his beliefs based on reason and on the senses?
10. How does Descartes argue for the distinction between mind and body? How does this argument fail?
11. Explain Spinoza's Monism.
12. How does Spinoza's view of God differ from more traditional theological perspectives?
13. How does Spinoza handle the mind/body problem?
14. How does Spinoza handle the matter of free will?
15. What sort of freedom can humans aspire to on Spinoza's view?
16. What are monads and how does Leibniz hope monad will help him avoid Spinoza's theologically controversial views?

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2.2: THE EMPRICISTS

Empiricism, you might recall, is the view that all of our knowledge is ultimately acquired through by sense experience. The empiricist philosophical tradition comes to fruition in Great Britain over the course of the 17th and 18th centuries. We will discuss three major empiricist thinkers: John Locke, George Berkeley, and David Hume. We'll consider the first two briefly and focus more closely on Hume.

2.2.1: John Locke

2.2.2: George Berkeley

2.2.3: David Hume

2.2.4: Review and Discussion Questions

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2.2.1: John Locke

John Locke (1632 –1704) is better known now for his political thought than his Empiricism. Locke spent time in Holland as a young man and his political thought was probably influenced significantly by Spinoza who had died only recently. Locke argued against the divine right of kings to rule and instead defended a liberal egalitarian political philosophy on which people have equal and natural rights to liberty. Liberty, in Locke's thought, should be understood as being free from domination by others. Liberty is not in Locke's view being free to do whatever one pleases. For starters, if everyone is to be free from domination, then it follows that nobody is free to dominate. Locke also offers the classic justification for property rights as an extension of our self-ownership. So property rights are seen as natural extensions of our human liberty. The point of government is just to secure our natural liberties to the highest degree possible on Locke's view. So government is legitimate only when it is limited to this role. This view should sound familiar. Locke's political philosophy was influential with the founding fathers of the U.S. Thomas Jefferson in particular was a close student of Locke's political thought. We will return to Locke at the end of the course when we take up political philosophy. But for now, we'll say a little about his epistemology.

Locke develops his empiricist epistemology in his Essay Concerning Human Understanding. Locke's approach is to examine the origins of the contents of the mind. Early in this work he argues against innate ideas. The mind starts off as a tablula rasa, a blank slate. All of our ideas have their origin in experience. Simple ideas, say of solidity and figure, are acquired through the senses, and from these we form complex ideas, say the idea of a dog, through the capacities of the understanding. The details of this account raise a number of challenging questions. We might think of Locke as launching a research program for developing an empiricist account of the mind rather than spelling out a fully developed view.

Locke thinks that some of the impressions we get from sense experience are genuinely similar to how things are objectively in the world. Our sense experience of the shape of things, for instance, reflects the ways things really are according to Locke. Locke refers to the qualities where there is a resemblance between our experience and the way things are as **primary qualities**. Shape, motion or rest, and number are a few of the primary qualities. Other aspects of our sense experience don't resemble the qualities in their objects. The taste of an apple, for instance, is not really in the apple. What is in the apple is just a power to produce the experience of a certain flavor. But we have no grounds for thinking that this power as it exists in the apple resembles in any way the sense experience we have of its taste. Locke calls qualities where our sense experience doesn't resemble the qualities that give rise to our experience **secondary qualities**. Our knowledge of the external world, then, is based entirely on our experience of the primary qualities. Empiricism, as we will see in the case of later empiricists, especially Hume, tends to place sharp limits on what is knowable.

While all experience depends on having simple ideas had through sense experience, Locke does not take experience to be limited to these. We also have experience of the operations of the mind in building up complex ideas out of simple ideas. Once you have some simple ideas through sense experience, you also have an experience of yourself and of your mental operations on those simple ideas. So given simple ideas through experience, the operations of the mind become a source for further ideas. Locke thinks knowledge of the self, God, mathematics, and ethics can be derived from this additional internal source of experience. Hume, as we shall see, is not so optimistic.

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2.2.2: George Berkeley

George Berkeley (1685-1753) is best known for arguing for Idealism on empiricist grounds. In metaphysics, Idealism is the view that there is no physical substance underlying our sense impressions of the world. Rather, the world consists entirely of ideas. Your mind is just a bundle of impressions, and there is nothing in the world except for so many minds having their various perceptions. Berkeley defends this as the view that best accords with common sense in *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous*.

Berkeley's argument attacks Locke's distinction between primary and secondary qualities and argues that all of our sense impressions are mere appearances and that we have no grounds for thinking that any of them bear any resemblance to the way things are. Since we lack any empirical experience of the underlying substances in which qualities inhere, we have no empirical reason to suppose underlying substances even exist. All we have access to are our sense impressions, and these are mental things, ideas. So all we can claim knowledge of are our ideas beginning with our sense impressions, the most basic ideas.

Berkeley also argues that positing underlying substances do no significant explanatory work. So, the common sense empiricist view ought to be that we live in a world of ideas that lacks any underlying physical substance. This startling view might make us wonder what happens to my desk when I leave the room and cease to perceive it. Does it pop out of existence when I leave and then pop back into existence just as it was when I return to my work? This would be most peculiar. Berkeley argues that the objects of our everyday life do have an enduring existence when we are absent. They continue to exist as ideas in the mind of God. Given this appeal to the mind of God to explain the continued existence of things we aren't actively observing, we might argue that positing underlying substances does some explanatory work after all and charge that Berkeley has only substituted one unobservable theoretical posit, God, for another, underlying substances.

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2.2.3: David Hume

Of the philosophers discussed here, David Hume (1711-1776) has probably had the greatest influence on contemporary analytic philosophy. The twentieth century begins with a movement known as Logical Positivism that tests the limits of Empiricism. The Empiricism of the Logical Positivists is heavily indebted to Hume.

Hume's empiricist epistemology is grounded in his philosophy of mind. Hume starts by asking what we have in the mind and where these things come from. He divides our mental representations into two categories, the relatively vivid **impressions**, these include sensations and feelings, and the less vivid ideas which include memories and **ideas** produced by the imagination.

What distinguishes impressions from ideas in our experience is just their vividness. The picture of the mind Hume offers is one where all of our beliefs and representations are cooked up out of basic ingredients provided by experience. Our experience gives us only impressions through sense experience and internal impressions like feelings. From this we generate less vivid ideas. Memories are merely faint copies of impressions. Through the imagination we can generate further ideas by recombining elements of ideas we already have. So through impressions we get the idea of a lizard and the idea of a bird. We can then generate the idea of a dragon by imaginatively combining elements of each. In cooking up new ideas from old ideas, the imagination is guided by associating relations like resemblance, contiguity (next-to-ness) and cause and effect. So, for example, an impression of a grapefruit might lead me to think of an orange due to their similarity. The thought of my bicycle might lead me to think of the table saw it is parked next to in the basement. Through the association of cause and effect, my idea of a struck match leads me to the idea of a flame. The last of these principles of association, cause and effect, turns out to be faulty for reasons we will examine shortly.

The imagination is not merely a source of fancy and fiction. The imagination also includes our ability to understand things when we reason well in formulating new ideas from old ones. A *priori* reasoning, which is reasoning independent of experience, can produce understanding of relations of ideas. Mathematical and logical reasoning is like this. When I recognize the validity of an argument or the logic behind a mathematical proof, the understanding I attain is just a matter of grasping relations between ideas. But *a priori* reasoning only reveals logical relations between ideas. It tells us nothing about matters of fact. Our ability to understand matters of fact, say truths about the external world, depends entirely on *a posteriori* reasoning, or reasoning based on experience. As we will see, our ability to reason about matters of fact doesn't get us very far.

Often our philosophical confusion is the result of having added more than we are entitled to add to our experience when we are striving to understand it. Hume aims to correct many of these errors and, in doing so, he aims to delineate the limits of human knowledge and understanding. As it turns out, we don't know as much as we commonly suppose, in Hume's opinion. The result of Hume's rigorous Empiricism is skepticism about a great many things. Some of Hume's skeptical results are not so surprising given his Empiricism. Hume is skeptical about objective moral truths, for instance. We don't get to observe rightness and wrongness in the way we can see colors and shapes, for instance. The idea that there are objective moral truths, according to Hume, is a mistaken projection of our subjective moral sentiments.

Hume is not worried that his subjectivism about morality will lead to moral anarchy. Note that the opinion that it's OK to do whatever you want is itself a moral opinion. So, for the subjectivist, "anything goes" is no more rationally justified than any other moral opinion. While Hume does think that morality is concerned with subjective sentiments, not objective facts, the lack of objective moral truths won't corrupt us or undermine the social order because we all have pretty much the same sorts of moral sentiments and we can base a sensible social order on these. While we may feel differently about specific practices or principles, Hume thinks we have a basis for negotiating our moral differences in our more general and more or less universally shared moral sentiments of self-love, love for others, and concern for happiness.

Hume's skepticism about objective moral truths now strikes many people as common sense. But the empiricist epistemology that leads him to subjectivism about morality also leads him to skepticism about causation, the external world, inductive reasoning, about God, and even about the self. We'll examine these further skeptical conclusions starting with causation.

Causation

When we examine our everyday idea of causation, Hume says we find four component ideas:

- the idea of a constant conjunction of cause and effect (whenever the cause occurs, the effect follows).
- the idea of the temporal priority of the cause (the cause happens first, then the effect).

- the idea of causes and effects being contiguous (next to each other) in space and time.
- the idea of a necessary connection between the cause and the effect.

So, for instance, the idea that striking a match causes it to light is made up of the idea that whenever similar matches are struck (under the right conditions), they light, plus the idea of the striking happening first, and the idea of the striking and the lighting happen right next to each other in time and space, and, finally, the idea that the striking somehow necessitates or makes the match light. Now let's consider these component ideas and ask whether they all have an empirical basis in corresponding sense impressions. We do have sense impressions of the first three: the constant conjunction of cause and effect, the temporal priority of the cause, and the contiguity of cause and effect. But Hume argues that we lack any corresponding empirical impression of necessary connections between causes and effects. We don't observe anything like the cause making the effect occur. As Hume puts the point,

> When we look about us towards external objects, and consider the operation of causes, we are never able, in a single instance, to discover any power or necessary connexion; any quality, which binds the effect to the cause, and renders the one an infallible consequence of the other. We only find, that the one does actually, in fact, follow the other. (An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding, Section VII)

The idea of causes necessitating their effects, according to Hume's analysis, is a confused projection of the imagination for which we find no basis in experience. For this reason, Hume denies that we have rational grounds for thinking that causes do necessitate their effects.

The External World

All of our reasoning about the external world is based on the idea of causation. So the skepticism that follows from Hume's skepticism about causation is quite far reaching. Our beliefs about the external world, for instance, are based on the idea that things going on in the external world cause our sense impressions. We have no rational grounds for thinking so, says Hume.

More generally, our evidence for what we can know begins with our impressions, the mental representations of sense experience. We assume that our impressions are a reliable guide to the way things are, but this is an assumption we can't rationally justify. We have no experience beyond our impressions that could rationally certify that our impressions correspond in any way to an external reality. Our assumption that our impressions do correspond to an external reality is a rationally unsupportable product of our imagination.

Induction

Closely related to Hume's skepticism about causation is Hume's skepticism about inductive reasoning. Inductive argument, in its standard form, draws a conclusion about what is generally the case, or what will prove to be the case in some as yet unobserved instance, from some limited number of specific observations. The following is an example of a typical inductive argument:

1. Every observed sample of water heated to well over 100 C has boiled.
2. Therefore, whenever water is heated to well over 100 C, it boils.

Unless every instance of water heated to over 100C in the history of the universe is among the observed instances, we can't be sure that the conclusion is true given the truth of the premises. It follows that strong inductive arguments like the one above are not deductively valid. But then what justifies the inference from the premise to the conclusion of an inductive argument?

Hume considers the suggestion that every inductive argument has a principle of induction as a suppressed premise, and it is this principle of induction that renders the inference from premises to conclusion rational. This principle of induction tells us roughly that unobserved instances follow the pattern of observed instances. So inductive arguments really go something like this:

1. Every observed sample of water heated to over 100 C has boiled.
2. (Unobserved cases tend to follow the pattern of observed cases)
3. So, whenever water is heated to over 100 C, it boils.

Of course the argument still isn't valid, but that's not what we are aiming for in induction. Given the hidden second premise - our principle of induction - we can reasonably hold that the premises taken together give us good grounds to accept that the conclusion is probably true. However, if this principle of induction (2 above) is to render inductive inferences rational, then we need some grounds for thinking that it is true. In considering how this principle of induction is to be justified, Hume presents a dilemma. Since there is no contradiction in denying the principle of induction, it cannot be justified *a-priori* (independent of our

experience as can be done with logical truths). And any empirical argument would be inductive and therefore beg the question by appealing to the very principle of induction that requires support. So, Hume concludes, we have no rational grounds for accepting inductive inferences.

Think about the ramifications of Hume's skepticism about induction. If inductive argument is not rational, then we have no reason at all to think the sun will rise tomorrow. Here we aren't worried about improbably possibilities like the sun getting blown to bits by aliens before tomorrow morning. Hume's argument against the rationality of inductive reasoning implies that all of our experience of the sun regularly rising gives us no reason to think its rising tomorrow is even likely to happen. If this sounds crazy, then we have a problem because it is not easy to find a defect in Hume's reasoning. This is why philosophers speak of this topic as the *Problem of Induction*. Very few are prepared to accept Hume's skepticism about induction. But in the two and a half centuries that have passed since Hume died, we have yet to settle on a satisfactory solution to the problem of induction. We'll take a closer look at this problem when we take up the Philosophy of Science in the next chapter.

God

Unlike Locke and Berkeley, Hume's rigorous Empiricism leads him to skepticism about religious matters. To avoid censorship or persecution, critics of religious belief in the 18th century exercised caution in various ways. Hume's earliest challenge to religious belief, an essay on miracles, was removed from his early work, his *Treatise of Human Nature*, and published only in his later *Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding*. In this essay, Hume argues that the belief in miracles can never be rational. A miracle is understood to be a violation of the laws of nature resulting from Divine will. But, argues Hume, the weight of the evidence of our experience overall will always give us stronger reason to mistrust our senses in the case of a seemingly miraculous experience than to doubt the otherwise consistently regular course of events in our experience. Testimony by others of miracles is on even shakier ground.

> No testimony is sufficient to establish a miracle, unless the testimony be of such a kind, that its falsehood would be more miraculous than the fact which it endeavors to establish. (Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding, Section 10)

Among educated people in the 18th century, religious belief was thought to be supported not just by Divine revelation, but by our experience of the natural world as well. When we look to the natural world we find impressive harmony in the natural order of things. The various species all seem well suited to their environments and ecological stability is maintained by the various roles organism play in their environments. To the discerning mind in search of an explanation, the order and harmony we find in the world looks very much like the deliberate work of a Divine creator. This line of thought is known as the Argument from Design. Hume's last work, his posthumously published *Dialogues of Natural Religion*, aimed to undermine many arguments for the existence of God, including the Design Argument.

According to Hume, the Design Argument is a weak argument by analogy. We have reason to think that machines are the product of human design because we are familiar with their means of production. But we have no analogue in the case of the universe. We have not observed its creation. The alleged similarity of the universe to machines designed by humans is also suspect. We do find regularities in nature, but only in the small corner of nature we are familiar with. The regularity, order, and harmony we do find don't provide enough of the appearance of design to warrant positing an intelligent designer, according to Hume. But suppose we do think the natural world bears the marks of a designer's craftsmanship. The only sorts of designers we are familiar with are people like us. But that doesn't tell us much about what sorts of being could be designers of complex harmonious systems. So even assuming we find the appearance of design in nature, we have little grounds to think that it is the product of a personal god or any sort of entity we can relate to.

Charles Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection provides a naturalistic account of the appearance of design in life forms. Thanks to providing a developed naturalistic alternative to the hypothesis of design by a Divine creator, Darwin probably had the greater impact in undermining the design argument for the existence of God. Darwin cites Hume as among his major influences, and there are a number of passages in Hume's writing that foreshadow insights that Darwin developed.

The Self

Descartes didn't hesitate to infer the existence of himself from the certainty of his thinking. And it seems obvious to most of us that having thoughts implies the existence of a subject that thinks. Hume is more cautious on this point.

> For my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call, I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I never can catch myself at any time without a perception, and never can observe anything but the perception." (*Treatise*, 1.4.6.3)

The contents of our immediate experience are just particular impressions and ideas. But we have no experience of any single unified self that is the subject of those experiences. The idea of a self, including the idea of the self as a soul, is a fanciful projection from our experiences. All we can say in an empirically grounded way of ourselves, according to Hume, is that we are just a bundle of experiences.

We've given just given the briefest sketch of how Hume reaches his assorted skeptical conclusions. There are many further arguments and objections to consider, but hopefully we've covered enough to give you an appreciation for how carefully a strict and carefully reasoned Empiricism leads to a variety of skeptical conclusions. Hume's skepticism about causation and induction may be the most surprising. We often hold up science as the paradigm of human intellectual achievement, and we tend think of science as pretty empirical. Yet Hume's strict Empiricism seems to undercut science on the key notions of causation and induction. Perhaps scientific inquiry is not as strictly empirical as Hume's epistemology. Or perhaps, as some have argued, science can get along fine without induction or causation. Still, if we are not comfortable with Hume's skepticism about causation and induction, this might be cause to reconsider his Empiricism. And perhaps also the skepticism about morality it seems to invite.

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2.2.4: Review and Discussion Questions

1. Explain Locke's distinction between primary and secondary qualities.
2. While Locke thinks that having any thoughts depends on sense experience, he doesn't think sense experience is the only source of our ideas. Explain.
3. Explain Berkeley's Idealism.
4. How is Berkeley's Idealism a response to Locke's epistemology?
5. Explain Hume's view of the contents of the mind.
6. What are ideas and impressions? How does Hume distinguish these?
7. How does the imagination form new ideas, according to Hume?
8. How is Hume's Empiricism grounded in his philosophy of the mind?
9. Explain Hume's skepticism about morality. How does he argue for this view?
10. How does Hume analyze our notion of the cause-effect relation? Explain Hume's skepticism about causation.
11. Why does Hume deny that we can have knowledge of an external world?
12. Why is Hume skeptical about the rationality of inductive argument?
13. Why does Hume doubt we could ever have reason to believe in miracles?
14. What is the Design Argument for the existence of God?
15. Explain Hume's objections to the Design Argument.

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2.3: The Republic, Book VII - The Allegory of the Cave

4 The Republic, Book VII: The Allegory of the Cave

The Allegory of the Cave[5]

(The following discussion takes place between Socrates and Glaucon)

And now, I said, let me show in a figure how far our nature is enlightened or unenlightened: --Behold! human beings living in a underground den, which has a mouth open towards the light and reaching all along the den; here they have been from their childhood, and have their legs and necks chained so that they cannot move, and can only see before them, being prevented by the chains from turning round their heads. Above and behind them a fire is blazing at a distance, and between the fire and the prisoners there is a raised way; and you will see, if you look, a low wall built along the way, like the screen which marionette players have in front of them, over which they show the puppets.

I see.

And do you see, I said, men passing along the wall carrying all sorts of vessels, and statues and figures of animals made of wood and stone and various materials, which appear over the wall? Some of them are talking, others silent.

You have shown me a strange image, and they are strange prisoners.

Like ourselves, I replied; and they see only their own shadows, or the shadows of one another, which the fire throws on the opposite wall of the cave?

True, he said; how could they see anything but the shadows if they were never allowed to move their heads?

And of the objects which are being carried in like manner they would only see the shadows?

Yes, he said.

And if they were able to converse with one another, would they not suppose that they were naming what was actually before them?

Very true.

And suppose further that the prison had an echo which came from the other side, would they not be sure to fancy when one of the passers-by spoke that the voice which they heard came from the passing shadow?

No question, he replied.

To them, I said, the truth would be literally nothing but the shadows of the images.

That is certain.

And now look again, and see what will naturally follow it' the prisoners are released and disabused of their error. At first, when any of them is liberated and compelled suddenly to stand up and turn his neck round and walk and look towards the light, he will suffer sharp pains; the glare will distress him, and he will be unable to see the realities of which in his former state he had seen the shadows; and then conceive some one saying to him, that what he saw before was an illusion, but that now, when he is approaching nearer to being and his eye is turned towards more real existence, he has a clearer vision, -what will be his reply? And you may further imagine that his instructor is pointing to the objects as they pass and requiring him to name them, -will he not be perplexed? Will he not fancy that the shadows which he formerly saw are truer than the objects which are now shown to him?

Far truer.

And if he is compelled to look straight at the light, will he not have a pain in his eyes which will make him turn away to take and

take in the objects of vision which he can see, and which he will conceive to be in reality clearer than the things which are now being shown to him?

True, he now

And suppose once more, that he is reluctantly dragged up a steep and rugged ascent, and held fast until he 's forced into the presence of the sun himself, is he not likely to be pained and irritated? When he approaches the light his eyes will be dazzled, and he will not be able to see anything at all of what are now called realities.

Not all in a moment, he said.

He will require to grow accustomed to the sight of the upper world. And first he will see the shadows best, next the reflections of men and other objects in the water, and then the objects themselves; then he will gaze upon the light of the moon and the stars and the spangled heaven; and he will see the sky and the stars by night better than the sun or the light of the sun by day?

Certainly.

Last of he will be able to see the sun, and not mere reflections of him in the water, but he will see him in his own proper place, and not in another; and he will contemplate him as he is.

Certainly.

He will then proceed to argue that this is he who gives the season and the years, and is the guardian of all that is in the visible world, and in a certain way the cause of all things which he and his fellows have been accustomed to behold?

Clearly, he said, he would first see the sun and then reason about him.

And when he remembered his old habitation, and the wisdom of the den and his fellow-prisoners, do you not suppose that he would felicitate himself on the change, and pity them?

Certainly, he would.

And if they were in the habit of conferring honours among themselves on those who were quickest to observe the passing shadows and to remark which of them went before, and which followed after, and which were together; and who were therefore best able to draw conclusions as to the future, do you think that he would care for such honours and glories, or envy the possessors of them? Would he not say with Homer,

Better to be the poor servant of a poor master, and to endure anything, rather than think as they do and live after their manner?

Yes, he said, I think that he would rather suffer anything than entertain these false notions and live in this miserable manner.

Imagine once more, I said, such an one coming suddenly out of the sun to be replaced in his old situation; would he not be certain to have his eyes full of darkness?

To be sure, he said.

And if there were a contest, and he had to compete in measuring the shadows with the prisoners who had never moved out of the den, while his sight was still weak, and before his eyes had become steady (and the time which would be needed to acquire this new habit of sight might be very considerable) would he not be ridiculous? Men would say of him that up he went and down he came without his eyes; and that it was better not even to think of ascending; and if any one tried to loose another and lead him up to the light, let them only catch the offender, and they would put him to death.

No question, he said.

This entire allegory, I said, you may now append, dear Glaucon, to the previous argument; the prison-house is the world of sight, the light of the fire is the sun, and you will not misapprehend me if you interpret the journey upwards to be the ascent of the soul into the intellectual world according to my poor belief, which, at your desire, I have expressed whether rightly or wrongly God knows. But, whether true or false, my opinion is that in the world of knowledge the idea of good appears last of all, and is seen only with an effort; and, when seen, is also inferred to be the universal author of all things beautiful and right, parent of light and of the lord of light in this visible world, and the immediate source of reason and truth in the intellectual; and that this is the power

upon which he who would act rationally, either in public or private life must have his eye fixed.

I agree, he said, as far as I am able to understand you.

Moreover, I said, you must not wonder that those who attain to this beatific vision are unwilling to descend to human affairs; for their souls are ever hastening into the upper world where they desire to dwell; which desire of theirs is very natural, if our allegory may be trusted.

Yes, very natural.

And is there anything surprising in one who passes from divine contemplations to the evil state of man, misbehaving himself in a ridiculous manner; if, while his eyes are blinking and before he has become accustomed to the surrounding darkness, he is compelled to fight in courts of law, or in other places, about the images or the shadows of images of justice, and is endeavouring to meet the conceptions of those who have never yet seen absolute justice?

Anything but surprising, he replied.

Any one who has common sense will remember that the bewilderments of the eyes are of two kinds, and arise from two causes, either from coming out of the light or from going into the light, which is true of the mind's eye, quite as much as of the bodily eye; and he who remembers this when he sees any one whose vision is perplexed and weak, will not be too ready to laugh; he will first ask whether that soul of man has come out of the brighter light, and is unable to see because unaccustomed to the dark, or having turned from darkness to the day is dazzled by excess of light. And he will count the one happy in his condition and state of being, and he will pity the other; or, if he have a mind to laugh at the soul which comes from below into the light, there will be more reason in this than in the laugh which greets him who returns from above out of the light into the den.

That, he said, is a very just distinction.

But then, if I am right, certain professors of education must be wrong when they say that they can put a knowledge into the soul which was not there before, like sight into blind eyes.

They undoubtedly say this, he replied.

Whereas, our argument shows that the power and capacity of learning exists in the soul already; and that just as the eye was unable to turn from darkness to light without the whole body, so too the instrument of knowledge can only by the movement of the whole soul be turned from the world of becoming into that of being, and learn by degrees to endure the sight of being, and of the brightest and best of being, or in other words, of the good.

Very true.

And must there not be some art which will effect conversion in the easiest and quickest manner; not implanting the faculty of sight, for that exists already, but has been turned in the wrong direction, and is looking away from the truth?

Yes, he said, such an art may be presumed.

And whereas the other so-called virtues of the soul seem to be akin to bodily qualities, for even when they are not originally innate they can be implanted later by habit and exercise, the of wisdom more than anything else contains a divine element which always remains, and by this conversion is rendered useful and profitable; or, on the other hand, hurtful and useless. Did you never observe the narrow intelligence flashing from the keen eye of a clever rogue --how eager he is, how clearly his paltry soul sees the way to his end; he is the reverse of blind, but his keen eyesight is forced into the service of evil, and he is mischievous in proportion to his cleverness.

Very true, he said.

But what if there had been a circumcision of such natures in the days of their youth; and they had been severed from those sensual pleasures, such as eating and drinking, which, like leaden weights, were attached to them at their birth, and which drag them down and turn the vision of their souls upon the things that are below --if, I say, they had been released from these impediments and turned in the opposite direction, the very same faculty in them would have seen the truth as keenly as they see what their eyes are turned to now.

Very likely.

Yes, I said; and there is another thing which is likely. or rather a necessary inference from what has preceded, that neither the uneducated and uninformed of the truth, nor yet those who never make an end of their education, will be able ministers of State; not the former, because they have no single aim of duty which is the rule of all their actions, private as well as public; nor the latter, because they will not act at all except upon compulsion, fancying that they are already dwelling apart in the islands of the blest.

Very true, he replied.

Then, I said, the business of us who are the founders of the State will be to compel the best minds to attain that knowledge which we have already shown to be the greatest of all-they must continue to ascend until they arrive at the good; but when they have ascended and seen enough we must not allow them to do as they do now.

What do you mean?

I mean that they remain in the upper world: but this must not be allowed; they must be made to descend again among the prisoners in the den, and partake of their labours and honours, whether they are worth having or not.

But is not this unjust? he said; ought we to give them a worse life, when they might have a better?

You have again forgotten, my friend, I said, the intention of the legislator, who did not aim at making any one class in the State happy above the rest; the happiness was to be in the whole State, and he held the citizens together by persuasion and necessity, making them benefactors of the State, and therefore benefactors of one another; to this end he created them, not to please themselves, but to be his instruments in binding up the State.

True, he said, I had forgotten.

Observe, Glaucon, that there will be no injustice in compelling our philosophers to have a care and providence of others; we shall explain to them that in other States, men of their class are not obliged to share in the toils of politics: and this is reasonable, for they grow up at their own sweet will, and the government would rather not have them. Being self-taught, they cannot be expected to show any gratitude for a culture which they have never received. But we have brought you into the world to be rulers of the hive, kings of yourselves and of the other citizens, and have educated you far better and more perfectly than they have been educated, and you are better able to share in the double duty. Wherefore each of you, when his turn comes, must go down to the general underground abode, and get the habit of seeing in the dark. When you have acquired the habit, you will see ten thousand times better than the inhabitants of the den, and you will know what the several images are, and what they represent, because you have seen the beautiful and just and good in their truth. And thus our State which is also yours will be a reality, and not a dream only, and will be administered in a spirit unlike that of other States, in which men fight with one another about shadows only and are distracted in the struggle for power, which in their eyes is a great good. Whereas the truth is that the State in which the rulers are most reluctant to govern is always the best and most quietly governed, and the State in which they are most eager, the worst.

Quite true, he replied.

And will our pupils, when they hear this, refuse to take their turn at the toils of State, when they are allowed to spend the greater part of their time with one another in the heavenly light?

Impossible, he answered; for they are just men, and the commands which we impose upon them are just; there can be no doubt that every one of them will take office as a stern necessity, and not after the fashion of our present rulers of State.

Yes, my friend, I said; and there lies the point. You must contrive for your future rulers another and a better life than that of a ruler, and then you may have a well-ordered State; for only in the State which offers this, will they rule who are truly rich, not in silver and gold, but in virtue and wisdom, which are the true blessings of life. Whereas if they go to the administration of public affairs, poor and hungering after the' own private advantage, thinking that hence they are to snatch the chief good, order there can never be; for they will be fighting about office, and the civil and domestic broils which thus arise will be the ruin of the rulers themselves and of the whole State.

Most true, he replied.

And the only life which looks down upon the life of political ambition is that of true philosophy. Do you know of any other?

Indeed, I do not, he said.

And those who govern ought not to be lovers of the task? For, if they are, there will be rival lovers, and they will fight.

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2.4: Descartes' Meditations - Doubt

5 Descartes' Meditations: Doubt

Meditations[6]

MEDITATION I.

OF THE THINGS OF WHICH WE MAY DOUBT.

1. SEVERAL years have now elapsed since I first became aware that I had accepted, even from my youth, many false opinions for true, and that consequently what I afterward based on such principles was highly doubtful; and from that time I was convinced of the necessity of undertaking once in my life to rid myself of all the opinions I had adopted, and of commencing anew the work of building from the foundation, if I desired to establish a firm and abiding superstructure in the sciences. But as this enterprise appeared to me to be one of great magnitude, I waited until I had attained an age so mature as to leave me no hope that at any stage of life more advanced I should be better able to execute my design. On this account, I have delayed so long that I should henceforth consider I was doing wrong were I still to consume in deliberation any of the time that now remains for action. To-day, then, since I have opportunely freed my mind from all cares [and am happily disturbed by no passions], and since I am in the secure possession of leisure in a peaceable retirement, I will at length apply myself earnestly and freely to the general overthrow of all my former opinions.

2. But, to this end, it will not be necessary for me to show that the whole of these are false--a point, perhaps, which I shall never reach; but as even now my reason convinces me that I ought not the less carefully to withhold belief from what is not entirely certain and indubitable, than from what is manifestly false, it will be sufficient to justify the rejection of the whole if I shall find in each some ground for doubt. Nor for this purpose will it be necessary even to deal with each belief individually, which would be truly an endless labor; but, as the removal from below of the foundation necessarily involves the downfall of the whole edifice, I will at once approach the criticism of the principles on which all my former beliefs rested.

3. All that I have, up to this moment, accepted as possessed of the highest truth and certainty, I received either from or through the senses. I observed, however, that these sometimes misled us; and it is the part of prudence not to place absolute confidence in that by which we have even once been deceived.

4. But it may be said, perhaps, that, although the senses occasionally mislead us respecting minute objects, and such as are so far removed from us as to be beyond the reach of close observation, there are yet many other of their informations (presentations), of the truth of which it is manifestly impossible to doubt; as for example, that I am in this place, seated by the fire, clothed in a winter dressing gown, that I hold in my hands this piece of paper, with other intimations of the same nature. But how could I deny that I possess these hands and this body, and withal escape being classed with persons in a state of insanity, whose brains are so disordered and clouded by dark bilious vapors as to cause them pertinaciously to assert that they are monarchs when they are in the greatest poverty; or clothed [in gold] and purple when destitute of any covering; or that their head is made of clay, their body of glass, or that they are gourds? I should certainly be not less insane than they, were I to regulate my procedure according to examples so extravagant.

5. Though this be true, I must nevertheless here consider that I am a man, and that, consequently, I am in the habit of sleeping, and representing to myself in dreams those same things, or even sometimes others less probable, which the insane think are presented to them in their waking moments. How often have I dreamt that I was in these familiar circumstances, that I was dressed, and occupied this place by the fire, when I was lying undressed in bed? At the present moment, however, I certainly look upon this paper with eyes wide awake; the head which I now move is not asleep; I extend this hand consciously and with express purpose, and I perceive it; the occurrences in sleep are not so distinct as all this. But I cannot forget that, at other times I have been deceived in sleep by similar illusions; and, attentively considering those cases, I perceive so clearly that there exist no certain marks by which the state of waking can ever be distinguished from sleep, that I feel greatly astonished; and in amazement I almost persuade myself that I am now dreaming.

6. Let us suppose, then, that we are dreaming, and that all these particulars--namely, the opening of the eyes, the motion of the head, the forth- putting of the hands--are merely illusions; and even that we really possess neither an entire body nor hands such as we see. Nevertheless it must be admitted at least that the objects which appear to us in sleep are, as it were, painted

representations which could not have been formed unless in the likeness of realities; and, therefore, that those general objects, at all events, namely, eyes, a head, hands, and an entire body, are not simply imaginary, but really existent. For, in truth, painters themselves, even when they study to represent sirens and satyrs by forms the most fantastic and extraordinary, cannot bestow upon them natures absolutely new, but can only make a certain medley of the members of different animals; or if they chance to imagine something so novel that nothing at all similar has ever been seen before, and such as is, therefore, purely fictitious and absolutely false, it is at least certain that the colors of which this is composed are real. And on the same principle, although these general objects, viz. [a body], eyes, a head, hands, and the like, be imaginary, we are nevertheless absolutely necessitated to admit the reality at least of some other objects still more simple and universal than these, of which, just as of certain real colors, all those images of things, whether true and real, or false and fantastic, that are found in our consciousness *(cogitatio),*are formed.

7. To this class of objects seem to belong corporeal nature in general and its extension; the figure of extended things, their quantity or magnitude, and their number, as also the place in, and the time during, which they exist, and other things of the same sort.

8. We will not, therefore, perhaps reason illegitimately if we conclude from this that Physics, Astronomy, Medicine, and all the other sciences that have for their end the consideration of composite objects, are indeed of a doubtful character; but that Arithmetic, Geometry, and the other sciences of the same class, which regard merely the simplest and most general objects, and scarcely inquire whether or not these are really existent, contain somewhat that is certain and indubitable: for whether I am awake or dreaming, it remains true that two and three make five, and that a square has but four sides; nor does it seem possible that truths so apparent can ever fall under a suspicion of falsity [or incertitude].

9. Nevertheless, the belief that there is a God who is all powerful, and who created me, such as I am, has, for a long time, obtained steady possession of my mind. How, then, do I know that he has not arranged that there should be neither earth, nor sky, nor any extended thing, nor figure, nor magnitude, nor place, providing at the same time, however, for [the rise in me of the perceptions of all these objects, and] the persuasion that these do not exist otherwise than as I perceive them ? And further, as I sometimes think that others are in error respecting matters of which they believe themselves to possess a perfect knowledge, how do I know that I am not also deceived each time I add together two and three, or number the sides of a square, or form some judgment still more simple, if more simple indeed can be imagined? But perhaps Deity has not been willing that I should be thus deceived, for he is said to be supremely good. If, however, it were repugnant to the goodness of Deity to have created me subject to constant deception, it would seem likewise to be contrary to his goodness to allow me to be occasionally deceived; and yet it is clear that this is permitted.

10. Some, indeed, might perhaps be found who would be disposed rather to deny the existence of a Being so powerful than to believe that there is nothing certain. But let us for the present refrain from opposing this opinion, and grant that all which is here said of a Deity is fabulous: nevertheless, in whatever way it be supposed that I reach the state in which I exist, whether by fate, or chance, or by an endless series of antecedents and consequents, or by any other means, it is clear (since to be deceived and to err is a certain defect) that the probability of my being so imperfect as to be the constant victim of deception, will be increased exactly in proportion as the power possessed by the cause, to which they assign my origin, is lessened. To these reasonings I have assuredly nothing to reply, but am constrained at last to avow that there is nothing of all that I formerly believed to be true of which it is impossible to doubt, and that not through thoughtlessness or levity, but from cogent and maturely considered reasons; so that henceforward, if I desire to discover anything certain, I ought not the less carefully to refrain from assenting to those same opinions than to what might be shown to be manifestly false.

11. But it is not sufficient to have made these observations; care must be taken likewise to keep them in remembrance. For those old and customary opinions perpetually recur-- long and familiar usage giving them the right of occupying my mind, even almost against my will, and subduing my belief; nor will I lose the habit of deferring to them and confiding in them so long as I shall consider them to be what in truth they are, viz, opinions to some extent doubtful, as I have already shown, but still highly probable, and such as it is much more reasonable to believe than deny. It is for this reason I am persuaded that I shall not be doing wrong, if, taking an opposite judgment of deliberate design, I become my own deceiver, by supposing, for a time, that all those opinions are entirely false and imaginary, until at length, having thus balanced my old by my new prejudices, my judgment shall no longer be turned aside by perverted usage from the path that may conduct to the perception of truth. For I am assured that, meanwhile, there will arise neither peril nor error from this course, and that I cannot for the present yield too much to distrust, since the end I now seek is not action but knowledge.

12. I will suppose, then, not that Deity, who is sovereignly good and the fountain of truth, but that some malignant demon, who is at once exceedingly potent and deceitful, has employed all his artifice to deceive me; I will suppose that the sky, the air, the earth, colors, figures, sounds, and all external things, are nothing better than the illusions of dreams, by means of which this being has laid snares for my credulity; I will consider myself as without hands, eyes, flesh, blood, or any of the senses, and as falsely believing that I am possessed of these; I will continue resolutely fixed in this belief, and if indeed by this means it be not in my

power to arrive at the knowledge of truth, I shall at least do what is in my power, viz, [suspend my judgment], and guard with settled purpose against giving my assent to what is false, and being imposed upon by this deceiver, whatever be his power and artifice. But this undertaking is arduous, and a certain indolence insensibly leads me back to my ordinary course of life; and just as the captive, who, perchance, was enjoying in his dreams an imaginary liberty, when he begins to suspect that it is but a vision, dreads awakening, and conspires with the agreeable illusions that the deception may be prolonged; so I, of my own accord, fall back into the train of my former beliefs, and fear to arouse myself from my slumber, lest the time of laborious wakefulness that would succeed this quiet rest, in place of bringing any light of day, should prove inadequate to dispel the darkness that will arise from the difficulties that have now been raised.

MEDITATION II.

OF THE NATURE OF THE HUMAN MIND; AND THAT IT IS MORE EASILY KNOWN THAN THE BODY.

1. The Meditation of yesterday has filled my mind with so many doubts, that it is no longer in my power to forget them. Nor do I see, meanwhile, any principle on which they can be resolved; and, just as if I had fallen all of a sudden into very deep water, I am so greatly disconcerted as to be unable either to plant my feet firmly on the bottom or sustain myself by swimming on the surface. I will, nevertheless, make an effort, and try anew the same path on which I had entered yesterday, that is, proceed by casting aside all that admits of the slightest doubt, not less than if I had discovered it to be absolutely false; and I will continue always in this track until I shall find something that is certain, or at least, if I can do nothing more, until I shall know with certainty that there is nothing certain. Archimedes, that he might transport the entire globe from the place it occupied to another, demanded only a point that was firm and immovable; so, also, I shall be entitled to entertain the highest expectations, if I am fortunate enough to discover only one thing that is certain and indubitable.[

2. I suppose, accordingly, that all the things which I see are false (fictitious); I believe that none of those objects which my fallacious memory represents ever existed; I suppose that I possess no senses; I believe that body, figure, extension, motion, and place are merely fictions of my mind. What is there, then, that can be esteemed true ? Perhaps this only, that there is absolutely nothing certain.

3. But how do I know that there is not something different altogether from the objects I have now enumerated, of which it is impossible to entertain the slightest doubt? Is there not a God, or some being, by whatever name I may designate him, who causes these thoughts to arise in my mind ? But why suppose such a being, for it may be I myself am capable of producing them? Am I, then, at least not something? But I before denied that I possessed senses or a body; I hesitate, however, for what follows from that? Am I so dependent on the body and the senses that without these I cannot exist? But I had the persuasion that there was absolutely nothing in the world, that there was no sky and no earth, neither minds nor bodies; was I not, therefore, at the same time, persuaded that I did not exist? Far from it; I assuredly existed, since I was persuaded. But there is I know not what being, who is possessed at once of the highest power and the deepest cunning, who is constantly employing all his ingenuity in deceiving me. Doubtless, then, I exist, since I am deceived; and, let him deceive me as he may, he can never bring it about that I am nothing, so long as I shall be conscious that I am something. So that it must, in fine, be maintained, all things being maturely and carefully considered, that this proposition (pronunciatum) *I am, I exist*, is necessarily true each time it is expressed by me, or conceived in my mind.

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2.5: EPISTEMOLOGY

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2.5.1: Overview

How do we know what we claim to know? How do we find out what we know? How do we judge claims to know? These are questions covered in this chapter. They are in the field of Philosophy known as epistemology.

The ISSUES for epistemology are all in one way or another related to knowledge:

- RELIABILITY of KNOWLEDGE
- EXTENT of KNOWLEDGE
- KINDS of KNOWLEDGE
- SOURCES of KNOWLEDGE
- TRUTH
- SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE

The sections of this chapter will cover the following:

1. RATIONALISM
2. EMPIRICISM
3. SKEPTICISM
4. TRANSCENDENTAL IDEALISM
5. SCIENCE

Theories of Truth

1. CORRESPONDENCE THEORY
2. COHERENCE THEORY
3. PRAGMATIC THEORY
4. SCIENTIFIC METHOD and TRUTH

The following sections will look into these matters and attempt to answer some of these questions.

Those who think about knowledge realize that there are several basic types of knowledge.

The first kind might be thought of as **Personal Knowledge** or knowledge by acquaintance. This is the sort of knowledge that people claim when they express claims such as "I know John Doe. " Or "I know that building"

People also claim to know how to do things. People claim to ahve the skill or experience to do things such as speak or drive or bake a cake or many other things. This is sometimes described as **Prodecural Knowledge.**

What philosophers are mainly concerned with are a third sort of knowledge where people claim to know things. Those sorts of claims are often thought to be about "facts". This form of knowledge is termed Propositional Knowledge. This will be the concern of this chapter.

Before we look into the various theories about how we know what we do know when we make propositional claims and how to determine if claims are true or not it would be helpful to make a number of important points or distinctions about language and how we use it. Not all uses of language involve a claim that can be described as claims of knowledge. There are a variety of forms of expressions or sentences in any language. Not all sentences are functioning for the speaker in the same way.

VIEW: Types of Claims

Here are four of the different uses for language:

Expressive (Thus use includes sentences that are neither true nor false.)

"Holy Cow!" "ouch" "Hurray!"

They express the feelings of the speaker/writer.

Directive (Thus use includes sentences that are neither true nor false.)

1. "Please close the door."
2. "What time is it?"
3. "How much does that cost?"

This use offers instructions or requests information.

Performative (Thus use includes sentences that are neither true nor false.)

1. "I bid five dollars."
2. "I promise that I will do that."
3. "I now pronounce you ..."

This use actually performs some operation. It presents no information and makes no requests.

Evaluative (Thus use includes sentences that are neither true nor false.)

1. "That is a good car."
2. "She is a good person."
3. Chocolate is the best flavor for ice cream.

This use expresses how people think about some object, activity, person, condition, or situation. As the standard for making such evaluations is not such as to be derived from a source that is recognized as existing apart from humans and uninfluenced by culture there is no commonly agreed upon method for determining if such evaluations are true or not true.

Sentences expressing evaluations are not taken as making claims about what is known so much as making claims about how the evaluator thinks.

Cognitive (This use includes sentences that are either true or false, or potentially true or false.)

1. There are three sides to a triangle. The sum of their angles is 180 degrees.
2. There is a computer in front of you right now.
3. 23 + 11= 34
4. A bachelor is an unmarried male.
5. If a is more than b, and b is more than c, then a is more than c.
6. There are 1.8376 x 10 73rd grains of sand on planet Earth.

It is the cognitive use of language that concerns us with the issue of knowledge. This is the use involved with **Propositional Knowledge**. It is the cognitive use that makes claims that should be capable of being determined to be either true or false. Cognitive use of language expressing that which is claimed as knowledge exists in a variety of forms: logical, semantic, systemic and empirical. We will examine them in a subsequent section. What they have in common is that claims are made that can be determined to be true or false in some manner or other.

For the remainder of this chapter it should be understood that it is the **cognitive use** of language that is of concern in so far as the issues of knowledge or truth.

For a look into What is knowledge?

READ: Dallas Roark **How Do We Know? What do we know**

VIEW: Jan Willem Lindemans Epistemology or the theory of knowledge

On Knowledge:

WIKIPEDIA:

INTERNET ENCYCLOPEDIA of PHILOSOPHY:

STANFORD ENCYCLOPEDIA of PHILOSOPHY:

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2.5.2: Rationalism

There are several theories of how we come to know something. These lectures will cover several of them.

(NOTE: You must read only those linked materials that are preceded by the capitalized word **READ**.)

Theories of Knowledge

1. RATIONALISM
2. EMPIRICISM
3. SKEPTICISM
4. TRANSCENDENTAL IDEALISM
5. SCIENCE

Rationalism -in Epistemology

Rationalism is a reliance on reason {Lat. *ratio*} as the only reliable source of human knowledge. In the most general application, rationalism offers a naturalistic alternative to appeals to religious accounts of human nature and conduct.

A psychological characterization of rationalism would describe it as an overly deductive way of thinking and to the molding of reality to fit one's theoretical understanding.

More specifically, rationalism is the epistemological theory that significant knowledge of the world can best be achieved by *a priori* means; it therefore stands in contrast to empiricism.

The first philosophers who are today referred to as having been rationalists include Descartes (1596-1650), Leibniz (1646-1716), and Spinoza (1632-1677). These thinkers thought they were defending a form of rational thought in the form of a science against the older school of thought known as scholasticism. The defense of science offered by Descartes included a form of dualism that carried over elements of tradition of the scholastics in a form of thinking that is technical, deductive, and abstract. In Spinoza's Ethics the method is again deductive and modeled on the geometric system of Euclid's Elements. Rationalism is a method of thinking that is marked by being a deductive and abstract way of reasoning.

In ordinary usage rationalism is a basic sense of respect for reason or to refer to the idea that reason should play a large role in human life (in contrast, say, to mysticism).

READ : on rationalism

READ: rationalism

So with RATIONALISM it is possible to have knowledge without having sensory experiences. There is knowledge of logic and its laws or rules that are based upon reasoning and not sensory experience. There is a knowledge that is innate or born inside of us, that is to say that there are forms of knowledge that exists within our minds from the time we are born.

Links to Rationalism sites

Descartes' Epistemology READ: the first five sections

Suggested Reading: Descartes' *Meditations* part I

For Descartes knowledge involves CERTAINTY and certainty exists in the form of clear and distinct ideas, which are ideas that are indubitable (not capable of being doubted). These would be innate ideas that all rational beings are born with such as knowledge of self, God, and the world. But all knowledge is the result of acts of reasoning.

Links related to Descartes:

View: Dr. Richard Brown Descartes 1: The Method of Doubt

Dr. Richard Brown Descartes 2: A Priori Knowledge

Leibniz

Distinguished the truths of reasoning which were necessary truths as in the rule of contradictions, and excluded middle (statements are either true or false) from the truths of fact which are not necessary but are contingent upon experience and sufficient reason needed to accept what the senses report.

Links to Leibniz sites:

Problems: While the rationalist can explain knowledge of Mathematics and Logic , how are the rationalists to explain knowledge of the external world?

On Rationalism see also

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy,

Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy,

Encyclopedia Brittanica,

The Ism Book: a Field Guide to Philosophy

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2.5.3: Empiricism

Reliance on experience as the source of ideas and knowledge. More specifically, empiricism is the epistemological theory that genuine information about the world must be acquired by *a posteriori* means, so that nothing can be thought without first being sensed. Prominent modern empiricists include Bacon, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, and Mill. In the twentieth century, empiricism principles were extended and applied by the pragmatists and the logical positivists.

READ all sources on empiricism:

1. Encyclopedia
2. Skeptics Dictionary

John Locke : For Locke the mind is a blank slate at birth tabla rasa and all knowledge results from experiences that enter the mind from the experiences of the body. Knowledge of ideas is possible because ideas are representations of things experienced. But if representations are copies of our experiences, just how accurate are they?

Locke distinguished the primary and secondary qualities of an object of an experience and opened a door to a major problem in determining just how accurate sense knowledge could ever be. Locke distinguished the properties that where in or with the object and those that existed within the mind of the subject of the experience. The object has a texture but the idea of “smoothness” is in the subject. The object had a degree of heat but “hot” and “cold” are ideas in the knower.

Read the overview of Locke in a lecture by Dr. Tom Kerns:

VIDEO Locke argument against innate ideas

View: Dr. Richard Brown on Locke and Berkeley and Empiricism http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R9GuSA9HHgA

Suggested Reading: Locke Essay Concerning Human Understanding Bk 1 ch 1

George Berkeley: (**subjective idealism**) **Berkeley** would treat both the primary and the secondary qualities as being the result of the subject, the knower. There would be no proof of the existence of any thing outside of the mind. All evidence and experiences are within the mind. God would be the MIND that thought of all other minds and thought of them in such a way that they think of themselves as being in a world with others at the same time.

Read the overview of Berkeley in a lecture by Dr. Tom Kerns http://philosophycourse.info/lecsite/lec-berke.html

David Hume: Hume was a skeptic. He agreed with Locke that we are born with a blank slate, tabla rasa and that all our knowledge comes through the senses (empiricism) but he did not think that we could know all that much for certain.(skepticism). He held that are perceptions are or make impressions which are our thought, that we have no ideas without sense impressions, that reasoning (a priori) does not lead to knowledge, that sense impressions are not proof of an external independent reality.

Read the overview of Hume in a lecture by Dr. Tom Kerns

VIEW: Dr. Richard Brown on

Hume 1: Empiricism and the A Priori

Hume 2: Induction

See also

Encyclopedia of Philosophy,

Encyclopedia Brittanica,

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy,

The Ism Book,

Catholic Encyclopedia.

PROBLEMS: The empiricists could not overcome problems with accounting for forms of knowledge that did not relate to the senses, e.g., in Mathematics and in Logic. And they could not account for how it could be that humans can have knowledge for which there is no direct experience, for example of the universe as a whole or of sub atomic events or quanta of energy, entities for which there can be no direct experience.

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2.5.4: Transcendentalism

(NOTE: You must read only those linked materials that are preceded by the capitalized word **READ**.)

Immanuel Kant (1724-1804)



Figure 2.5.4.1

Images of Kant:

Introduction to Kant and his Epistemology by Tom Kerns

READ Detailed overview of Kant by reading all sections until you reach Kant's Ethics

- Kant Links:
- Kant on the Web:

For Kant there is :

- unity of consciousness
- unity of being
- unifying act of the mind

To account for this and our relation to being, Kant postulates that there must exist rules for thoughts, which he calls CATEGORIES that are innate and necessary for UNDERSTANDING. Without such rules operating there is no way to account for our knowledge of such ideas as:

substance/space/time/unity/plurality /cause and effect/ possibility/necessity/reality

Knowledge has both form and content.

Form or structure of Knowledge of reality- reason -CATEGORIES- part of the way in which the mind operates

Content of the knowledge of reality - provided through the senses

So, IDEAS CONSTITUTE OUR EXPERIENCE

But, there is a fundamental distinction to be made of two types of KNOWLEDGE

1. KNOWLEDGE of the thing as it appears through our senses as filtered by the brain-**phenomena**

   This is possible and what we generally call knowledge of the world

2. KNOWLEDGE of the thing as it is in itself **noumena**

> This is not possible for humans can never get beyond or away from the categories of the understanding which shape and influence all that the human experiences because humans can never think without using the mind -brain and thus involving its structure and manner of operating.

For Kant humans will never know things as they are in themselves because humans can never think without their brains and the brains are so structured as to provide for arrangements and ordering and connecting elements for human thought to occur. It is as if the humans must always see things through colored glasses because they cannot remove them. Therefore the universe will always appear through the tinting of those glasses. Humans will never know how the universe actually looks. Humans may get close but can not experience the thing itself directly.

How do we acquire ideas?

Kant combines ideas of the rationalists and the empiricists.

Rationalism	Empiricism
innate	empirical
a priori	from experience

How is knowledge organized in the mind?

Mind introduces new principles of order into experience and arranges and stores and tests arrangements and tests the efficacy of those ideas and arrangements.

Transcendental Idealism

Kant

all propositions are a priori empirical

analytic synthetic

I. Analytic a priori: e.g. math, definitions

II. Analytic empirical don't exist

III. Synthetic a priori: categories, rules, principles

part of perception

part of thought

IV. Synthetic empirical: all physical claims- this includes all of the sciences.

Suggested Reading: Kant: Kritik der reinen Vernunft or the Critique of Pure Reasont



Figure 2.5.4.2

View: Dr. Richard Brown on Kant and the Synthetic a priori

Transcendental Idealism noumena and phenomena

Kant's contributions of the distinction of types of knowledge and of the role played by the order of the brain remain a dominating influence over thinking about epistemological issues to this day.

> *Immanuel Kant is considered to be one of the world's greatest philosophers. In his account of epistemological theory of knowledge, called transcendental idealism, he claimed that "the mind of the knower makes an active contribution to experience of objects before us". He meant that whatever we already know through our experience makes it easier for us to acquire new means of knowledge. Accordingly, Kant specified two sources of our knowledge, which are the mind's receptive capacity (sensibility), and the mind's conceptual capacity (understanding). He thought that it would be impossible for people to have any experience of objects, which are not placed in space and time. These conditions of sensibility are due to our consciousness, which must "apprehend objects as occupying a region of space and persisting for some duration of time". However, sensibility by itself doesn't make judging objects possible. It takes also understanding, which provides the concepts, the rules for determining what is "common or universal in different representations". He said, "without sensibility no object would be given to us; and without understanding no object would be thought. Thoughts without content are empty; intuitions without concepts are blind". He meant that in order to think about some object it takes understanding, which assigns concepts, based on the object's sensation input, to identify what is common and general about it.*
>
> *Nevertheless, empirical derivation discussed above is not sufficient to explain all of the concepts that arise in the human life, such as causation, substance, self, identity, space, time, etc. It's due to the fact that these concepts are products of our experience, which is constituted by ideas. Therefore, "Kant postulates that there must exist rules for thoughts, which he calls Categories that are innate and necessary for understanding" all of the concepts. In addition to mind's conceptual contribution to experience only that special set of concepts organized into these fundamental categories of thought make empirical concepts and judgments possible. Although these concepts cannot be experienced directly, they are present when particular judgments of objects take place. Plus, "since objects can only be experienced spatio-temporally, the only application of concepts that yields knowledge is to the empirical...world". Kant rejects any kind of knowledge that goes beyond the bounds of sensation because there can be no objects for the understanding to judge, rightly or wrongly. While Kant is a transcendental idealist he believes the nature of objects as they are in themselves is unknowable to us. However, the knowledge of appearance is...possible. Therefore, knowledge of the things can never get beyond the categories of understanding, which shape and influence all that the human experiences. Accordingly, human will never know how the universe actually looks because they aren't able to think without any arrangement and order of elements. Kant's theory of knowledge combines rationalism and the empiricism in his account to distinct types of knowledge and the principles of mind's order.* Andrzej Lagodzinski (QCC, 2001)

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2.5.5: Skepticism

(NOTE: You must read only those linked materials that are preceded by the capitalized word **READ**.)

Skepticism is the belief that some or all human knowledge is impossible. Since even our best methods for learning about the world sometimes fall short of perfect certainty, skeptics argue, it is better to suspend belief than to rely on the dubitable products of reason. Classical skeptics include Pyrrho and Sextus Empiricus. In the modern era, Montaigne, Bayle, and Hume all advocated some form of skeptical philosophy. Fallibilism is a more moderate response to the lack of certainty.



Figure 2.5.5.1

READ Wikipedia on Skepticism

David Hume, the jovial skeptic

Suggested Reading: Hume: An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding

Philosophy Encyclopedia on Skepticism

Ancient Skepticism

READ Encyclopedia of Philosophy

Contemporary Skepticism

A degree of skepticism is quite healthy as a counterpoint to being too credulous and being taken in by poor reasoning and illusions and deliberate attempts to mislead and deceive. Skepticism that holds that it is not possible to have knowledge is self defeating and not productive. There should be a skeptical inquiry that is used before humans reach conclusions and decide which beliefs they will hold. There is a sort of positive skepticism that urges caution and all deliberate care and critique before drawing conclusions or setting beliefs but does not reject the possibility of either achieving knowledge or gaining closer proximity to knowledge and truth.

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2.5.6: Types of Knowledge

Although philosophers may differ on how many different types of knowledge there are they agree that with **Propositional Knowledge** we claim to have knowledge of different things. What they may have in common that make them knowledge then becomes the issue.

Here is one schema for different types of **Propositional Knowledge** .

- LOGICAL
- SEMANTIC
- SYSTEMIC
- EMPIRICAL

What are these about ? Why make these distinctions?

Consider that you probably would claim to know the following things.

Examples:

1. There are three sides to a triangle. The sum of their angles is 180 degrees.
2. There is a computer in front of you right now.
3. 23 + 11= 34
4. A bachelor is an unmarried male.
5. If a is more than b, and b is more than c, then a is more than c.

These sentences all make claims that can be determined to be either true or false. They are sentences that express propositions. They are claims about which you can come to a judgment as to whether or not they are true. You probably know that they are true. Now how is it that you come to know these things? Obviously you come by this knowledge in different ways. This relates to the idea of the different types of knowledge.

LOGICAL （ example 5 ）

There is a knowledge that is the result of the understanding of the relationship of ideas to one another. There are the rules or laws of logic that permit claims to knowledge that are further statements of ideas consistent with the rules and the ideas already accepted.

Here is another example where you do not need to know what I am talking about because you know the relationships involved.

A. All gazintz are gazatz

B. All gazatz are garingers

C. Therfore, all gazintz are garingers.

You can claim to know that : If A and B are true, then C is true as well. This you know by LOGIC.

SEMANTIC （ example 4 ）

There is knowledge that is the result of learning the meaning of words. Knowledge of words is knowledge of definitions. Such definitions are set in dictionaries. So bachelors are unmarried males. You know this. People acknowledge this. You can look it up.

(Are newborn baby boys Bachelors???????? Do people say to the new mother in the hospital nursery: "Oh what a beautiful bachelor you have there Ms Jones!" ?)

SYSTEMIC （ examples 1 and 3 ）

There is knowledge of Mathematics and Geometry, which is the result of learning a system of words, or symbols and how they

relate to one another and the rules of operating in that system and then any claims made that are consistent with those definitions and rules is called knowledge.

EMPIRICAL (example 2)

There is a knowledge that comes through our senses. This knowledge is empirical knowledge. Science is the best example of a method for ascertaining the accuracy of such knowledge. Scientific knowledge is a result of the practice of the method : Observation, abduction of a hypothesis, careful observation, refinement of hypothesis, deduction of test for hypothesis, testing and experimentation, confirmation or falsification of the hypothesis.

What do these four types of knowledge have in common? One of the most popular theories of knowledge of the twentieth century holds that KNOWLEDGE does imply a **Belief.**

Belief does not Imply Knowledge. Wherever people claim to know that something is true they believe that it is so. When people claim to believe that something is so they don't always claim to know that it is so.

What kind of a belief is KNOWLEDGE.?

To begin with it must be true. You can not know something that is false, that is not so.

It must be true and you must claim to know it and it be true not by accident or coincidence but because there is evidence to support and enough to warrant or justify the claim to know.

So, KNOWLEDGE = JUSTIFIED TRUE BELIEF

WARRANTED TRUE BELIEF

EVIDENCE is NEEDED for JUSTIFICATION

VIEW: Knowledge as Justified True Belief http://youtu.be/tg2itM5-cdM

CAUTION!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

WARRANTED TRUE BELIEF may not be knowledge if true by ACCIDENT.

January 1, 2001 the claim is made: I know that the GIANTS are going to win the SUPERBOWL in 2001!

It turns out that several weeks later they did win. Can I claim that I knew it on January 1st or was it just a lucky guess or a well informed guess?

How does a person gain the warrant or the justification for the belief?

Well, depending on the type of belief that it is there are different kinds of warrants.

MODES of WARRANTY

LOGICAL

Warrants found in the rules of Logic. Follow them and the claim is warranted.

SEMANTIC

Warrants are found in the dictionaries. Use them, be consistent with them and the claim is warranted.

SYSTEMIC

Warrants are found within the system (Math or Geometry) follow the rules be consistent with the definitions and rules and the claim is warranted.

EMPIRICAL

Warrants are found with evidence. How is the evidence to be gathered, examined and evaluated? Ther will be more on this under the topic of **TRUTH**

There are four types of beliefs when considering truth and warrants:

1. warranted true beliefs : This type is called KNOWLEDGE
2. warranted false beliefs: This type cannot exist at all.
3. unwarranted true beliefs These are lucky guesses or coincidences and not knowledge.
4. unwarranted false beliefs These are just wild unsupported claims or wishes that are not true .

Why Knowledge is Justified True Belief; JTB.

Justification , Warranty comes in degrees!

How much evidence is needed in order to determine whether or not someone knows something or not?

How much evidence is needed in order to determine whether or not someone has sufficient warrant to make a claim to know something or not?

How much is needed depends on what is riding on the outcome of the claim. For simple matters of little consequence humans appear to accept fairly small amounts of evidence. For important matters much more evidence is needed.

EXAMPLE:

How old is someone? If someone claims to know how old John Smith or Mary Doe is we probably accept the claim on their word if it is just gossip. However, if there were a $10 bet on it we would ask for evidence. We might go to the person and ask them to confirm the claim. If it were $100 we might want a driver's license. If it were $1000 we might want a birth certificate. For $10,000 we might want to go to the official registry and check the official documents ourselves.

The highest consequences on claims to know: Human Life. At a criminal trial, a capital homicide case, what is the standard of proof? It is evidence that is convincing beyond a reasonable doubt. NOT beyond all doubts. But beyond reasonable doubts, meaning beyond all doubting or questioning of the evidence that we have reason to doubt or question.

Scientists have their reputation riding on their claims to know things. The standard for the warrant in Science sis that heir claims be supported by evidence that other scientists can examine, experiments that others can repeat and get the same result and equations that others can examine to check against errors.

So, claims to know may be accepted depending on amounts of support that may vary in the type and amount depending on the type of claim that it is. However, to know something that which you claim to know must be TRUE and truth does not have degrees: because a statement p is either true or it isn't

TRUTH will be examined in the next section.

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2.5.7: Truth

NOTE: You must read only those linked materials that are preceded by the capitalized word **READ**.)

There are several different theories of what truth is. It turns out that as with most questions in Philosophy, the question “What is Truth?” does not have a simple answer.

truth {Gk. alhqeia [alêtheia]; Lat. *veritas*; Ger. *Wahrheit*}

The conformity of a proposition to the way things are. Precise analysis of the nature of truth is the subject of the correspondence, coherence, pragmatic, redundancy, and semantic theories of truth.

Theories of Truth

Several theories are explained including the Pragmatic Theory and Correspondence theory

READ: Dallas Roark **When Can We Say We Know?**

On Truth

WIKIPEDIA on TRUTH:

INTERNET ENCYCLOPEDIA of PHILOSOPHY on TRUTH:

STANFORD ENCYCLOPEDIA of PHILOSOPHY on TRUTH

I. CORRESPONDENCE THEORY （Bertrand Russell）

This is the theory most people are brought up to believe but it has too many problems with it to be the complete answer. A claim is made about the universe. We go and check out the claim with observations and physical measuring devices. This is understood by many people in the simplest way. A claim is made about the physical universe and people want to go and check it out. **Peep that!** Is that so for all claims?

The theory is based on the belief that a proposition is true when it conforms with some fact or state of affairs. While this theory properly emphasizes the notion that propositions are true when they correspond to reality, its proponents often have difficulty explaining what facts are and how propositions are related to them.

There exists an independent realm of facts: reality

Truth is the correspondence of belief with fact

BELIEF corresponds to Facts = truth

BELIEF does not correspond to Facts = false

Problems:

Verification involves subjective experiences as to both observations and require interpretations.

Example 1：

Claims are made about things that are very large such as galaxies and the entire universe, as to its shape and size and duration that are beyond the ability of any human to have a direct experience of it.

Example 2：

Claims are made about things that are very small such as sub atomic particle and small quanta of energy, bosons, gluons,

neutrinos, charm particles and the like which no human can have a direct experience of.

Example 3:

A simple claim:

There is a container of milk in the refrigerator.

To determine whether or not this is true all one needs to do is to go to the refrigerator and check. Would the claim be true if:

a. There is a bottle of milk there?
b. There is a wax container of milk there.
c. There is a wax container of powdered milk there?
d. There is a wax container of Parmalat there?

Some answer yes it would be true in all 4 cases . Some think it is only true in case b. It all depends on what you mean by "container" ! For some it means a wax container. For others it may mean any object that holds any sort of contents.

Example 4 :

Is the following claim true or not?

Bill Clinton: “I did not have sexual relations with that woman, Monica Lewinski.”

It all depends on what you mean by "sex". For some it means any act involving the sexual organs being stimulated to the point of orgasm. For others it might mean only the penetration of the penis into a vagina and only for beings of the same species.

II. COHERENCE THEORY（Bland Blanshard ）

This explains how scientists can make claims about the very large and small objects using a system of claims already accepted to be true.

The theory is the belief that a proposition is true to the extent that it agrees with other true propositions. In contrast with the correspondence theory's emphasis on an independent reality, this view supposes that reliable beliefs constitute an inter-related system, each element of which entails every other. Thus, such idealists as Bradley, Bosanquet, and Blanshard all defended versions the coherence theory.

READ: Theory, its variations and criticisms of it.

TRUTH is a property of a related group of consistent statements

e.g., Mathematics Science

Truth is systemic coherence of propositions interconnectedness of beliefs

Problems:

1. what if other judgments (statements) are false? Consistent error is possible?
2. coherence theory in the last analysis seems to involve a correspondence for the first judgments must be verified directly. How?

III. PRAGMATIC THEORY C.S. Peirce James Dewey ）

Read and focus on the pragmatic test for truth: Dallas Roark **When Can We Say We Know?**

Further on PRAGMATISM by Dallas Roark

The theory is the belief that a proposition is true when acting upon it yields satisfactory practical results. As formulated by William

James, the pragmatic theory promises (in the long term) a convergence of human opinions upon a stable body of scientific propositions that have been shown in experience to be successful principles for human action.

Examines how beliefs work in practice, the practical difference.

Truth of a belief is determined by evaluating how well the belief satisfies the whole of human nature over a long period of time: how well does it WORK?

What are its consequences?

This makes TRUTH something that is PSYCHOLOGICAL.

What difference do the beliefs make if they are true?

TRUTH is whatever has met a society's criteria for justification.

For pragmatists like Richard Rorty there is no objective truth at all. All claims need only satisfy the group's expectations for verification. Science is just one of many groups with its own rules and criteria. As there are multiple groups with different criteria there can be multiple truths.

Rorty 's neopragmatism, (antifoundationalism), argues against any quest for ultimate reality or Platonic absolutes such as "Truth," "Goodness," . Rorty advocates turning away from these impossible standards, instead embracing a pragmatic and contingent view of truth in all human endeavors". Thus he's called an antifoundationalist because he rejects the existence of any real or objective foundations for human knowledge, i.e., the Western philosophical attempt to build theory from "the ground up," on firm foundational "first principles". (See Rorty's book, Consequences of Pragmatism.)

Rorty thus is emphasizing the nature of all human knowledge as "made" rather than "found." Rorty is mostly content to point out the fallacy of trying to pursue objective reality.

READ: **Richard Rorty the Public Philosopher *by Michael Albert***

On Rorty: Conversational Constraints: Richard Rorty and Contemporary Critical Theory" Prepared for the Midwinter Meeting of the English and American Literature Section, ACRL, January 1996 By Richard Fyffe, Humanities Bibliographer, University of Connecticut Libraries, Storrs

Consequences of Pragmatism

Problems:

1. What is justified for one community to believe may not be true!!!!
2. How to explain errors? Falsehoods?
3. It makes truth RELATIVE.（ NO ABSOLUTE TRUTH; NO OBJECTIVE TRUTH; MANY TRUTHS AT ONCE!!!!)
4. Self Refuting basic Claims: The pragmatic theory makes the claims that a. there is no objective knowledge/ b. there is no absolute knowledge/ c. there is no objective truth/ d. there is no absolute truth

If these claims are true then they would refute themselves. If all claims are true only within a community that accepts them as true then the claims above (a to d) are only true within the communities that accept them as being true by whatever criteria they use and think has been satisfied. So within the community of pragmatists the claims would be true but for others they would not be true and thus there is being affirmed a series of contradictions.

Pragmatists would by their principles and theories accept that claims above (a to d) are true and not true at the same time!

Pragmatists overlook a number of things.

There are different types of claims and it is only the empirical, aesthetic and ethical claims that appear to be troublesome.

The empirical claims can be resolved as to their accuracy. This is so because there is a difference between truth and justified belief which pragmatism overlooks.

C.S. Peirce's solution was to postulate an ideal community of inquirers who would come to agreement concerning what is known

and what is true in the infinite long run of time. C. S. Peirce held that there was but one reality.

Truth= what an ideal community would believe in the long run of time

This is particularly true for empirical claims.

However there are many post modernist pragmatists who have abandoned the idea of an objective truth and objective knowledge.

The Case of Two Islands: A Test for No Objective Truth or Reality and Relativism

On Island A the people there are quite happy with the belief that they have souls that will survive the death of their bodies. They think that they have experiences that support that belief and they are satisfied with what the belief provides for them.

On Island B the people there are quite happy with the belief that they do not have souls that will survive the death of their bodies. They think that they have experiences that support that belief and they are satisfied with what the belief provides for them.

Now according to the postmodern relativist position if the people on each island are satisfied and happy with their beliefs, then what they believe is true and what they think are real are real. The result would be that on Island A people have souls and on Island B people do not have souls.

Is this belief that at the same time people have souls and do not have souls a belief that you can accept? Can you hold that at the same time some people have souls and some people do not have souls?

DOES TRUTH MATTER ?

If objectivity is rejected, every groups claims would be equal !! So the claims of the following ideologies would be true: racism, sexism, Nazism, etc... According to this post modern theory of truth all claims are ideologies. Must all claims be accepted as true at once?

With empirical claims how can it be that there would not be some basis for truth that would rule out inconsistent and contradictory claims from all being true at once? How could it be true that the earth would be flat and spherical at the same time?

Even with claims about non-physical entities, how could it be that there are more than one truth as when :

Group A thinks it is true that people have souls

Group B thinks that there are no souls

How can the claims to truth for both group A and group B be true at the same time?

MULTIPLE TRUTHS

There are those influenced by the postmodern relativist position who think or believe or want to believe that there can be more than one truth at the same time. They believe that there can be multiple simultaneous truths. Is this possible? But is that really possible? Is it possible to have multiple truths for all types of claims.

Let us consider carefully what this might mean.

SEMANTIC CLAIMS

CLAIM S : The meaning of the word ‘table ‘ in the following sentence is that of a type of furniture according to standard dictionaries of the English Language : “At dinner time they placed the dishes and glasses on the table.”

Claim 1 : Claim S is true

Claim 2 : Claim S is not true

Is it possible that Claim 1 and Claim 2 are both true at the same time?

CLAIM Se: The meaning of the word ‘table ‘ in the following sentence is that of a type of hat according to standard dictionaries of the English Language : “At dinner time they placed the dishes and glasses on the table.”

Is it possible that Claim S and Claim Se are both true at the same time?

SYSTEMIC CLAIMS

Claim T: 2 + 5 = 7

Claim 3 : Claim T is true

Claim 4 : Claim T is not true

Is it possible that Claim 3 and Claim 4 are both true at the same time?

Claim Te: 2+5=9

Is it possible that Claim T and Claim Te are both true at the same time?

LOGICAL CLAIMS

Claim L: If A is more than B and B is more than C , then A is more than C

Claim 5 : Claim L is true

Claim 6 : Claim L is not true

Is it possible that Claim 5 and Claim 6 are both true at the same time?

CLAIM Le: If A is more than B and B is more than C , then A is less than C

Is it possible that Claim L and Claim Le are both true at the same time?

EMPIRICAL CLAIMS

CLAIM E: The planet Earth has the shape of an oblate spheroid.

Claim 7: Claim E is true.

Claim 8: Claim E is not true.

Is it possible that Claim 7 and Claim 8 are both true at the same time?

CLAIM Ee The planet Earth has the shape of a flat saucer.

Is it possible that Claim E and Claim Ee are both true at the same time?

Logical Empiricism

For the logical empiricist movement the truth of a proposition rests on how well it is verified. For them what makes a proposition true or false would be how well it checks out through a process of verification.

As Dallas Roark puts it:

> " Or, "in other words, it is a way of asking how propositions are validated."[34] How is this done? Ayer answers:
>
> The answer is that we test the validity of an empirical hypothesis by seeing whether it actually fulfills the function which it is designed to fulfill. And we have seen that the function of an empirical hypothesis is to enable us to anticipate experience. Accordingly, if an observation to which a given proposition is relevant conforms to our expectations, the truth of that proposition is confirmed.--A.J. Ayer, **Language, Truth and Logic,** New York: Dover Publications, 1936,
>
> Ayer admits that there is no certainty in this operation. If the experiment comes off according to expectations then creditability has been enhanced. There is no question that it will be repeated. If it does not, then questions about the

> experiment may be raised; if it is successful again, greater probability of being true is attached to the statement.--Dallas Roark, **Introduction to Philosophy.**

Thus the best that is offered is that at the present time a proposition would have a certain amount of support and of verification.

For some material on WHY TRUTH MATTERS just read here.WHY TRUTH MATTERS

TRUTH, CONFLICTS and POWER

Must we tolerate and respect all groups even those with conflicting claims? How is it to be resolved when there are conflicts? For the pragmatists all the criteria for resolution are criteria that groups have developed. It will then always come down to which group has the most power.

Instead of **KNOWLEDGE is POWER.**

For pragmatists and postmodern thinkers: **POWER IS KNOWLEDGE**

There is a cynicism with pragmatists such as Rorty and other post modernists who would deny that thee is "truth" as objective. They claim that truth is only and whatever those in power have persuaded people to believe. They accept that truth is whatever experts happen to agree upon but not that it relates to anything that is "objective". They make truth something based on the consent or agreement of the folks who wish to claim that truth. Such cynics make truth depend on nothing "objective" and deny that there is anything that is "objective". The resolution of conflicting claims concerning what is true lies not in any reference to an objective reality or to an objective truth but to whatever criteria the group holds for the resolution of claims. If two groups have two different sets of criteria then the group with the most power will determine what truth is by its criteria and impose it upon the others who will go on thinking that their original ideas were true anyway. There will be two truths at once over the same situation. This will apply to claims as to what is real as well as to what is true.

One group may use scientific method and hold to the criteria of science and another group may use consultation with a shaman and the shaman mystical experiences as the basis for truth and the results of each approach are thought to be the truth by each group and for the pragmatists both are correct at the same time. A large rock in the American Museum of Natural History can be a meteorite for the group using science and a messenger from the sky god for the original peoples at the same time.

It can be true for one group that (Jews, Blacks, Women...) are inferior to (Christians, Whites, Men) and for another group the opposite can be true at the same time according to this theory. One of the values that pragmatists attempt to promote is tolerance and in the name of tolerance and for the sake of tolerance people are asked to respect the right of others to hold their own views. yet if a person holds the view that the truth is that tolerance is wrong then they can be right and tolerance can be both good and bad at the same time. This theory results in applications of political power to resolve conflicts and has not lead to a more tolerant set of societies in this world.

V. redundancy theory of truth

Belief that it is always logically superfluous to claim that a proposition is true, since this claim adds nothing further to a simple affirmation of the proposition itself. "It is true that I am bald." means the same thing as "I am bald."

VI. semantic theory of truth

Belief that any claim that a proposition is true can be made only as a formal requirement regarding the language in which the proposition itself is expressed. Thus, according to Tarski, "It rained today" is true if and only if it rained today. The distinction between different levels of language employed by this theory is presumed to offer a convenient evasion of otherwise troublesome semantic paradoxes.

RESolutionS ????

Can you put the theories together??? Are they complementary ? e.g. could you attempt these matches and consolidations?

1. empirical claims > correspondence theory

2. semantic claims > coherence theory

3. ethical claims > pragmatic theory

Not really, for such an amalgamation of theories can't account for differences, can't resolve disagreements, conflicts, particularly, social and ethical issues.

What is to be done then? How are we to learn what is true?

For many people whether one tells the truth or lies does not much matter most of the time. There are some who think anything can be true and lying is not wrong. There are those who think if some beleif makes them happy or serves their purpose then it is true. Is this so? Does it really matter?

For some material on WHY TRUTH MATTERS just read here.WHY TRUTH MATTERS

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2.5.8: Truth and Science

For logical, semantic and systemic claims there are methods to determine their truth. It is with regard to the empirical claims about the universe, events and properties of it that is the main concern of the theories about Truth. Perhaps the best that humans have been able to do with regard to getting at the truth concerning empirical claims is the development of a method for doing it. In Science there are a number of views that are operative in its various phases.

1. Instrumentalist View - **Pragmatist Theory**

    The scientific theory makes predictions, the predictions are verified and so it works and it satisfies the community of inquirers (the scientists).

2. The Realist View - **Correspondence Theory**

    The scientific theory provides true explanations because its predictions are verified through empirical testing.

3. The Conceptual Relativist - **Coherence Theory**

    The scientific theory is coherent within a given framework, what coheres or fits in with a system of beliefs

        -true theory is that which is accepted by the community of working scientists with its own **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

        -independent checks are not possible because all observations are theory laden

So in the end perhaps the truth concerning empirical claims is that claim which :

- **corresponds to fact and**
- **coheres with and is consistent with other established truths and**
- **has useful consequences for those concerned.**

Perhaps what is the most useful consequence of a belief concerning an empirical claim is to correspond to reality (facts) and to cohere (be consistent) with what has already been accepted as true by the same means.

Philosophers shall continue to spend time arriving at a more certain foundation for claims of truth.

For now what do we have? What is knowledge?

To claim to know and to have that claim accepted by others as being correct is to satisfy the criteria that the claim be warranted. What supplies the warrant is that the claim be justified and true. how is that accomplished or established? Well that depends on the type of claim that it is:

Semantic claim: Supported by references to dictionaries or lexicons

Systemic claim: supported by the rules of the system in which the claim is being made

Logical claim: supported by and consistent with the rules of logic

Empirical claim: supported by a process of verification that establishes that the empirical claim

- **corresponds to fact and**
- **coheres with and is consistent with other established truths and**
- **has useful consequences for those concerned.**

This may be the best explanation that humans have for what and how they know what they claim to know. It is not totally satisfying to all critical inquirers but it is more well founded within human experience than the position that there is no knowledge at all or that there is no knowledge that is objective or that there is no knowledge that is certain. There are types or forms of knowledge

and within each there are the means to establish the justification for making and accepting claims.

ON SCIENTIFIC METHOD

Wikipedia

philosophy pages

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy

Encyclopedia Britannica

The Scientific Method by Donald E. Simanek

scientific method in physics

What is scientific Method by Austin Cline

Scientific Method in Biology

Diagrams on Scientific Method

ON SCIENTIFIC METHOD by Percy W. Bridgman (From: Reflections of a Physicist, 1955)

Socratic Method and Scientific Method

Myth-of-scientific-method

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2.5.9: Conclusion

What is truth? How do we know? These are two good questions which are part of the long tradition of Philosophy. They are called perennial issues because they keep returning.

Philosophy has yet to arrive at answers to these questions that have been universally accepted and gone without a challenge through time. Philosophers keeping working at it and have come to realize a good deal about what appear to be simple matters to most people who do not stop to ponder the issues that arise when one would reflect on the assumptions being made in the simple positions being taken in an uncritical manner. One thing that now appears to be fairly certain is that the post modern ideas supporting relativism on these topics are proving insufficient to the needs of the human community and so the critical thinking and philosophical reflection on these matters will continue. And lest it be dismissed or forgotten there is a case to be made that truth does really matter see WHY TRUTH MATTERS

Suggested:

On Knowledge:

WIKIPEDIA: http://en.Wikipedia.org/wiki/Knowledge

INTERNET ENCYCLOPEDIA of PHILOSOPHY: http://www.iep.utm.edu/knowledg/

STANFORD ENCYCLOPEDIA of PHILOSOPHY: http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/knowledge-analysis/

On Truth

On Truth

WIKIPEDIA on TRUTH:

INTERNET ENCYCLOPEDIA of PHILOSOPHY on TRUTH:

STANFORD ENCYCLOPEDIA of PHILOSOPHY on TRUTH

VIEW: lecture by Dr. Peter Millican at the University of Oxford. 60 minutes

Introduction to Knowledge 10:31

The Traditional Analysis of Knowledge 16:30

Gettier and Other Complications 14:48

Scepticism, Externalism and the Ethics of Belief 12:32

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2.6: 8-Bit Philosophy (Wisecrack)

Video: “What is Real?”

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Video: “Can We Be Certain of Anything?”

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2.7: The Brain with David Eagleman (PBS)

“Messing with Reality”

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3: PERSONAL IDENTITY

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3.4: Hume's skepticism

3.4.1: David Hume (1711—1776)

3.4.2: Personal Identity

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3.5: Locke's Theory of Personal Identity (Paul Helm)

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3.1: Descartes' Meditations - Cartesian Dualism

Meditations[11]

MEDITATION VI- OF THE EXISTENCE OF MATERIAL THINGS, AND OF THE REAL DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE MIND AND BODY OF MAN.

1. THERE now only remains the inquiry as to whether material things exist. With regard to this question, I at least know with certainty that such things may exist, in as far as they constitute the object of the pure mathematics, since, regarding them in this aspect, I can conceive them clearly and distinctly. For there can be no doubt that God possesses the power of producing all the objects I am able distinctly to conceive, and I never considered anything impossible to him, unless when I experienced a contradiction in the attempt to conceive it aright. Further, the faculty of imagination which I possess, and of which I am conscious that I make use when I apply myself to the consideration of material things, is sufficient to persuade me of their existence: for, when I attentively consider what imagination is, I find that it is simply a certain application of the cognitive faculty *(facultas cognoscitiva)* to a body which is immediately present to it, and which therefore exists.

2. And to render this quite clear, I remark, in the first place, the difference that subsists between imagination and pure intellection [or conception]. For example, when I imagine a triangle I not only conceive *(intelligo)* that it is a figure comprehended by three lines, but at the same time also I look upon *(intueor)* these three lines as present by the power and internal application of my mind *(acie mentis),* and this is what I call imagining. But if I desire to think of a chiliogon, I indeed rightly conceive that it is a figure composed of a thousand sides, as easily as I conceive that a triangle is a figure composed of only three sides; but I cannot imagine the thousand sides of a chiliogon as I do the three sides of a triangle, nor, so to speak, view them as present [with the eyes of my mind]. And although, in accordance with the habit I have of always imagining something when I think of corporeal things, it may happen that, in conceiving a chiliogon, I confusedly represent some figure to myself, yet it is quite evident that this is not a chiliogon, since it in no wise differs from that which I would represent to myself, if I were to think of a myriogon, or any other figure of many sides; nor would this representation be of any use in discovering and unfolding the properties that constitute the difference between a chiliogon and other polygons. But if the question turns on a pentagon, it is quite true that I can conceive its figure, as well as that of a chiliogon, without the aid of imagination; but I can likewise imagine it by applying the attention of my mind to its five sides, and at the same time to the area which they contain. Thus I observe that a special effort of mind is necessary to the act of imagination, which is not required to conceiving or understanding *(ad intelligendum);* and this special exertion of mind clearly shows the difference between imagination and pure intellection *(imaginatio et intellectio pura).*

3. I remark, besides, that this power of imagination which I possess, in as far as it differs from the power of conceiving, is in no way necessary to my [nature or] essence, that is, to the essence of my mind; for although I did not possess it, I should still remain the same that I now am, from which it seems we may conclude that it depends on something different from the mind. And I easily understand that, if some body exists, with which my mind is so conjoined and united as to be able, as it were, to consider it when it chooses, it may thus imagine corporeal objects; so that this mode of thinking differs from pure intellection only in this respect, that the mind in conceiving turns in some way upon itself, and considers some one of the ideas it possesses within itself; but in imagining it turns toward the body, and contemplates in it some object conformed to the idea which it either of itself conceived or apprehended by sense. I easily understand, I say, that imagination may be thus formed, if it is true that there are bodies; and because I find no other obvious mode of explaining it, I thence, with probability, conjecture that they exist, but only with probability; and although I carefully examine all things, nevertheless I do not find that, from the distinct idea of corporeal nature I have in my imagination, I can necessarily infer the existence of any body.

4. But I am accustomed to imagine many other objects besides that corporeal nature which is the object of the pure mathematics, as, for example, colors, sounds, tastes, pain, and the like, although with less distinctness; and, inasmuch as I perceive these objects much better by the senses, through the medium of which and of memory, they seem to have reached the imagination, I believe that, in order the more advantageously to examine them, it is proper I should at the same time examine what sense-perception is, and inquire whether from those ideas that are apprehended by this mode of thinking (consciousness), I cannot obtain a certain proof of the existence of corporeal objects.

5. And, in the first place, I will recall to my mind the things I have hitherto held as true, because perceived by the senses, and the foundations upon which my belief in their truth rested; I will, in the second place, examine the reasons that afterward constrained me to doubt of them; and, finally, I will consider what of them I ought now to believe.

6. Firstly, then, I perceived that I had a head, hands, feet and other members composing that body which I considered as part, or perhaps even as the whole, of myself. I perceived further, that that body was placed among many others, by which it was capable of being affected in diverse ways, both beneficial and hurtful; and what was beneficial I remarked by a certain sensation of pleasure, and what was hurtful by a sensation of pain. And besides this pleasure and pain, I was likewise conscious of hunger, thirst, and other appetites, as well as certain corporeal inclinations toward joy, sadness, anger, and similar passions. And, out of myself, besides the extension, figure, and motions of bodies, I likewise perceived in them hardness, heat, and the other tactile qualities, and, in addition, light, colors, odors, tastes, and sounds, the variety of which gave me the means of distinguishing the sky, the earth, the sea, and generally all the other bodies, from one another. And certainly, considering the ideas of all these qualities, which were presented to my mind, and which alone I properly and immediately perceived, it was not without reason that I thought I perceived certain objects wholly different from my thought, namely, bodies from which those ideas proceeded; for I was conscious that the ideas were presented to me without my consent being required, so that I could not perceive any object, however desirous I might be, unless it were present to the organ of sense; and it was wholly out of my power not to perceive it when it was thus present. And because the ideas I perceived by the senses were much more lively and clear, and even, in their own way, more distinct than any of those I could of myself frame by meditation, or which I found impressed on my memory, it seemed that they could not have proceeded from myself, and must therefore have been caused in me by some other objects; and as of those objects I had no knowledge beyond what the ideas themselves gave me, nothing was so likely to occur to my mind as the supposition that the objects were similar to the ideas which they caused. And because I recollected also that I had formerly trusted to the senses, rather than to reason, and that the ideas which I myself formed were not so clear as those I perceived by sense, and that they were even for the most part composed of parts of the latter, I was readily persuaded that I had no idea in my intellect which had not formerly passed through the senses. Nor was I altogether wrong in likewise believing that that body which, by a special right, I called my own, pertained to me more properly and strictly than any of the others; for in truth, I could never be separated from it as from other bodies; I felt in it and on account of it all my appetites and affections, and in fine I was affected in its parts by pain and the titillation of pleasure, and not in the parts of the other bodies that were separated from it. But when I inquired into the reason why, from this I know not what sensation of pain, sadness of mind should follow, and why from the sensation of pleasure, joy should arise, or why this indescribable twitching of the stomach, which I call hunger, should put me in mind of taking food, and the parchedness of the throat of drink, and so in other cases, I was unable to give any explanation, unless that I was so taught by nature; for there is assuredly no affinity, at least none that I am able to comprehend, between this irritation of the stomach and the desire of food, any more than between the perception of an object that causes pain and the consciousness of sadness which springs from the perception. And in the same way it seemed to me that all the other judgments I had formed regarding the objects of sense, were dictates of nature; because I remarked that those judgments were formed in me, before I had leisure to weigh and consider the reasons that might constrain me to form them.

7. But, afterward, a wide experience by degrees sapped the faith I had reposed in my senses; for I frequently observed that towers, which at a distance seemed round, appeared square, when more closely viewed, and that colossal figures, raised on the summits of these towers, looked like small statues, when viewed from the bottom of them; and, in other instances without number, I also discovered error in judgments founded on the external senses; and not only in those founded on the external, but even in those that rested on the internal senses; for is there aught more internal than pain ? And yet I have sometimes been informed by parties whose arm or leg had been amputated, that they still occasionally seemed to feel pain in that part of the body which they had lost, --a circumstance that led me to think that I could not be quite certain even that any one of my members was affected when I felt pain in it. And to these grounds of doubt I shortly afterward also added two others of very wide generality: the first of them was that I believed I never perceived anything when awake which I could not occasionally think I also perceived when asleep, and as I do not believe that the ideas I seem to perceive in my sleep proceed from objects external to me, I did not any more observe any ground for believing this of such as I seem to perceive when awake; the second was that since I was as yet ignorant of the author of my being or at least supposed myself to be so, I saw nothing to prevent my having been so constituted by nature as that I should be deceived even in matters that appeared to me to possess the greatest truth. And, with respect to the grounds on which I had before been persuaded of the existence of sensible objects, I had no great difficulty in finding suitable answers to them; for as nature seemed to incline me to many things from which reason made me averse, I thought that I ought not to confide much in its teachings. And although the perceptions of the senses were not dependent on my will, I did not think that I ought on that ground to conclude that they proceeded from things different from myself, since perhaps there might be found in me some faculty, though hitherto unknown to me, which produced them.

8. But now that I begin to know myself better, and to discover more clearly the author of my being, I do not, indeed, think that I ought rashly to admit all which the senses seem to teach, nor, on the other hand, is it my conviction that I ought to doubt in general of their teachings.

9. And, firstly, because I know that all which I clearly and distinctly conceive can be produced by God exactly as I conceive it, it is sufficient that I am able clearly and distinctly to conceive one thing apart from another, in order to be certain that the one is different from the other, seeing they may at least be made to exist separately, by the omnipotence of God; and it matters not by

what power this separation is made, in order to be compelled to judge them different; and, therefore, merely because I know with certitude that I exist, and because, in the meantime, I do not observe that aught necessarily belongs to my nature or essence beyond my being a thinking thing, I rightly conclude that my essence consists only in my being a thinking thing [or a substance whose whole essence or nature is merely thinking]. And although I may, or rather, as I will shortly say, although I certainly do possess a body with which I am very closely conjoined; nevertheless, because, on the one hand, I have a clear and distinct idea of myself, in as far as I am only a thinking and unextended thing, and as, on the other hand, I possess a distinct idea of body, in as far as it is only an extended and unthinking thing, it is certain that I, [that is, my mind, by which I am what I am], is entirely and truly distinct from my body, and may exist without it.

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3.2: The Brain with David Eagleman (PBS)

“What Makes Me?”

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“Who Will We Be?”

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3.3: PHILOSOPHY OF MIND

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- *An Introduction to Philosophy* by W. Russ Payne Bellevue College, Chap 7: Philosophy of Mind, http://solr.bccampus.ca:8001/bcc/file/24d4160c-c8b2-4f3b-9d5c-7203c92b790b/1/IntroductionToPhilosophy.pdf

3.3.1: Introduction

3.3.2: Empiricism leads to Logical Behaviorism

3.3.3: The Brain State Identity Theory

3.3.4: Functionalism

3.3.5: Consciousness and Property Dualism

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3.3.1: Introduction

Some of the main questions for the philosophy of mind are metaphysical questions about the nature of minds and mental states. “What is the mind?” quickly proves to be too big a question. We might say that for a being to have a mind is just for it to have mental states like beliefs, desires, perceptions, memories, emotions, and so forth. And this leads us towards somewhat more tractable questions like “What is a belief (desire, memory, perception. . .)?” The philosophy of mind has seen tremendous progress since Descartes proposed his dualist view of mind and body. Contemporary philosophical analyses of mental states and processes are among the key components of a rapidly emerging new science of mind. Philosophers of mind, along with cognitive psychologists, information scientists, and neuro-scientists have begun to work out detailed explanations of how our physical brains realize and carry out the functions of many mental states. In this chapter we will cover some of the progress philosophy of mind has contributed over the past century. As we will see by the end, some hard philosophical questions about the nature of mind persist.

Descartes’ Dualism

As with many topics, modern philosophy of mind begins with Descartes and soon moves on. Descartes’ dualism holds that the mind is composed of a fundamentally different kind of substance than the body. Bodies are composed of matter that exists in space and time, and behaves in accordance with laws of nature. Minds, however, are spiritual in nature according to Descartes. Their existence is not spatio-temporally bound, and unlike physical stuff, minds have free will. The critical faults in Descartes’ view were quickly spotted by Princess Elisabeth of Bohemia. The central problem lies in accounting for how the mind and the body can have any influence on each other. Clearly the physical world has effects on the mind, as when I perceive things. And it seems equally obvious that the mind has effects in the physical world, as when I act on my will. But if mind and body are so completely different, it is hard to see how this can happen at all. How does something that exists outside of space and time have any influence over the body that exists in space and time? How can the behavior of my causally determined body be influenced by a freely willing mind? The problem of mind/body interaction is a major stumbling block for Cartesian dualism about the mind and the body.

The full original text of Descartes’ correspondence with Elisabeth includes some ornate literary flirtation in the first couple letters. By today’s standards, Descartes could be accused of sexual harassment for much of his flattery of Elisabeth. But the patronizing flattery pretty much disappears in later letters as Descartes comes to appreciate the seriousness of the Elisabeth’s incisively argued challenge. Elisabeth provides a brilliant illustration of how to deal most effectively with patronizing behavior whether it is of sexist variety or some other kind: just be competent and this will show that you deserve to be taken seriously.

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3.3.2: Empiricism leads to Logical Behaviorism

Following Hume in the 18th century, the philosophy of science takes a sharp empirical turn in the latter 19th and early 20th century. During this time, what is scientifically knowable is taken to be limited to what can be defined in observable terms. This puts the mind and psychological phenomena generally on epistemically shaky ground. Mental states like beliefs, desires, perceptions, and anxieties are not the sorts of things we can examine under a microscope. If all things knowable are supposed to be knowable through sense experience, then it begins to appear that minds and mental states are not knowable.

The philosophical behaviorism of Gilbert Ryle is an attempt to salvage talk of minds and mental states and make such talk empirically acceptable. Mental terms like belief or fear can often be associated with observable behavior. Anger and fear, for instance, often seem to be observable. Suppose we identified the mental state of being angry with displaying angry behavior. On this proposal, anger just is stomping around, cursing a lot or generally throwing a fit. The obvious problem here is that some people can be angry without displaying it and some people, good actors for instance, can engage in convincingly angry behavior even though they aren't really angry. Or to take another example, my desire for chocolate ice cream might be observable in my rummaging around in the freezer, or it might not be observable at all because the usual behaviors are checked by my (also unobservable) desire to shed a few pounds. So mental states like anger or many beliefs and desires sometimes show in terms of behaviors, but perhaps only under the rights sorts of conditions. To make mental states empirically respectable and yet avoid the obvious problems we've seen in identifying mental states with observable behaviors, Ryle proposed to analyze mental states as dispositions to behave.

We are disposed in one way or another when we would behave a certain way given certain conditions. The behavior is not the disposition itself, but a manifestation of the disposition. The disposition can be identified in terms of a certain kind of "if. . .then. . ." statement. To help get clear on the idea, consider simpler physical dispositions like solubility or flexibility. To say that a spring is flexible is not to say that it is currently flexed. It is rather to say that if you were to stress it in the right way, then it would absorb the force placed on it and bend. To say that sugar is soluble is not to say that it is dissolved. But it is to say that if you were to submerge it in water (under the right conditions), then it would go into solution. So dispositions are described in terms of stimulating conditions and responses or manifestations. Ryle's idea is that talk of mental states, like beliefs, desires, perceptions, or emotions can be fully explained as talk of very complex dispositions where the stimulating conditions and the manifestations are observable conditions and behaviors. So, my desire for chocolate ice cream might be understood as a complex disposition to exhibit behaviors like rummaging around in the freezer if I think I'll find chocolate ice cream there, and I'm not too worried about my weight, and . . . . If this project works out, then we can understand talk of mental states in terms of empirically respectable stimulus-response dispositions.

The project of defining talk of mental states in terms of observable environmental stimuli and behavioral responses faces a number of difficult challenges though. We normally understand simple physical dispositions as being grounded in some further physical basis. Sugar is soluble in water because of its molecular structure, for instance. So we associate the disposition of solubility with a physical state of the sugar. In his eagerness to avoid positing unobservable mental states, Ryle wanted us to understand talk of dispositions merely as defining mental terms in terms of empirically respectable stimulus response "if. . then. . ." claims. He wanted to avoid positing any unobservable states of the brain, for instance, as the basis of mental dispositions. So Ryle's talk of dispositions is limited to mere "if . . then . . ." without any appeal to underlying states of minds.

A second problem is that while we might be able to formulate plausible stimulus response conditionals for some mental state terms like fear or anger, in many cases the subtle links between stimulus and response that we might associate with a belief or a desire are simply too complex to allow for an analysis of the mental state talk in terms of observably defined disposition talk. What "if . . then . . ." claim, for instance, analyzes talk of my belief that my brother lives in Arizona?

A distinct problem, one that will continue to dog subsequent theories in the philosophy of mind, is the problem of conscious experience. However Ryle's project worked out, we could imagine some kind of mindless robot that satisfies all of the relevant stimulus-response dispositions we associate with beliefs, desires, and emotions. And yet, by hypothesis, the mindless robot lacks any subjective conscious experience. When we think of our own case at least, our subjective conscious experience seems to be quite central to having a mind. This is an issue we will return to after a brief look at a few other 20th century approaches to understanding the mind.

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3.3.3: The Brain State Identity Theory

Ryle's behaviorism attempts to make talk of mental states empirically respectable by defining mental terms in terms of observable conditions and behaviors. One concern raised about this approach was that mental state terms are to be understood entirely in terms of observable things going on outside the person. This seems to take the mind out of the person. There is no place in behaviorism for any account of our inner lives or even the notion that my beliefs and desires are in some sense in me or part of me. The Brain State Identity Theory, most ably advanced by J. J. C. Smart, goes some ways towards remedying this apparent defect (though Ryle would not have counted it as a defect). The Brain State Identity Theory proposes that mental states are identical with brain states. Contrary to Descartes' dualism, the Identity Theory takes mind to be a physical thing. Namely, it takes the mind to be identical with the brain. For this reason, we count the Identity Theory as a physicalist view of the mind.

According to the Identity theory, the belief that Obama was president of the USA in 2002 just is a certain neuro-chemical state of the brain. Note that a great many people share this belief. When we speak of the belief as a view about what is true, one that might be shared by many people, we are speaking of a belief type. My belief that Obama was the American president in 2002 is just one token of that shared belief type. This distinction between types and tokens is important to understanding what the identity theory says. The Identity Theory originally proposed that mental state types are identical with brain state types. So for you to have the mental property of believing that Obama was president of the USA in 2002 is just for your brain to have a certain specific neuro-chemical property. The identity theory holds that for anyone to have the belief that Obama was president in 2002 is just for them to have that same specific neuro-chemical property. A popular and plausible example of such mental state/brain state type identity was that pain just is C-fibers, a certain kind of neuron, firing.

We have scientific evidence that very roughly points in the direction for something like the Identity Theory. Cases of localized brain injuries indicate that different parts of the brain carry out different functions. People who suffer lesions in specific areas of the brain tend to find specific mental functions impaired while other functions are left perfectly intact. It is through analyzing such cases that we began to map areas of the brain according to the functions they perform.

In the Identity Theory we witness a significant point of intersection between the philosophy of mind and the science of mind. Philosophical speculation has given rise to a great many scientific hypotheses. Here we have an example of how this can happen. We have a theory about the metaphysical nature of mental states that turns out to be empirically testable. The Identity Theory says that mental state types are identical with brain state types. Types are properties, so this view tells us that all of your mental properties are physical properties of your brain. We have learned a great deal about how brains store and process information since this hypothesis was popular. The science of mind is not yet mature, but well past its infancy and the broad outlines of how brains work are more or less in place. What the science tells us is that different brains store and process the same information in very different ways. That is, the Identity Theory is wrong. My belief that Obama was president in 2002 involves many properties of my brain. But your belief that Obama was president in 2002 involves your brain having different properties.

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3.3.4: Functionalism

Belief is the spring of action. We explain people's actions in terms of their mental states. People do what they do because of what they believe, desire, fear, hope for, and so forth. The behaviorists were on to something in thinking about mental states in terms of dispositions. But recall that the behaviorists were looking for a way to analyze talk about mental states entirely in terms of observable things like behavior. They wanted to avoid positing unobservable things going on in the head. Talk of dispositions for the behaviorists was not talk of underlying and possibly unobservable brain states that give rise to behavior. Rather it was merely talk of tendencies that might allow us to understand mental state terms as synonymous with complex "if. . . then. . ." conditional statements. The behaviorists sought a way to avoid understand mental terms as referring to unobservable things going on in the head. To many, taking the mental out of the head seemed a problematic feature of behaviorism. But this is just what behaviorists set out to do, understand talk of the mental in public, observable terms.

The functionalists would understand talk of mental dispositions differently. To have a mental disposition is not, by definition, just to satisfy a certain "if . . ., then. . ." claim. Rather, to be in a mental state is to be in some underlying state, perhaps unobservable, that fulfills a certain functional role. The molecular structure that makes the spring flexible might not be observable to us. But for the spring to be flexible, for it to have this disposition, is for it to be in some underlying state that makes the spring such that if we exert a force on it, it will bend and absorb that energy. We can call that underlying state that accounts for something having a disposition the causal basis of the disposition. With this idea in hand, we can mark a difference in how a behaviorist and a functionalist would understand the idea of a disposition. For the behaviorist, talking of mental states as dispositions does not involve the attribution of any causal basis, it only gives us a way of translating talk of the mental into talk of observable behavior by means of complicated "if . . ., then . . ." statements. For functionalism, on the other hand, talking of mental states as dispositions does involve attributing underlying causal base properties. To be in a mental state is to have some underlying causal basis for behaving in this way if these conditions are met, or behaving in that way if those conditions are met, etc.

Given this differing treatment of talk of mental dispositions, the functionalist avoids a problem we raised for behaviorism. We seem to understand what it means to believe that Obama was president in 2002. But if this mental state attribution is really just a shorthand way of expressing a complex behavioral disposition, then we ought to be able to fill in the associated "if . . then . . ." claim. But we can't. So talk of mental states can't simply be regarded as synonymous with talk of behavioral dispositions. Unlike the behaviorist, the functionalist is not trying to define away talk of the mental in terms of talk of observable behavior. The functionalist is happy to leave the mental in the head. Talk of behavioral dispositions don't define mental terms for the functionalist, they rather provide a means for specifying what it is for an underlying brain state to realize, or be a causal basis for, a mental state type.

We were lead to functionalism by the idea that a given mental state might be realized by various different states in different brains. This suggests a physicalist interpretation of functionalism, a view that insists that mental states are realized by physical states. But note that functionalism needn't be restricted in this way. Any state, physical or otherwise, can realize a mental state so long as it fulfills the appropriate role. Being guided by spirits in the appropriate way might, in principle, be the causal basis for having a certain mental disposition. So, strictly speaking, unlike the brain state identity theory, functionalism is not committed to physicalism, the view that the mental is ultimately physical. One could be a functionalist about mental states and a Cartesian dualist.

Here is a link to further reading on functionalism: http://www.iep.utm.edu/functism/

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3.3.5: Consciousness and Property Dualism

While one could, in principle, be a functionalist and a Cartesian dualist, the intractable problem of mind/body interaction has lead scientists of the mind to reject Descartes' substance dualism. The difficulty of understanding consciousness, however, has led some leading contemporary thinkers, notably David Chalmers, to another kind of dualism: property dualism. On this view, though the world consists of just one kind of stuff, matter, that stuff has fundamentally different kinds of properties including those we can regard as purely physical, like mass, charge and so forth, and other kinds of properties, like consciousness, that are irreducibly mental. Let's start by thinking about how consciousness is special and especially difficult to analyze in terms of physical properties.

Functionalism gives us a promising approach for understanding some kinds of mental states in terms of physical states fulfilling functional roles describable in terms of complex dispositions. According to functionalism, for me to believe that my cat is sleeping on the sofa only requires that my brain be in some state that plays an appropriate function role. I can't specify the functional role completely, but it might include walking softly when I go to refill my tea, not playing loud music on the stereo, saying "no" if my wife asks me if the cat is outside, etc. The state of my brain that fulfills this mental functional role might be one that can be entirely specified in physical terms. It is just the state of having certain connections between networks of neurons activated in certain ways. With enough neurophysiology, we could completely describe this brain state in terms of physical chemical and electrical properties. A great many kinds of mental phenomena might yield completely to such functional explanation in purely physical terms. Scientists of the mind have already made tremendous progress at understanding memory, shape recognition, belief, and desire in terms of functional roles that could have purely physical bases. But then there is our subjective conscious experience, what it is like for me to perceive something, for instance, or how I experience desiring something, believing something, remembering something.

Consciousness does not yield to functional analysis in the same way. An interesting kind of thought experiment suggests that consciousness can't be understood in purely functional terms or in terms of physical properties and processes at all. First we need to talk about zombies. The zombies we are familiar with from horror stories are easily recognizable. They walk in menacing dull witted ways in spite of broken legs and open wounds. They are the reanimated dead. This is not at all like philosophical zombies, the beings that populate philosophical zombie thought experiments in the philosophy of mind. The idea of a philosophical zombie is the idea of being that functions exactly like a conscious person in every observable respect. The only difference between a philosophical zombie and a normal person is that the philosophical zombie lacks conscious experience. Imagine a physical duplicate of yourself, a doppelganger that is molecule for molecule exactly like you and fully operational. It functions just like you, so it would give the same replies you would give to questions and the same responses to stimuli. It is just as subtly expressive as you in every conceivable way because it is functionally just like you. Your mother or your lover could never tell the difference. The only difference there is, is that the zombie lacks the conscious experiences that you have.

There is philosophical debate about whether such a being is metaphysically possible. There don't appear to be any logical contradictions involved, but that may not settle the issue. However, if such a zombie is possible, this possibility would demonstrate something interesting. Since your zombie doppleganger is exactly like your conscious self in every physical and functional respect down to the atomic level, yet differs from you mentally because it lacks conscious experience, the mere possibility of such a being would show that whatever consciousness is, it can't be understood in terms of functioning or the kinds of physical biochemical properties that ground your functioning (provide the causal bases for you various dispositions to behave.

Chalmers thinks philosophical zombies are possible, so consciousness can't be understood purely in terms of physical properties or the functional processes they ground. He instead proposes that we understand some properties of minds, like consciousness, as fundamentally mental properties that are not reducible, even in principle, to physical properties. While no distinct kinds of nonphysical substance is proposed, Chalmers is offering a kind of dualism we now call property dualism. Property dualism in the philosophy of mind is the view that among the primitive most fundamental properties of our world, there are both basically physical properties and basically mental properties.

Here is David Chalmers' clear and accessible paper "Facing up to the Problem of Consciousness": http://consc.net/papers/facing.pdf

Here is the IEP reference article on consciousness: http://www.iep.utm.edu/consciou/

Here is a collection of SEP entries on Mind, largely edited by David Chalmers: http://consc.net/guide.html

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3.4: HUME'S SKEPTICISM

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3.4.1: David Hume (1711—1776)

3.4.2: Personal Identity

3.4.3: Skepticism

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3.4.1: David Hume (1711—1776)

“Hume is our Politics, Hume is our Trade, Hume is our Philosophy, Hume is our Religion.” This statement by nineteenth century philosopher James Hutchison Stirling reflects the unique position in intellectual thought held by Scottish philosopher David Hume. Part of Hume’s fame and importance owes to his boldly skeptical approach to a range of philosophical subjects. In epistemology, he questioned common notions of personal identity, and argued that there is no permanent “self” that continues over time. He dismissed standard accounts of causality and argued that our conceptions of cause-effect relations are grounded in habits of thinking, rather than in the perception of causal forces in the external world itself. He defended the skeptical position that human reason is inherently contradictory, and it is only through naturally-instilled beliefs that we can navigate our way through common life. In the philosophy of religion, he argued that it is unreasonable to believe testimonies of alleged miraculous events, and he hints, accordingly, that we should reject religions that are founded on miracle testimonies. Against the common belief of the time that God’s existence could be proven through a design or causal argument, Hume offered compelling criticisms of standard theistic proofs. He also advanced theories on the origin of popular religious beliefs, grounding such notions in human psychology rather than in rational argument or divine revelation. The larger aim of his critique was to disentangle philosophy from religion and thus allow philosophy to pursue its own ends without rational over-extension or psychological corruption. In moral theory, against the common view that God plays an important role in the creation and reinforcement of moral values, he offered one of the first purely secular moral theories, which grounded morality in the pleasing and useful consequences that result from our actions. He introduced the term “utility” into our moral vocabulary, and his theory is the immediate forerunner to the classic utilitarian views of Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill. He is famous for the position that we cannot derive *ought* from *is*, the view that statements of moral obligation cannot simply be deduced from statements of fact. Some see Hume as an early proponent of the emotivist metaethical view that moral judgments principally express our feelings. He also made important contributions to aesthetic theory with his view that there is a uniform standard of taste within human nature, in political theory with his critique of social contractarianism, and economic theory with his anti-mercantilist views. As a philosophical historian, he defended the conservative view that British governments are best run through a strong monarchy.

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3.4.2: Personal Identity

Regarding the issue of personal identity, (1) Hume's skeptical claim is that we have no experience of a simple, individual impression that we can call *the self*—where the "self" is the totality of a person's conscious life. He writes, "For my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call *myself*, I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I never can catch *myself* at any time without a perception, and never can observe anything but the perception" (*Treatise*, 1.4.6.3). (2) Even though my perceptions are fleeting and I am a bundle of different perceptions, I nevertheless have some idea of personal identity, and that must be accounted for (*Treatise*, 1.4.6.4). Because of the associative principles, the resemblance or causal connection within the chain of my perceptions gives rise to an idea of myself, and memory extends this idea past my immediate perceptions (*Treatise*, 1.4.6.18 ff.). (3) A common abuse of the notion of personal identity occurs when the idea of a soul or unchanging substance is added to give us a stronger or more unified concept of the self (*Treatise*, 1.4.6.6).

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3.4.3: Skepticism

In all of the above discussions on epistemological topics, Hume performs a balancing act between making skeptical attacks (step 1) and offering positive theories based on natural beliefs (step 2). In the conclusion to Book 1, though, he appears to elevate his skepticism to a higher level and exposes the inherent contradictions in even his best philosophical theories. He notes three such contradictions. One centers on what we call induction. Our judgments based on past experience all contain elements of doubt; we are then impelled to make a judgment about that doubt, and since this judgment is also based on past experience it will in turn produce a new doubt. Once again, though, we are impelled to make a judgment about this second doubt, and the cycle continues. He concludes that "no finite object can subsist under a decrease repeated *in infinitum*." A second contradiction involves a conflict between two theories of external perception, each of which our natural reasoning process leads us to. One is our natural inclination to believe that we are directly seeing objects as they really are, and the other is the more philosophical view that we only ever see mental images or copies of external objects. The third contradiction involves a conflict between causal reasoning and belief in the continued existence of matter. After listing these contradictions, Hume despairs over the failure of his metaphysical reasoning:

> The *intense* view of these manifold contradictions and imperfections in human reason has so wrought upon me, and heated my brain, that I am ready to reject all belief and reasoning, and can look upon no opinion even as more probable or likely than another [*Treatise*, 1.4.7.8].

He then pacifies his despair by recognizing that nature forces him to set aside his philosophical speculations and return to the normal activities of common life. He sees, though, that in time he will be drawn back into philosophical speculation in order to attack superstition and educate the world.

Hume's emphasis on these conceptual contradictions is a unique aspect of his skepticism, and if any part of his philosophy can be designated "Humean skepticism" it is this. However, during the course of his writing the *Treatise* his view of the nature of these contradictions changed. At first he felt that these contradictions were restricted to theories about the external world, but theories about the mind itself would be free from them, as he explains here:

> The essence and composition of external bodies are so obscure, that we must necessarily, in our reasonings, or rather conjectures concerning them, involve ourselves in contradictions and absurdities. But as the perceptions of the mind are perfectly known, and I have us'd all imaginable caution in forming conclusions concerning them, I have always hop'd to keep clear of those contradictions, which have attended every other system [*Treatise*, 2.2.6.2].

When composing the Appendix to the *Treatise* a year later, he changed his mind and felt that theories about the mind would also have contradictions:

> I had entertained some hopes, that however deficient our theory of the intellectual world might be, it wou'd be free from those contradictions, and absurdities, which seem to attend every explication, that human reason can give of the material world. But upon a more strict review of the section concerning I find myself involv'd in such a labyrinth, that, I must confess, I neither know how to correct my former opinions, nor how to render them consistent. If this be not a good *general* reason for scepticism, 'tis at least a sufficient one (if I were not already abundantly supplied) for me to entertain a diffidence and modesty in all my decisions [*Treatise*, Appendix].

Thus, in the *Treatise*, the skeptical bottom line is that even our best theories about both physical and mental phenomena will be plagued with contradictions. In the concluding section of his *Enquiry*, Hume again addresses the topic of skepticism, but treats the matter somewhat differently: he rejects extreme skepticism but accepts skepticism in a more moderate form. He associates extreme *Pyrrhonian* skepticism with blanket attacks on all reasoning about the external world, abstract reasoning about space and time, or causal reasoning about matters of fact. He argues, though, that we must reject such skepticism since "no durable good can ever result from it." Instead, he recommends a more moderate or *Academic* skepticism that tones down Pyrrhonism by, first, exercising caution and modesty in our judgments, and, second, by restricting our speculations to abstract reasoning and matters of fact.

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3.5: LOCKE'S THEORY OF PERSONAL IDENTITY (PAUL HELM)

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- Helm, P. (1979). Locke's Theory of Personal Identity. *Philosophy, 54*(208), 173-185. Retrieved April 17, 2021, from http://www.jstor.org/stable/3750072

3.5.1: I

3.5.2: II

3.5.3: III

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3.5.1: I

It is widely held that Locke propounded a theory of personal identity in terms of consciousness and memory. By 'theory' here is meant a set of necessary and sufficient conditions indicating what personal identity consists in. It is also held that this theory is open to obvious and damaging objections,[1] so much so that it has to be supplemented in terms of bodily continuity, either because memory alone is not sufficient, or because the concept of memory is itself dependent upon considerations of bodily continuity.[2] Alternatively it has been suggested that Locke's theory could be modified by allowing that for the purposes of personal identity 'remember' should be regarded as a transitive relation. So if A remembers the experiences of B but not those of C, and B remembers the experiences of C, then A, B and C can be regarded as belonging to the same unit of consciousness.[3]

What will seem odd about this orthodox criticism of Locke to any reader of the Essay is that the objections about the inadequacy of memory which are regarded as damaging to Locke are very similar to criticisms which Locke himself considers but which he does not regard as being bother- some. One of the current criticisms of Locke's account is that memory has gaps. We remember some of the things that we have done, but not all.[4] But if memory and consciousness are together regarded as logically necessary and sufficient conditions of personal identity then forgetfulness ensures the loss of, or an interruption in, personal identity, and this is surely implausible. That is, it is implausible to hold that my past identity as a person should depend on the present vagaries of my memory.

But we find Locke himself making a similar point about forgetfulness. For instance at Essay II, xxvii, Io, he recognizes that consciousness is often interrupted by forgetfulness, 'even the best memories losing the sight of one part whilst they are viewing another; and we sometimes, and that the greatest part of our lives, not reflecting on our past selves, being intent on our present thoughts, and in sound sleep having no thoughts at all'. Locke introduces the fact of forgetfulness as an objection to the view that personal identity consists in being 'the same identical substance'. 'Consciousness being interrupted, and we losing sight of our past selves, doubts are raised whether we are the same thinking thing, i.e. the same substance, or no'. The view Locke seems to be combating here might be expressed as the following: personal identity consists in sameness of spiritual substance if and only if every conscious action is directly remem- bered (i.e. remembered 'from the inside') at every subsequent moment to its performance. Locke is easily able to show that this condition is not met. But the evidence he adduces ought also to count (as Locke himself would say) fatally against his own view, at least in the eyes of his current inter- preters. The same point about memory could also be made regarding the drunk-sober example later in the same chapter (section xxii). It may be that Locke is simply careless about such matters, and that he forgets what he has written a couple of pages earlier. But if we proceed on this assump- tion the task of interpreting Locke becomes a hopeless one. Instead I want to argue that Locke does have a theory of personal identity and that memory does not not play quite the role in it that is widely assumed in contemporary discussions of personal identity. So the question is, what sort of theory of personal identity must Locke have held if forgetfulness does not count against it?

I

Locke's account of personal identity forms part of a wider discussion of identity in general, or to be more specific, a wider discussion of the identity of particulars, including finite intelligences, bodies, and God.[5] Locke holds that an individual thing A existing at a particular time and place is identical with B if A and B are the same kind of thing, and there is a continuous spatiotemporal history between A and B. The principium individuationis, according to Locke, 'is existence itself, which determines a being of any sort to a particular time and place, incommunicable to two beings of the same kind' (section iii). Reference to kinds is necessary because Locke holds that it is possible that two things of different kinds should exist at the same place at the same time. Further, Locke insists that finite spirits are included in this general account of identity. 'Finite spirits having had each its determinate time and place of beginning to exist, the relation to that time and place will always determine to each of them its identity, as long as it exists' (section ii).[6]

Locke then applies this general account to (among other things) persons, and he defines a person in terms of consciousness. 'For since consciousness always accompanies thinking, and it is that that makes everyone to be what he calls self, and thereby distinguishes himself from all other thinking things: in this alone consists personal identity, i.e. the sameness of a rational being' (section ix). In understanding Locke's view at this point it is quite crucial to fit these last remarks into his general view of identity. Given that there is a man at a series of times and places tip1. . .. taps how do we know whether or not there is also a person at these times and places? Locke's answer is: by reference to consciousness. Consciousness at those times and places indicates that there is one (or more) persons. But how do we know whether or not there is more than one person that has existed at those times and places? Might there not have been a succession of twenty people? It is here that memory becomes relevant. In so far

as it is reliable memory gives evidence of that spatiotemporal continuity of consciousness which according to Locke personal identity consists in. Memory is the (as yet) imperfect and incomplete recaller of this continuity of individual consciousness.

So the role of consciousness in personal identity is logical and meta- physical. Personal identity at a time consists in consciousness at that time. Personal identity over a period of time consists in the spatiotemporal continuity of an individual consciousness. The role of memory, on the other hand, is epistemic. It is one sort, no doubt for Locke the main sort, of evidence for personal identity. That memory is limited and fallible has repercussions for our knowledge of personal identity, but not for personal identity as such, in just the same way that (for Locke) our limited and sometimes misleading sensations limit our knowledge of bodies, but not the metaphysical or ontological reality of bodies. So that when Locke introduces memory, with the words 'as far as this consciousness can be extended backwards to any past action or thought, so far reaches the identity of that person' (section ix), memory is being used to retrace the previous spatio- temporal history of that individual consciousness. Memory is a test (and in this sense a criterion) of personal identity whereas personal identity consists in consciousness (and so consciousness is a criterion of personal identity in a much stronger sense, being that in which personal identity consists). So much for the respective roles of consciousness and memory. I shall return to the implications of the fallibility of memory later.

The second argument regarding the place of memory in Locke's theory of personal identity concerns the possibility of paramnesia. Locke discusses s the question of why 'one intellectual substance may not have represented to it, as done by itself, what it never did, and was perhaps done by some other agent' (section xiii). That this will not happen is due, Locke thinks, to the goodness of God 'who, as far as the happiness or misery of any of his sensible creatures is concerned in it, will not, by a fatal error of theirs, transfer from one to another that consciousness which draws reward or punishment with it' (section xiii). XWhat Locke is here supposing is that the goodness of God will prevent one person (what he here calls a thinking (or intellectual) substance) from being conscious of (i.e. remembering) what another intellectual substance did. What Locke seems to be saying is that it may, in the nature of things, be impossible for such transfer of memory from one thinking substance to another to take place, but that until we are clearer about just what is and is not possible in this area we had better say that, due to the goodness of God, such transfers cannot take place. If it turns out that there is a necessary connection between being a thinking substance and remembering certain things then the invocation of God's goodness will have been unnecessary.

The standard comment on Locke's argument at this point is to say that the possibility that Locke invokes God to actualize is not a possibility at all. Flew says that the assistance for which Locke supplicates is beyond even the resources of omnipotence, for 'if anyone can remember doing something then necessarily according to Locke's account he is in fact the same person as did that deed'.[7] Mackie says that Locke's defence is useless because 'it presupposes that there is something else which really constitutes personal identity, which is the true bearer of responsibility, and which therefore needs to be protected from the unjust effects of a transfer of consciousness .[8] But this is a mistake, at least if by the words 'transfer of consciousness' here Mackie means 'transfer of memory'. For what the goodness of God is being invoked to prevent is the possession by a particular consciousness ('thinking substance') of a memory ('a present representation of a past action') of doing something that it did not do and for which it is liable to be punished. This view does not presuppose that there is something else besides consciousness that really constitutes the personal identity, only that there is something else besides the 'memory' of these particular actions that constitutes personal identity. Such a presupposition is perfectly in order, for what constitutes personal identity in such a case is a certain spatiotemporal continuity of consciousness. Further, what the goodness of God is being invoked to prevent is not the falsity of

1. iThere are no misrememberings
2. Someone will be punished (or rewarded) on the grounds provided by a misremembering.

Locke may or may not be mistaken on the question of fact, but he is right to claim that on his view this represents a possibility.

The third argument is more general, having to do with what, according to Locke, are the capabilities and limitations of the human memory. Any account of personal identity that Locke provides will presumably be consistent with his account of memory in general, and this is important for the following reason: if it is a fact about the human mind that it is forgetful then it would be implausible to define personal identity in terms of memory. But if, on the other hand, it is a fact that the human mind is forgetful it can hardly be a criticism of the role that memory plays in Locke's theory of personal identity that the role is consistent with human forgetfulness, if that role is the modest epistemic and evidential one that we have suggested.

Locke's views on the memory can be found referred to in the chapter on identity, as when he says that consciousness is always interrupted by forgetfulness, and the best memories 'lose the sight of one part whilst they are viewing another' (section x). But they can be found at greater length in the chapter 'Of Retention' (Book II, Chapter X). Here he emphasizes the weakness of memory where, due to one of a number of factors, 'Ideas in the mind quickly fade and often vanish quite out of the understanding, leaving no more footsteps or remaining characters of themselves than shadows do flying over fields of corn; and the mind is as void of them as if they never had been there' (section iv). Further, there is a constant decay of all our ideas, Locke says, 'Even of those

which are struck deepest and in minds the most retentive: so that, if they be not sometimes renewed by repeated exercise of the senses of reflection on those kind of objects which at first occasioned them, the print wears out and at last there remains nothing to be seen' (section v). If actual memory is taken to be logically necessary and sufficient for personal identity (as on the current account of Locke it is) then these views of Locke on the limitations of memory will be taken as providing evidence for the presence of a general phenomenon which we could call 'person decay'. One's identity as a person decays as one's memory fades, but the rate of decay can be accelerated by, for example, the onset of disease or shock, or be decelerated by indulging in certain exercises to tone up the memory. But it is surely an extremely odd justification for looking at old diaries and photographs at regular intervals that one is striving to continue to be the person one once was. It is surely more reasonable, and more consistent with Locke's overall view, to describe the situation as trying to remember what one once did and was like. Consistently with his own interpretation of Locke, Mackie says that Locke should have recognized that fragmentary memories and interruptions of consciousness are as much a problem for his own theory as they are for the Cartesian view of a substance whose essence is thinking.[9] But are they? Imperfect and incomplete memories can provide evidence of personal identity even though they cannot be what personal identity consists in.[10]

The fourth argument as grounds for a modification of the usual view of the part played by memory in Locke's account of personal identity is the significance of what he says about the Last Judgment, both in connection with the drunk-sober example (section xxii) and also in connection with the idea of a person as a forensic notion (section xxvi). lie invokes the Christian doctrine of the Last Judgment because he is concerned with the moral implications of being a person, and is answering the objection of why it is that in a court of law in seventeenth century England a drunkard is punished for doing acts that he may not have been aware of doing at the time, and so were actions that were not strictly speaking his. One thing that Locke might have said is that this sort of sentencing went on because the laws of England were not framed in accordance with the Lockean view of a person. Instead he argues that this is because, due to human ignorance, human courts cannot give the drunkard the benefit of the doubt. 'Human judicatures justly punish him, because the fact is proved against him, but want of consciousness cannot be proved for him' (section xxii). By contrast at the Great Day there will be perfect justice. Then no one will be made to suffer for what he has not done, even though this sometimes occurs now. In a similar vein he says in section xxvi that at the Great Day 'The sentence shall be justified by the consciousness all persons shall have that they themselves, in what bodies soever they appear, or what substances soever that consciousness adheres to, are the same that committed those actions and deserve that punishment for them'.

What does this bit of Lockean theologizing show? That in his eyes the present ascriptions of personal responsibility based on the likelihood of memory being reliable and of the person having been conscious at the time the action was performed are provisional. Hence there can be, at present, though not hereafter, honest but false memory claims and ascriptions of personal responsibility. At the Great Day not only will memories be jogged, but false memory claims will be corrected. On what basis will they be corrected? On the basis provided by continuity of consciousness. If I 'remember' doing an action which is not spatially and temporally continuous with my present consciousness then at the Great Day that 'memory' will be corrected. If I fail to remember doing an action which was performed by an individual whose consciousness is spatially and temporally continuous with my present consciousness then at the Great Day my store of memories will be augmented. And verdicts that were wrong because based on partial or false information will be overturned. 'In the Great Day, wherein the secrets of all hearts shall be laid open, it may be reasonable to think no one shall be made to answer for what he knows nothing of, but shall receive his doom, his conscience accusing or excusing him' (section xxii).

Locke conceives of a situation where, by a miracle, the following is possible: every individual directly remembers all that it is logically possible for him to remember, and (presumably) has no apparent direct memories, or indirect memories, of what he did not do. There will be nothing that it is possible for an individual to remember that he will not be brought to remember should this be necessary for the forensic purposes of the Great Day.

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[1] By, for example, Antony Flew, 'Locke and the Problem of Personal Identity' in Locke and Berkeley: A Collection of Critical Essays, C. B. Martin and D. M. Armstrong (eds) (Garden City, i968); J. L. Mackie, Problems from Locke (Oxford, I976), Ch. 6; and Bernard Williams, 'Personal Identity and Indivi- duation' in Problems of the Self (Cambridge, 1973).

[2] On the development of this point see, for example, Terence Penelhum, Survival and Disembodied Existence (London, I970).

[3] Mackie, op. cit., i8o.

[4] Flew, op. cit., i6i; Mackie, op. cit., 175-I76, i8i-i83.

[5] Essay II, xxvii, I-2. All quotations from the Essay are from the edition of John Yolton (London, i96i).

[6] For further discussion of this and related points see Baruch Brody, 'Locke on the Identity of Persons', American Philosophical Quarterly (October I972).

[7] Flew, op. cit., i64.

[8] Mackie, op. cit., I84.

[9] Mackie, op. cit., I82.

[10] See M. W. Hughes, 'Personal Identity: A Defence of Locke', Philosophy (I975) for a similar conclusion about the character of memory according to Locke.

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3.5.2: II

In the above section I have tried to develop four separate arguments in order to show that it is inaccurate to say that according to Locke personal identity consists in memory, that memory is the criterion (in the strong sense) of personal identity.[11] Rather it appears that Locke thinks that personal identity consists in spatiotemporal continuity of consciousness in rather the same way in which the identity of a tree consists in spatiotemporal continuity of a 'common life'. Memory is good evidence (perhaps for us the best evidence) for such continuity in rather the way that observations of the tree are good evidence for its continued identity as a tree. I want to support this line of reasoning by making a number of more general observations.

Locke undoubtedly thinks of memory as being necessary for personal identity, but in what sense he takes it to be necessary requires carefully spelling out. There are three senses in which he regards memory as necessary and each of these falls short of memory being logically necessary for continued personal identity. In the first place Locke does allow that it is logically necessary for being a person at a given time that the individual in question has the capacity to remember. Such a capacity seems to be part of what Locke means by 'consciousness'. A person 'can consider itself as itself, the same thinking thing in different times and places' (section ix). But it is not logically necessary for being the same individual as someone in the past that one remembers certain things in the past. So that to say 'Memory is logically necessary for personal identity' is ambiguous. If it means 'Memory is logically necessary for something's being a person at a time' then Locke is committed to this by his view of consciousness. If it means 'Memory of doing A is logically necessary for being the person who did A' then there is no evidence that Locke held this view.

But he did hold that memory was necessary for personal identity in other senses. It is epistemically or evidentially necessary, necessary for knowing that one is the same person as some individual in the past. Throughout his treatment of this topic Locke assigns priority to direct memory as against indirect memory. At the Great Day it will not be sufficient for God to tell me what I am responsible for. I must remember what I am responsible for for myself. At present it is not epistemically necessary that someone else should remember, but it is that I should remember myself. 'Whatever past actions it (viz. the self) cannot reconcile or appropriate to that present self by consciousness, it can be no more concerned in than if they had never been done' (section xxvi). This links with Locke's strongly forensic emphasis. Memory is necessary in order for me to have evidence that I am identical with some person in the past and hence necessary for me regarding myself (and being justly regarded by others) as responsible for some action in the past.

Further, what is logically sufficient for being the same person is that the individual consciousness in question can recall some action in the past, not that he does recall it. Locke emphasizes this point in various ways, straight- forwardly in his first statement about his concept of a person (section ix), and then negatively when he considers the possibility of an incommunicable consciousness (section xx), and the possibility of losing a memory irretrievably, and the possibility of two incommunicable consciousnesses 'acting the same body' (section xxiii). Finally in section xxvi he considers the case of a man punished now for what he had done in another life 'whereof he could be made to have no consciousness at all' and asks: 'What difference is there between that punishment and being created miserable?'

While Locke emphasizes in such passages the logical possibility of memory being logically sufficient for being the same person this is not to be taken as implying that Locke thinks that in fact memory is generally untrustworthy. An individual consciousness does not have to remember everything that it has done, only some of the things, and Locke seems never to doubt that the human memory has such powers. But because memory is only logically sufficient for continued personhood, this practical emphasis in Locke does not mean that he is open to the objection that he allows personal identity to be limited by what an individual consciousness can recall at any time, and that an individual consciousness might recall different things at different times. If individual consciousnesses could in fact recall very little then this would be a difficulty, but in fact they are quite successful, and hence the appeal to memory is of practical use, as well as having the theoretical role that I have tried to indicate above.[12]

So the relation between memory, consciousness and personhood assumes more complicated proportions than is usually thought. The essential features of this relationship can be expressed in the following five theses

1. Spatio-temporal continuity of consciousness is logically necessary and sufficient for personal identity over time.
2. Consciousness, including the ability to remember, is logically necessary and sufficient for being a person at any given time.
3. Augmented or ideal memory is logically sufficient for continuous personal identity and hence for personal responsibility for past actions.
4. Memory is evidentially necessary and sufficient for personal identity over time, for an individual consciousness knowing that it is identical with some individual consciousness in the past.

5. Unaugmented memory is logically sufficient for continuous personal identity.

It would seriously misrepresent Locke's views to add to these five theses the thesis that unaugmented memory is logically necessary for continued personal identity and hence for personal responsibility for past actions.

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[11] Like Mackie I think that it is necessary not to slur over the distinction between truth-conditions and evidence by the use of the term 'criterion' (Mackie, op. cit., i85-I 86). By 'criterion in the strong sense' I mean 'truth-conditions'.

[12] Cf. Hughes, op. cit., I72.

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3.5.3: III

Given that these five theses fairly represent Locke's theory of personal identity, and in particular the part that memory plays (and does not play) in it, how are some of the standard criticisms of Locke going to fare against it? I shall consider six such criticisms.

(a) The Gallant Officer objection. This was first coined by Bishop Berkeley,[13] issued in a revised version by Thomas Reid,[14] and has been kept in circulation ever since.[15] The objection can be put as follows. Suppose that A remembers doing x when a young man, but does not remember doing y when a small boy. But the young man did remember doing y as a small boy. Then, the objection runs, according to Locke's theory A is identical with the young man, the young man is identical with the child, but A is not identical with the child. The transitivity of identity is sacrificed, and Locke's theory is shown to have an absurd consequence. But this is an objection to Locke only if 'can remember' is interpreted as 'can in fact remember'. But of course if it is interpreted like this then there are many other less contrived absurdities, for instance, that a person's identity varies with what he remembers from hour to hour. If he is alert and in a mood for reminiscing then his personal identity extends back further in time than when, an hour later, he is drowsy and can recall very little. But as we have seen, 'can remember' means, for Locke, 'can ideally remember'. If A, the young man and the child are the same person, then A could be made (as Locke would put it (section xxvi)) to remember what the child remembered

If this is correct it gives us a general approach to the objection of Mackie's that there are no well-defined units of consciousness, though there might conceivably be.[16] For Locke the unit of consciousness is given by the spatio-temporal continuity of an individual consciousness, and forms the boundary of what it is logically possible to remember, though actual memory, at least before the Great Day, never coincides with it, and is not well defined. Yet Locke thinks that this unit of consciousness is at least as well defined as, say, the life history of an individual tree. Further, Locke is able to give a clear sense to what Mackie calls 'potential consciousness'. This avoids circularity because the constituent of personal identity is not memory but continuity of consciousness.

(b) This leads to a consideration of the dilemma Flew poses for Locke.[17] If we suppose that by 'remember' we mean 'genuinely remember' and not 'apparently remember' then, according to Flew, Locke's account is impaled on the horns of the following dilemma: it either excludes too much (if the 'can remember' is factual) or it is a futile necessary truth.[18] 'For it is mani- festly true, though not an helpful definition of "same person", that X at time two is the same person as Y at time one if and only if X and Y are both persons and X can (logically) remember at time two (his doing) what Y did, or what have you, at time one.' It has been pointed out in a number of places19 that Locke is not committed to this definition but only to saying that X and Y are the same if X remembers doing what Y was conscious of doing. But if this is a correct interpretation of Locke then according to him what an individual is remembering is not a particular person's experience as his own, but only experiencing (where this includes agency) a particular state of affairs. If that individual consciousness can be brought directly to remember the state of affairs in question then the individual has grounds for concluding that he is identical with the individual who witnessed or brought about the state of affairs originally.

(c) Mackie poses the well-known 'puzzle case' of fission, which he says is also applicable to criteria of personal identity in terms of bodily continuity. 'This difficulty arises for the view that memory is sufficient on its own for personal identity from the possibility that two apparently distinct persons should each remember, from the inside and in the required causally direct way, the experiences of some one earlier person.... So if the continuity of body, or brain, or memory, or of some conjunction of these, is sufficient for personal identity, the possibility of the corresponding case of fission entails that either two apparently distinct persons are identical with one another, or personal identity is either non-symmetrical or non-transitive.'[20] But the objection only arises because Locke's account of identity is not being strictly adhered to. According to Mackie Locke's criterion of identity is that x-occurrences (particular occurrences of a certain kind of thing) at ti and t2 are occurrences of the same x if and only if there is a continuous x-history linking them.[21]' We have already shown that Locke regards the case of personal identity as a particular application of this general theory, the identity of a tree as another, and so on. But a fissioned consciousness, if there could be such a thing,[22] consists of two consciousnesses existing at two different places, and so they are not part of a continuous x-history. Given Locke's criterion of identity no divided consciousness could be identical with the undivided consciousness since there is another consciousness spatio-temporally continuous with the original but distinct from the other consciousness which is likewise spatio- temporally continuous with the original. Locke's criterion of identity seems to require us to say that upon division the original consciousness went out of existence.

So the fission puzzle case is not really a problem since it is not true that for Locke memory is alone sufficient for personal identity.

(d) M. W. Hughes has argued[23] that Locke's doctrine of personal identity treats memory or consciousness as a causal notion, and that the logic of identity is not specially relevant to problems of personal identity.[24] There is some truth in both these

points. If by 'the logic of identity' is meant the principle of the indiscernibility of identicals then it is clear that this does not figure in Locke's account of personal identity over time. Nor does the much disputed principle of the identity of indiscernibles. Indeed we might say that for Locke personal identity over time, and the identity of other things over time, was a case of the identity of discernibles. Hughes is right to point out that Locke treats memory as a causal notion, and that memory provides corrigible evidence for personal identity. This expresses the role that Locke thinks that memory at present plays in enabling us to decide questions of personal identity. But it is not the whole story. It does not do justice to Locke's conviction that what he calls 'fatal mistakes' cannot (logically) be made in any question of personal identity. The corrigibility of memory applies only to the 'interim' period, coupled as it with human ignorance and fallibility. Although it is important to stress that for Locke memory provides corrigible evidence for personal identity, though the best evidence presently available, it is nevertheless also true that with respect to any action he thinks that there is a right and a wrong answer to the question 'Did A do it?', even though to get that answer we may in some cases have to await the eschaton

(e) Mackie thinks that perhaps the most damaging objection is that 'Since a man at t2 commonly remembers only some of his experiences and actions at t1, whereas what constituted a person at tI was all the experi- ences and actions that were then co-conscious, Locke's view fails to equate a person identified at t2 with any person identifiable at t1'.[25] But this objection, like all those that stress the limitations and fallibilities of memory, is not going to be at all decisive against Locke, for whom memory is at best grounds for continued personal identity, not what that identity consists in. But perhaps Mackie's objection is to be taken not as an objection against the logical necessity of memory for personal identity, but against its logical sufficiency. Memory could not be logically sufficient for continued personal identity because memory is only ever partial, what is remembered is only ever a subset of what the individual was actually conscious of at the time that is remembered. But this objection seems to commit Mackie to an extreme, perhaps Leibnizian, form of essentialism, for according to it what constitutes a person at a time is all the experiences and actions then co-conscious. This implies that if a different experience or fewer experiences were had the person in question would not have been the person he was. If Mackie does not mean this Leibnizian view his objection can hardly be an objection to the idea of memory being logically sufficient for personal identity, for all that is needed for memory to be logically sufficient for continued personal identity in that case is that the memory is of some experience which it is impossible for two individuals to have had, or of some action which it is impossible for two individuals to have performed. Provided that what is remembered individuates only one person then memory is going to be logically sufficient for continued personal identity even though the memory is, perhaps necessarily, incomplete.

(f) Finally, it might be said that our account of Locke leaves open the possibility of there being what we might call pre-incarnate existence (and also disembodied existence, though we shall not take up this particular case here). But why is this to be regarded as a criticism of Locke's theory? In arguing against the idea that sense can be made of a particular personality solely in terms of consciousness and memory Bernard Williams invokes the principle that not everything that one seems to remember is something that one really remembers.[26] This is no doubt correct, but Mackie is surely right in claiming that it is logically possible that a person should have memory impressions of such detail and accuracy that we (and he) would have to take seriously the claim that he was remembering doing things at a time when he had a body discontinuous with his present body, or perhaps when he had no body at all.[27]

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[14] Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man, 111.6.

[15] See e.g. Flew, op. cit., i6i-i62; Mackie, op. cit., 179.

[16] Mackie, op. cit., 178-I79.

[17] Flew, op. cit., i6i f.

[18] Flew, op. cit., i6i f.

[19] Brody, op. cit., 332 (footnote II)

[20] Mackie, op. cit., i88.

[21] Mackie, op. cit., I142.

[22] Cf. R. M. Chisholm, Person and Object (London, I976), who denies this (P. III).

[23] Op. Cit., i84.

[24] Op. Cit., I8

[25] Mackie, op. cit., 183.

[26] Williams, op. cit., 3.

[27] Mackie, op. cit., i86.

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4: MIND/BODY DILEMMA

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4.5.1: Overview

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4.1: Materialism and Behaviorism (HEATHER SALAZAR)

INTRODUCTION

In stark contrast to Cartesian substance dualism is materialism. Materialism denies the existence of a "mind" as an entity separate from the body. According to materialism, the concept of "mind" is a relic of the past from before a time of scientific understanding and when used today is only properly shorthand for "brain" or "behavior." Materialism therefore implies that: 1. There are no pure minds or souls in Heaven, Hell, or any such kind of afterlife after bodily death; 2. There are no spirits or immaterial essences, and therefore spiritual and self-transformative practices that purport to move people beyond their bodies, brains, and behaviors are absurd; and 3. Reincarnation and switching bodies (made famous in movies such as *Switching Places*, *Freaky Friday*, and *Big*) are nonsense. A mind just is a body or a body's behaviors; without a body a mind cannot exist.

Consider the movie *Big*. In it, a kid named Josh makes a wish to be "big" during an eerie encounter with a fortune-telling machine at a state fair. When he wakes, he is a 35-year-old adult and is unrecognizable to his mom. He convinces his best friend that he really is Josh and his best friend helps him to get a job and an apartment. Nevertheless, he cannot manage to grow emotionally enough to inhabit his new world. He frustrates his close female friend who cannot understand why he does not want to be romantic with her. According to the standard interpretation of stories like *Big*, a person's mind contains memories, love, fears, and so on. This is what constitutes the core of who a person really is. The mind is immaterial and cannot be seen; it can only be experienced by the person whose mind it is. But a person's mind is also connected to a body, which enables the person to communicate and interact with others in the world. Some bodies have minds (like other people) and some do not (like rocks). A body is incidental to a person's selfhood; it is just a house for the mind. So it is possible that a body can age and have the same mind. And this is what happens to Josh. Eventually, Josh finds the strange fortune-telling machine and wishes to be a boy again, and he re-enters his kid-body, now with the knowledge and wisdom he gained in his transformative journey.

Big is a fantasy, but it trades on common beliefs about what a person is (an immaterial mind) and what a body is (a material house for a mind which is incidental to a person's true identity). Note that if dualism is false and the body and mind are not two, but one, as materialism claims, then a person could not have the same mind in a vastly different body (or even in a slightly altered body). This is because every change in the memories, emotions, and experiences of a person would not take place in an immaterial mind, but rather would be translatable to talk of the body, the interactions of the body with the world, or as many materialists claim, talk of the brain.

Take what it would mean in *Big* for Josh to change according to such a materialist understanding. Imagine that it is possible to induce rapid aging in a person through an entirely physical process (say, the taking of a pill that speeds up a person's metabolism and turnover of bodily cells), such that overnight Josh ages by ten years. Even then, the turnover of those cells would have changed his mind just as much as it changed his body. But if his mind is identical and reducible to his brain, then his mind would (of logical necessity) be changed just as much as his body. This is evident through Leibniz's Law (also called the "indiscernibility of identicals"), which is a metaphysical truth that simply states that if something is identical to something else it must be identical in every way (or else it would not be the *same* object, but merely a *similar* object). That means Josh's mind would no longer be that of a boy; rather, he would have the mind of a man. Romantic desires would no longer be foreign to him (as they are in the movie) because the biological chemicals, such as testosterone, that are responsible for aging him into a man with a beard are the same chemicals that are responsible for creating sex drives. His biochemistry would be changed and so would his energy levels and emotions. Furthermore, his brain mass would be larger, since a person's brain grows in the process of aging from childhood to adulthood. That additional brain mass would entail not only different biochemicals, but also more and differently connected neurons. Those are the same neurons and connections, materialists claim, that are responsible for the development of concepts, language, understanding, and so on. So if Josh woke up with his body transformed into a man, then his mind would be changed just as much. He could not possibly wake up with the same mind he had as a boy, according to a materialist.

The story of *Big* is not just impossible; it is nonsense. The fact that people easily make sense of the story and readily suspend their disbelief shows just how deeply ingrained dualist assumptions of the body and mind are. Our ignorance and ability to be misled by fantasies, however, does not show that materialism is false. Instead, the materialist will state, it shows we are gullible and that intuition is not a reliable guide to the truth. If we were more sophisticated in our ability to grasp reality, *Big* would seem unbelievable and incomprehensible.

There are many different versions of materialism and behaviorism. This chapter will introduce some of the most common motivations for embracing it and some of the most important historical developments of it.

EMPIRICISM AND SCIENCE AS REPLACEMENT FOR GOD

The scientific revolution began in the mid-sixteenth century and the progress of science throughout the nineteenth century made science a proven method of quick advancement for knowledge. Some philosophers, such as David Hume (1711-1796), argued that people should "reject every system … however subtle or ingenious, which is not founded on fact and observation" (Hume [1751] 1998). He and those who agree are called empiricists. Rene Descartes (1596-1650) (who argued for substance dualism) and John Locke (1632-1704) had philosophical theories that tried to forward philosophical views within science, then called mechanical philosophy, which sought to find explanations that were subject to physical laws. Whereas Descartes was a rationalist, relying on principle, Locke was an empiricist and relied on experience (constituting evidence). Both Descartes and Locke had to prove that their theories were consistent with God and the religion of the time (which in Europe was Christianity); however, later theorists either left God completely out of the picture or tried to show from a theoretical basis that there still was a place for God in science.

Some of the important foundations of science, such as the closure principle and the primacy of the empirical over the theoretical, were prominent in philosophy, as well. In the sciences, experiments and theories rely centrally on the closure principle, which states that material objects have causes and effects that are locatable in the physical world. Without this principle, there would be no reason to do scientific research. Instead of claiming that the cause of a disease is a virus, we could just as easily claim that it is caused by God's wrath or a demonic force. This slowly caused people to rethink their ideas of the existence of God. If God was no longer needed to explain the things that we experience in the world—if science could do it completely without the use of God—then why do we need to believe in the existence of God?

An empiricist will readily point out that you cannot see God, nor can see your mind. You may be able to see someone else's brain if you witness a surgeon operating on someone, but you cannot see anyone's mind, including your own. And according to the principle of closure, something that is immaterial cannot affect something that is material, so the brain or other physical things are more properly the cause of our actions, not some mystical immaterial substance of the mind.

The principle of Ockham's Razor—named after William of Ockham (1285-1347), a philosopher from the middle ages—states that when something of a different kind (in this case, immaterial things) is not needed to explain something else (material things), then it can be eliminated. Favored in the sciences, Ockham's Razor is an explanatory principle of parsimony, and it gave philosophers a justification to remove God and other items that could not be seen (like minds) from their ontological status as real (separate) objects. Instead, talk of minds and mental events, such as thoughts and feelings, are simply shorthand expressions for processes in the body and world that science helps people to understand. It is therefore reasonable, they thought, that either minds really are just bodies or else minds do not exist. Ockham's Razor became the battle-cry of the new materialist brand of philosophers, scientists, and psychologists in the modern era and even today.

MATERIALISM

Some philosophers who worked in the same time period as Descartes and Locke, such as Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), began to follow a theory generally called materialism or physicalism, which states that all there is in the world and in us is material, and there is nothing immaterial. The mind had historically been conceived as immaterial with immaterial properties, such as thinking, believing, and desiring. Hobbes, however, insisted that the mind—and even God—must be material. When I think of a cat and you think of a cat, we think of the same concept (we assume), but how can we *know* that, and communicate with confidence, when there is nothing physical in the thought? How is it the case that we can ever verify that we are thinking of the same thing? Under materialism, if there is no such thing as an immaterial mind then what was previously called "thinking" must instead be explained by the body, the interactions of the body in the world, or more simply in modern materialism, the neurological firings of the brain. What we think of as thinking is an action of the body, and what we think of when we think of concepts such as "cat" is anchored in the material world of sense perception.

Type identity is a materialist theory that asserts that all mental states are identical to certain types of physical states. Contemporary proponents J. J. C. Smart (1920-2012) and U. T. Place (1924-2000) explained that science will reveal to us through experiments which kinds of mental states are equivalent to which kinds of physical processes in the brain. Note that a correlation between two kinds of states does not show that they are identical: a mental one of love and a physical one of more available serotonin in the brain, for example. Also, a physical event under type identity cannot be said to cause a mental one. Being hugged by someone does not cause a feeling happiness; rather it is an example of a physical action that causes certain nerves in the skin to send signals to the brain and create a sequence of firing that is identical to a feeling of happiness. Both correlation and causation assume that there are two events of different kinds that are related. Under materialism, there is just one kind of thing, so while it may appear that a mental and a physical event are related, the mental event is identical to the physical event. It is

important to refrain from these errors when speaking about materialism.

Brain scans reveal the physical processes that happen in the brain when people commonly experience seemingly mental events, giving credence to the type identity theorist's assertion that mental and brain events are just the same thing. A well-known example is that of the experience of pain, a kind of mental event that appears to be an immaterial feeling. The type identity theorist states that pain just is the completely physical event of C-fibers firing in the brain. When C-fibers fire, a person is in pain. Sometimes a person may not be fully aware of the pain they have, say, for example, if their attention is elsewhere or if another neurological process is covering up a subjective experience of pain. Imagine a person who gets struck in the head by a large rock. He is in fact injured and C-fibers fire in the brain, but then the person becomes unconscious. That is not to say he is not in pain; he is just unaware of it. Or say that a person gets attacked by a shark in the ocean and succeeds in fending it off. She is bleeding and is injured, but the ocean is so cold that her extremities are numb. In this case, there is a different physical process that is either postponing or covering up C-fibers firing, and therefore her experience of pain will be delayed until she is out of the cold ocean.

There have been numerous attacks against type identity theory that are so successful that many identity theorists have changed their account. One of the most devastating objections is based on the observation that different kinds of brains can realize pain. Animals surely experience pain like we do, but most animals have dramatically different brains, connections, and biochemicals than we do, so mental events like pain cannot be categorically reduced to a particular human brain kind of event. Hilary Putnam (1926-2016) astutely argued that this observation, called the multiple realizability of the mental, should lead us to abandon any supposed identity of kinds between the mental and the physical (Putnam 1967). Any account of mental events must explain how similar mental events appear to take place across a wide range of physical beings. We might even imagine beings from a distant planet who are silicone-based instead of carbon-based that also experience pain even though their systems have no physical similarities whatsoever to human brains and neurological events. This argument has led many to embrace a different account of the identity or reduction of the mental to the physical. In order to avoid this criticism, for example, token identity theories purport that all mental events reduce to a physical brain state, yet claim the identity is not necessarily instantiated by the same or similar brain states between people, or even within a single person at various times. Expositions of this theory vary and can often cross into other theories of mind, such as functionalism and property dualism, so they will not be discussed here.

Despite most theorists' discouragement of the arguments against type identity theory, there is a more radical materialist theory that embraces even more counterintuitive conclusions. Instead of taking on the explanatory burden of connecting the identity of mental and brain events, these theorists claim that everything is purely physical. There are no thoughts, no emotions, no minds. Everything is just an effect of brain and other physical processes. This kind of materialism is called eliminative materialism or reductive materialism because it states not only that the mind and the world should be explained consistently and within science as Descartes and Locke agreed, or that the mind should be seen as part of the physical realm as the type identity theorists do, but that there simply is no mind. Contemporary proponents of eliminative materialism Paul Churchland and Patricia Churchland explain our perceptions of the world according to neurology. An eliminative materialist would say that the feeling of pain is an illusion. We have become habituated to call certain things pain when at bottom there are only physical events happening. In discussions with the Dalai Lama, Patricia Churchland claims that she cannot say she even has the emotion of love toward her own child (because love is an illusion) and the beliefs of ordinary people who say there are such things as love and other emotions are false (Houshmand, Livingston, and Wallace 1999). Folk psychology, the theory of mind that embraces intuitions by the "common folk" who are uneducated about science, is merely a convenient myth**.**

Eliminative materialism is the most extreme view opposing substance dualism. The eliminative materialist truly eliminates the existence of minds, and with them, all of the features of mentality. They reject experiences, thoughts, and even actions. Therefore, although eliminative materialism explains everything within a scientific framework, it does so at the great cost of our intuitions, thoughts, feelings, and selves. Indeed, it eliminates most of what a theory of mind intends to understand. Many philosophers claim that Ockham's Razor has gone too far if most of what we intended to explain gets dismissed entirely. An account of the mind that brings back more of the features of normal life and explains those within a scientific framework is preferable to preserve the life and meaning of what people think, do, and say.

BEHAVIORISM AND THE LOGICAL POSITIVISTS

In the empiricist tradition, a different movement attempted to situate the mind within the realm of the material world, not through the identity of the two but through the explanation of the mind completely in terms of physical behaviors and events. Logical behaviorism claims that mental events (like pain) are to be understood as a set of behaviors (saying "ouch," screaming, or cringing after being hit). In this way, pain is entirely explainable within a concrete scientific framework that can be observed and communicated clearly between all beings.

The logical positivists (spanning from the Vienna Circle in 1922 through the 1950s in the United States) thought that if they could mimic the methods of the sciences that philosophical advances would also be imminent. Those such as Otto Neurath (1882-1945) and Rudolph Carnap (1891-1970) performed rigorous analyses to show that the mind and other non-observable and non-scientifically verifiable objects did not exist, and that those things we thought were immaterial could be constructed from completely material objects and processes. Some argued that all talk of immaterial objects or processes should be eliminated from our language. Their impact was tremendous and the terrain of Western philosophy shifted toward philosophy of language throughout the twentieth century. The period of logical positivism is also known as "the linguistic turn" (of the century). Some of the most important philosophers of the twentieth century, Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951) and W. V. O. Quine (1908-2000), were closely aligned with the Vienna Circle and logical positivism.

The logical positivists appeared to have a solution for the dilemma concerning the meaning of what people say and the integration of the mental within the physical. Instead of rendering everything involving the mental illusory or false, mental talk can be translated and should be translated into talk of behavior. The mind therefore becomes encapsulated within the realm of action. The argument goes like this: we do not need to eliminate all talk of our minds or our thoughts, and we do not need to say that all things involving such subjects are false. It is just that the meanings of all of those words and thoughts are not what they seem at first. What these words really are is a kind of shorthand for things that are all empirically observable, and most importantly, our behaviors. After all, we cannot see our thoughts and it seems like what we have always really meant by our talk of the mental we have created from observations of behavior. When I say, "Mom is angry," what I mean is that she is acting in such and such a way, not smiling, furrowing her eyebrows, not talking much, and so on. In this way, many of the things that we say come out true, and they all rely on empirical evidence—the evidence that we have always been gathering from the behavior of people. According to the logical behaviorist, if mental talk cannot be translated into behavior talk, then that particular mental talk is meaningless, just like Lewis Carroll's nonsense poem "Jabberwocky." The poem sounds grammatical and it resembles real words: "Twas bryllyg, and the slythy toves," it begins (Carroll and Tenniel 1872). People often have interpretations and emotional reactions to it, but it does not mean anything. Logical behaviorists believed poetry, art, and much of literature fell into this camp. It was entertaining but meaningless.

The logical behaviorists soon became overrun by possibly the most decisive objections in the history of philosophy. Whereas most philosophical positions refine themselves and carry more or fewer adherents, logical positivism and logical behaviorism had such devastating objections of inconsistency leveled against them that adhering to them became nearly impossible. There are two theoretical objections that were particularly damaging for logical behaviorism. The first depends on the principle of verificationism. Many of the logical positivists, including Carl Hempel (1905-1997), held a theory whereby all truths relied on their verification, either analytically (in virtue of their meanings, or by definition) or synthetically (not in virtue of their meanings, which, for Hempel indicated that they were true by experience) (Hempel 1980). Rudolph Carnap, though a member of the Vienna Circle, realized that verification was too stringent a demand to be met by any proposition, and he spent a good portion of his philosophical career trying out different criteria to rescue the theory from the criticism. As argued by Hilary Putnam, the principle of verification itself could not be verified and it was therefore "self-refuting" (Putnam 1983). Second, behaviorists were unable to provide the necessary and sufficient behavioral conditions required for translating talk about minds into talk about behaviors. In fact, Peter Geach (1916-2013) gave an objection to logical behaviorism that eliminated any kind of definition of beliefs or other mental states purely in terms of behaviors. Everything that a person does, or is disposed to do, depends on the person's beliefs and desires, so defining one belief in terms of certain actions just prolongs the problem of defining it, since the actions used to define it will make reference to yet other beliefs and desires. The account is therefore circular (Geach 1957, 8).

Another objection argues that behavior is both unnecessary and insufficient to account for what people mean by their use of mental concepts. The success of this objection affects the strong version of logical behaviorism (and usually the view to which people refer) which states that there are necessary and sufficient conditions within behavior to define mentality. To refute this view, focusing on the sufficiency of the behavior, a critic must find cases where there is behavior that mimics the existence of minds but where there is no mind. Ned Block, for example, said that puppets controlled via radio links by other minds outside the puppet's hollow body would mimic a mind working but is not a mind working (Block 1981). To refute the other side, that behavior is necessary for mentality, which could be seen as a weaker form of behaviorism if accepted without the sufficiency condition, the critic needs to find examples where there is thinking going on, but without the behavior. This is more difficult. Disembodied minds or thinking objects, if they exist, could constitute counterexamples. Hilary Putnam argued that we can imagine a world in which people experience pain but are conditioned to disguise their pain behaviors (Putnam 1963). Our ability to coherently think of such a world shows that pain is not conceptually and necessarily tied to behaviors, even if in our world we most often experience them contingently connected (see Chapter 5). Ludwig Wittgenstein, regarded as a champion for the logical positivists and the behaviorists, himself eventually turned away from a behaviorist-like theory to a theory that relied on thoughts as separate and independent from our descriptions of them.

CONCLUSION

Today, materialist and behaviorist views enjoy prominence in the sciences, but not in philosophy. Biologists and neuroscientists are working hard to uncover the mysteries of behavior and the brain. Each time they learn more information, they help build a better basis for a purely empirical philosophy of mind. But empirical research alone will never be sufficient to ground a materialist or behaviorist theory of mind. Both the radical theory of eliminativism (which intends to show that the mind does not exist) and non-reductive identity theories (which propose that mental events are always the same as physical events) still require persuasive philosophical arguments to show that minds are redundant or unnecessary in our ontology. Scientists themselves rely on self-reports of feelings and thoughts even while they conduct studies attempting to show that the mind can be reduced to the brain. An evolution in our ways of studying the body and the brain that do not rely on self-reports of feelings and thoughts seems a long way off.

The problem is that evidence of the workings of the body and brain, no matter how advanced, can never in itself establish a definite reduction of the mind to the body and the brain. Science alone cannot demonstrate the equivalence of the mind to the body or brain. Thus far, Ockham's Razor has not yet successfully shaved off the necessity of talk about minds for most philosophers. One day, an evolution in human ways of relating to ourselves and each other may rely less on feelings and thoughts and more on reactions and behaviors. Perhaps, it may be observed, the human condition was once like that, more instinctual in origin. Even if this is true, observations of the origin of human life do not indicate that our current human condition is entirely material. Some may argue that an evolution towards reliance on an immaterial mind marks progress in our species. Others may argue that the evolution of a seemingly immaterial mind shows the sophistication of brain. The debate will likely continue until talk of immaterial minds appears to be unnecessary.

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4.2: Functionalism (JASON NEWMAN)

INTRODUCTION: TWO MONSTERS WE MUST AVOID

While passing through the Strait of Messina, between mainland Italy and the isle of Sicily, Homer has Odysseus come upon two monsters, Scylla and Charybdis, one on either side of the strait. If Odysseus is to pass through the strait, he must choose between two very unhappy options; for if he averts one along the way, he will move in the other's monstrous reach. On the one side is roaring Charybdis, who would surely blot out—as if by colossal whirlpool—Odysseus's entire ship. (Have you ever been faced with an option so bad that you cannot believe you have to seriously consider it? Well, this is Odysseus's bleak situation.) On the other side of the strait, things fare little better for Odysseus and his war-weary crew: we have vicious Scylla, who only by comparison to Charybdis, looks like the right choice. The ship makes it through, Homer tells us, minus those who were snatched from the ship's deck and eaten alive. Six are taken, we are told, one for each of Scylla's heads. By comparison only, indeed.

In this chapter we consider the theory of mind known as functionalism, the view that minds are really functional systems like the computing systems we rely on every day, only much more complex. The functionalist claims to sail a middle path between materialism (discussed in Chapter 2), or the joint thesis that minds are brains and mental states are brain states, and behaviorism (also discussed in Chapter 2), or the thesis that mental states are behavioural states or dispositions to behave in certain ways.

AVOIDING MATERIALISM

One the one side we have materialism, which we must avoid because there appears to be no strict identity between mental states and brain states. Even though human Freya is different than a wild rabbit in many interesting ways, we think they can both be in physical pain. Suppose that while restringing her guitar, Freya lodges a rogue metal splinter off the D string in the top of her ring finger. She winces in pain. Physiologically and neurologically, a lot happened—from the tissue damage caused by the metal splinter, to Freya's finally wincing from the sensation. But it only took milliseconds.

Now suppose that while out foraging and hopping about, the wild rabbit mishops on the prickly side of a pinecone. The rabbit cries out a bit, winks hard, and hops off fast. A very similar physiological and neurological chain of events no doubt transpired from the mishop on the pinecone to hopping off fast in pain. But as interestingly similar as the wild rabbit's brain is to human Freya's, it is not plausible to think that both Freya and the wild rabbit entered into the same brain state. We do want to say they entered into the same *mental* state, however. That is, they were both in pain. Since the same pain state can be realized in multiple kinds of brains, we can say that mental states like pain are multiply realizable. This is bad news for the materialist; it looks like brain states and mental states come apart.

AVOIDING BEHAVIORISM

Now we look bleary-eyed in the direction of behaviorism. But here, too, we find a suspicious identity claim—this time between mental states, like Freya's belief that her house is gray, and behavioral states or dispositions to behave in certain circumstances. For example, if Freya were asked what color her house is, she would be disposed to answer, "Gray." But just as with mental states and brain states, Freya's believing that her Colonial-period house is painted the original gray from when the house was first built and painted in 1810, and her dispositions to behave accordingly, come apart, showing that they could not be identical.

Suppose Freya wants to throw a housewarming party for herself and includes a colorful direction in the invitation that hers is the "only big gray Colonial on Jones St. Can't miss it." We say that Freya would not sincerely include such a thing if she did not believe it to be true. And we have no reason to suspect she is lying. We can go further. We want to say that it is her belief that her Colonial is big, is gray, and the only one like it on Jones Street that causes her, at least in part, to include that direction in the invitation. But if it is her mental state (her belief) that caused her behavior, then the mental state and the behavioral state (her including the colorful direction in the invitation) cannot be strictly identical.

Freya might very well have been disposed to give just such a colorful direction to her home, given her beliefs, as the behaviorist would predict; and this disposition might even come with believing the things Freya does. But if we want to refer to Freya's beliefs in our explanation of her behavior—and this is the sort of thing we do when we say our beliefs and other mental states cause our behavior—then we must hold that they are distinct, since otherwise our causal explanation would be viciously circular.

It would be circular because the thing to be explained, her Colonial-describing behavior, is the same thing as the thing that is supposed to causally explain it, her Colonial-descriptive beliefs; and the circle would be vicious because nothing would ever really get explained. So the behaviorist, like the materialist, seems to see an identity where there is none.

NO TURNING BACK: THE MIND IS NATURAL

The goal is to formulate an alternative to the above two theories of mind that nevertheless both make a promise worth making: to treat the mind as something wholly a part of the natural world. From the failures of materialism and behaviorism, we must not turn back to a problematic Cartesian dualist view of mind and matter, where it again would become utterly mysterious how Freya's beliefs about how her Colonial looks could possibly influence her physical behavior, since her beliefs and physical behavior exist on different planes of existence, as it were. But there is a third way to view beliefs like Freya's.

FUNCTIONALISM AS THE MIDDLE PATH

Our way between the two monsters is to take seriously the perhaps dangerous idea that minds really are computing machines. In England, Alan Turing (1912-1954) laid the groundwork for such an idea with his monumental work on the nature of computing machines and intelligence (1936, 230-265; 1950, 433-460). Turing was able to conceive of a computing machine so powerful that it could successfully perform any computable function a human being could be said to carry out, whether consciously, as in the math classroom, or at the subconscious level, as in the many computations involved in navigating from one side to the other of one's room.

A Turing machine, as it came to be called, is an abstract computer model designed with the purpose of illustrating the limits of computability. Thinking creatures like human beings, of course, are not abstract things. Turing machines are not themselves thinking machines, but insofar as thinking states can be coherently understood as computational states, a Turing machine or Turing machine-inspired model should provide an illuminating account of the mind.

Turing's ideas were developed in the United States by philosopher Hilary Putnam (1926-2016). Functionalism treats minds as natural phenomena contra Cartesian dualism; mental states, like pain, as multiply realizable, contra materialism; and mental states as causes of behavior, contra behaviorism. In its simple form, it is the joint thesis that the mind is a functional system, kind of like an operating system of a computer, and mental states like beliefs, desires, and perceptual experiences are really just functional states, kind of like inputs and outputs in that operating system. Indeed, often this simple version of functionalism is known as "machine" or "input-output functionalism" to highlight just those mechanical features of the theory.

NOTHING'S SHOCKING: THE FUNCTIONALIST MIND IS A NATURAL MIND

The functionalist says if we conceive of mental stuff in this way—namely, as fundamentally inputs and outputs in a complex, but wholly natural system—then we get to observe the reality of the mind, and the reality of our mental lives. We get to avoid any genuine worries about mental stuff being too spooky, or about how it could possibly interact with material stuff, as one might genuinely worry on a Cartesian dualist theory of mind, where we are asked to construe mental stuff and material stuff as fundamentally two kinds of substances. With functionalism, the how-possible question about interaction between the mental and material simply does not arise, no more than it would for the software and hardware interaction in computers, respectively. So, on the functionalist picture of the mind, the mysterious fog is lifted, and the way is clear.

MULTIPLE REALIZABILITY

Let us use a thought experiment of our own to illustrate the functionalist's theory of mind. Imagine Freya cooks a warm Sunday breakfast for herself and sits on a patio table in the spring sun to enjoy it. Freya's belief that "my tofu scramble is on the table before me" is to be understood roughly like this: as the OUTPUT of one mental state, her seeing her breakfast on the table before her, and as the INPUT for others, including other beliefs Freya might have or come to have by deductive inference ("something is on the table before me," and so on and so forth) and behaviors (e.g., sticking a fork into that tofu scramble and scarfing it down). Note well: we have not mentioned anything here about the work Freya's sensory cortex or thalamus or the role the rods and cones in her retina are playing in getting her to believe what she does; her belief is identified only by its functional or causal role. This seems to imply that Freya's breakfast belief is multiply realizable, like pain is.

Recall our earlier discussion of the important difference between rabbit-brain stuff and human-brain stuff. Nevertheless, we wanted to say that both Freya and the wild rabbit could be in pain. We said pain, then, is multiply realizable. This is another way of saying that being in pain does not require any specific realization means, just some or other adequate means of realization. The point also strongly implies that the means of realization for Freya's breakfast belief, no less than her pain, need not be a brain state at all. This signals a major worry for the materialist. Since our beliefs, desires, and perceptual experiences are identified by their functional or causal role, the functionalist has no problem accounting for the multiple realizability of mental states.

REAL CAUSE: THE FUNCTIONALIST MIND CAUSES BEHAVIOR

Finally, we saw that our mental states cannot be counted as the causes of our behavior on a behaviorist view, since on that view of mind, mental states are nothing over and above our behavior (or, dispositions to behave in certain ways in certain circumstances). In an effort to disenchant the mind in general and individual minds in particular, and move mental states like beliefs and pain into scientific view, the behaviorist recoiled too far from spooky Cartesian dualism, leaving nothing in us to be the causes of our own behavior. The functionalist understands, like the behaviorist, that there is a close connection between our beliefs, desires, and pains, on the one hand, and our behavior, on the other. It is just that the connection is a functional, or causal, one, not one of identity. Since mental states (like Freya's belief that "my tofu scramble is on the table before me") are identified with their functional or causal role in the larger functional system of inputs and outputs, other mental states and behavioral states, the functionalist has no problem accounting for mental states playing a causal role in the explanations we give of our own behavior. On the functionalist theory of mind, mental states are real causes of behavior.

OBJECTIONS TO FUNCTIONALISM

Now that we have seen some of the major points in favor of the theory, let us have a look at some of the worries that have been raised against functionalism.

The Chinese Room

John Searle argues against a version of functionalism he calls "strong" artificial intelligence, or "strong AI" In "Minds, Brains and Programs," Searle develops a thought experiment designed to show that having the right inputs and outputs is not sufficient for having mental states, as the functionalist claims (1980). The specific issue concerns what is required to understand Chinese.

Imagine someone who does not understand Chinese is put in a room and tasked with sorting Chinese symbols in response to other Chinese symbols, according to purely formal rules given in an English-language manual. So, for example, one person can write some Chinese symbols on a card, place it in a basket on a conveyor belt which leads into and out from the little room you are in. Once you receive it, you look at the shape of the symbol, find it in the manual, and read which Chinese symbols to find in the other basket to send back out. Imagine further that you get very good at this manipulation of symbols, so good in fact that you can fool fluent Chinese speakers with the responses you give. To them, you function every bit like you understand Chinese. It appears, however, you have no true understanding at all. Therefore, Searle concludes, functioning in the right way is not sufficient for having mental states.

The functionalist has replied that, of course, as the thought experiment is described, the person in the room does not understand Chinese. But also as the case is described, the person in the room is just a piece of the whole functional system. Indeed, it is the system that functions to understand Chinese, not just one part. So it is the whole system, in this case, the whole room, including the person manipulating the symbols and the instruction manual (the "program"), that understands Chinese.

The Problem of Qualia

The splinter Freya picked up from her D string caused her a bit of pain, and perhaps more so for the behaviorist, as we saw earlier. One major worry for the functionalist is that there seems to be more to Freya's pain than its just being the putative cause of some pain-related behavior, where this cause is understood to be another mental state, presumably, not identified with pain at all. (Remember, the functionalist wishes to avoid the vicious circularity that plagued the behaviorist's explanations of behavior.)

There is an undeniable sensation to pain: it is something you feel. In fact, some might argue that at the conscious level, that is all there is to pain. Sure, there is the detection of tissue damage and the host physiological and neurological events transpiring, and yes, there is the pain-related behavior, too. However, we must not leave out of our explanation of pain the feel of pain. Philosophers call the feeling aspect of some mental states like pain fundamentally qualitative states. Other qualitative mental

states might include experiences of colored objects, such as those a person with normal color vision has every day.

In seeing a Granny Smith apple in the basket on a dining room table, she has a visual experience as of a green object. But the functionalist can only talk about the experience in terms of the function or causal role it plays. So, for example, the functionalist can speak to Freya's green experience as being the cause of her belief that she sees a green apple in the basket. But the functionalist cannot speak to the feeling Freya (or any of us) has in seeing a ripe green Granny Smith. We think there is a corresponding feeling to color experiences like Freya's over and above whatever beliefs they might go on to cause us to have. Since mental states like pain and color experiences are identified solely by their functional role, the functionalist seems without the resources to account for these qualitative mental states.

The functionalist might reply by offering a treatment of qualia in terms of what such aspects of experience function to do for us. The vivid, ripe greenness of the Granny Smith functions to inform Freya about a source of food in a way that pulls her visual attention to it. Freya's color experiences allow her to form accurate beliefs about the objects in her immediate environment. It is certainly true that ordinary visual experience provide us with beautiful moments in our lives. However, they likely function to do much more besides. Likewise, it is more likely that there is a function for the qualitative or feeling aspects of some mental states, and that these aspects can be understood in terms of their functions, than it is that these aspects are free-floating above the causal order of things. So, the functionalist who wishes to try to account for qualia need not remain silent on the issue.

CONCLUSION

We have not considered all the possible objections to functionalism, nor have we considered more sophisticated versions of functionalism that aim to get around the more pernicious objections we have considered. The idea that minds really are kinds of computing machines is still very much alive and as controversial as ever. Taking that idea seriously means having to wrestle with a host of questions at the intersection of philosophy of mind, philosophy of action, and personal identity.

In what sense is Freya truly an *agent* of her own actions, if we merely cite a cold input to explain some behavior of hers? That is to say, how does Freya *avow* her own beliefs on a merely functionalist view? If minds are kinds of computers, then what does that make thinking creatures like Freya? Kinds of robots, albeit sophisticated ones? These and other difficult questions will need to be answered satisfactorily before many philosophers will be content with a functionalist theory of mind. For other philosophers, a start down the right path, away from Cartesian dualism and between the two terrors of materialism and behaviorism, has already been made.

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4.3: Qualia and Raw Feels (HENRY SHEVLIN)

INTRODUCTION: WHAT ARE QUALIA?

As I sit writing this sentence, I am enjoying a wealth of experiences. In front of me, the sky is full of the pink and blue hues of approaching sunset dashed with white clouds. Tropical birds chitter in high-pitched trills, while a pair of dogs utter guttural barks at each other. My skin alternately prickles with the last lingering heat of the day, interrupted by the pleasant coolness of an evening breeze.

The scene I have just described is full of experiences with distinctive qualities—colours, sounds, and physical sensations. These qualities of experience are known to philosophers of mind as qualia, an oddly obscure term for an aspect of our lives that could scarcely be more familiar to us. Every waking moment of our lives, we are experiencing various qualia associated with sights, sounds, or feelings. Sometimes, we deliberately seek out new qualia, as when we order an unfamiliar dish at a restaurant, eager to learn what it tastes like. On other occasions, we seek urgently to put an end to some quale (the singular of "qualia") or another; for example, when we take an aspirin to relieve the throbbing sensation of a headache.

Qualia have been the focus of intense interest in philosophy of mind and cognitive science for several decades. They possess several apparent features that make them both fascinating and hard to explain. All of these properties are controversial (see section 4 below), but they certainly seem to capture several of the intuitive features of qualia.

First, qualia seem to be *private*: my qualia are a feature of my experience alone, and you can never directly access them. You may have wondered in the past whether other people experience colours in just the same way you do, or whether my blue may be your green. These questions arise precisely because of the apparent privacy of qualia. We can never know which qualia other people are experiencing.

Second (and related), qualia are arguably *ineffable*; that is, they cannot neatly be put into words. Imagine trying to explain to a person who is blind what red looks like, or (a less extreme example) conveying to a lifelong vegetarian what tuna tastes like. While in both cases, we might attempt to use metaphors ("red is like a trumpet") to convey the character of the experience, our attempts to do so will inevitably fail to do justice to the relevant sensation.

A final alleged property is that qualia are immediately and fully apprehensible to us just by experiencing them. In this respect, they are distinct from the *objects* of our experience. Imagine that you are lying in bed at night and hear a soft thud. You may well wonder what the noise was: a falling object, a door slamming in the wind, or perhaps your housemate returning home. What you don't have to speculate about, however, is what the noise s*ounded* like to you. This is something you grasped simply by hearing it. More strongly and more controversially, some philosophers have suggested that we can never make errors of judgment about our qualia. If I say something feels painful to me, for example, then it is nonsensical to suggest I might be in error.

QUALIA AND THE MIND-BODY PROBLEM

One reason qualia have so fascinated philosophers is that they are arguably hard to explain in standard scientific terms. Many of us have probably heard neuroscientists talking about things like synapses, neurons, and different regions of the brain. It is perhaps not too difficult to see how this kind of scientific approach might explain various aspects of our behavior. We might understand perception, for example, in terms of the transmission of information from the sense organs through various processing areas of the brain, or unusual aggression in terms of the release of some hormone or neurotransmitter. It is much harder to see, however, how these kinds of scientific descriptions could ever give us a satisfying explanation of why red looks the specific way that it does, or why cinnamon tastes like *this* and vanilla like *that*.

The challenge here is not merely to explain the neuroscience of how vision works or how our tongue relates flavour information to the brain. Important progress is being made every day in understanding questions like these, although the science still has a long way to go. Instead, the real difficulty is that while science tells us about how the brain *work*s, it seems unable to tell us what experiences are actually *like*. To get an idea of the problem, imagine a person who has been completely deaf since birth who wants to know what Beethoven sounds like. Even if we had perfect brain-scanners and could show them exactly what happens to someone's neurons when they listen to music, it does not seem like this could ever properly convey to them the subjective experience of hearing the opening bars of the Choral Symphony.

This creates an apparent challenge for a scientific worldview. If science cannot fully explain qualia, then does it follow that science can only offer us a partial understanding of the universe? More strongly, one might wonder whether the seeming inexplicability of qualia in scientific terms shows that the universe we inhabit does not consist solely of things like atoms, molecules, forces, and other objects from the domain of science, but also contains distinctive, irreducibly *mental* phenomena.

The challenge is well illustrated by a famous thought experiment called "Mary's Room" developed by philosopher Frank Jackson (1982).[1] Imagine a woman called Mary who is a brilliant scientist. Specifically, we are told that she knows all the physical facts about color perception: she knows all about the physics of light, the biology of the eye, and the neuroscience of color processing in the brain. However, Mary has never seen color herself, having spent her life in a black and white room. One day, Mary leaves her room, and sees a shiny red apple for the first time. "Wow!" she thinks, "So *that's* what red looks like."

Mary's Room attempts to demonstrate that there are certain facts that can't be accessed by scientific knowledge alone. After all, Mary *already* knows all the scientific facts about color before she leaves her room. What she lacks, however, is knowledge of the qualia of color; that is, what colors actually *look* like. She only gains this knowledge when she leaves the room and actually sees colors herself. Hence, the argument runs, there are certain facts that cannot be explained by science, but instead rely on subjective experience. The argument can be presented formally as follows.

1. Mary knows all the scientific facts about color before she leaves her room.
2. Mary learns new facts (about what colors look like) when she leaves her room.

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3. Therefore, not all facts are scientific facts.

Figure 4.3.1

Mary's Room is one of the most famous thought experiments in all of philosophy and has generated a vast number of responses. Most of them challenge premise (2), above, and argue that in fact Mary doesn't learn anything new when she leaves her room.

For example, the ability hypothesis claims that what Mary gains is not knowledge but a new set of abilities (Lewis 1990). Imagine someone who knows a lot about music, but can't play any instruments. However, after lots of practice, they learn to play the piano. The ability hypothesis suggests that something like this applies to Mary. Prior to leaving her room, she had never seen red objects, so couldn't recognize a given object as red, or imagine or remember the color red. After leaving the room, her new experiences of red allow her to do all of this. Our sense that she gains knowledge, then, is misplaced—what she gains is a new kind of skill. Some philosophers doubt that this adequately explains away our sense that Mary really does gain a new special kind of knowledge when she leaves her black and white room.

Another important approach we can term the old fact, new knowledge view.[2] Imagine someone knows that Istanbul was founded in 330AD. They then learn quite separately that Constantinople was founded in 330AD. Assuming they do not already know that Istanbul and Constantinople are the same city, it seems reasonable to say that the person learned something new when they heard the information about Constantinople. Certainly, they have an item of trivia at their disposal that they didn't have before. However, since "Constantinople" in fact refers to the same city as "Istanbul," we should also say that they have not strictly learned any *new* fact about the universe, having instead encountered a fact she already knew in a different form. Applied to the Mary case, the idea is that Mary really *did* know all facts about color before she left her room. When she sees red for the first time, she simply encounters these same facts in a new way, namely via her own color vision rather than via the theoretical language of science. One challenge for this view is to offer a developed account of this special experiential way of gaining knowledge while avoiding appeal to any non-scientific or non-physical facts or properties.

A final approach adopted by some defiant philosophers is to insist that Mary would not gain *any* kind of new knowledge or ability toward the world when she leaves her room. If she *really* knew all the scientific facts about color before leaving the room, she would in fact already have all the knowledge and abilities associated with seeing colors, despite never having personally seen them (Dennett 2006). This might sound like a flat denial of the powerful intuition motivating the thought experiment. One way to make this approach more persuasive, however, is to focus on the first premise of the argument above, that Mary knows *all* relevant the scientific facts. Is this really something we can easily imagine? After all, current science is still incomplete, and falls far short of providing us with knowledge of every fact even within its own domain of explanation. Moreover, most scientists are so specialized they know only a small proportion of the facts within their own field. Mary, then, would have be more like a superintelligence from the distant future than a normal human. Given this, should our intuitions about what we can imagine be given much weight?

These responses are only a fraction of the many approaches to Mary's Room adopted by philosophers. While considerable progress has been made in developing rebuttals to Mary's Room, it is probably fair to say that there is no one response that has been generally accepted as solving the problem. The puzzle of qualia for the scientific worldview, then, remains a central area of philosophical research.

HOW MANY KINDS OF QUALIA ARE THERE?

A further important debate about qualia concerns which kinds of mental states actually have them. The usual examples of qualia are things like sights, sounds, and bodily sensations. But some philosophers have argued that there are plenty of other kinds of qualia besides these.

Some example candidates for these additional qualia are things like emotions. It certainly seems like there is a distinctive feeling (or set of feelings) associated with powerful emotions like joy, anger, or sadness, for example. However, it remains controversial whether these feelings involve a special kind of qualia all of their own, or might be understood instead in terms of other qualia, such as, for example, those associated with bodily sensations, a view adopted by one of the founders of modern psychology, William James (1842-1910), in a famous article (1884). Note, for example, the intense physical sensations that accompany the emotion of excitement: we may experience the feeling of our heart rate going up, our mouth becoming dry, and our muscles tensing. Could such "bodily qualia" be all there is to the qualia of emotions? The issue remains hotly debated.

Another important debate concerns the range or type of qualia associated with perception. We can all agree that there are qualia associated with our experiences of color and shape, for example. But could there be special kinds of qualia involved in seeing someone as looking friendly, for example, or in recognizing an animal as a raccoon? The idea that there are such "high-level" qualia associated with properties beyond things like color, shape, and motion is sometimes called the rich content view (Siegel 2010). One way to motivate this idea comes from cases where the character of our experience—in other words, our qualia—seems to change despite there being no changes in how we are experiencing the lower level qualities of color, shape, and so on.

Consider, for example, the famous "duck-rabbit" illusion below (Jastrow 1899). With a little mental effort, we can "switch" from seeing the picture as a duck to seeing it as a rabbit, and it arguably seems like there is a shift in the way the picture looks. However, it is far from clear that our experience of the low-level features of the image—the colors and shapes—actually changes. If that is right, then it might provide evidence that there are special kinds of qualia associated with seeing the image *as a duck* and seeing it *as a rabbit*.

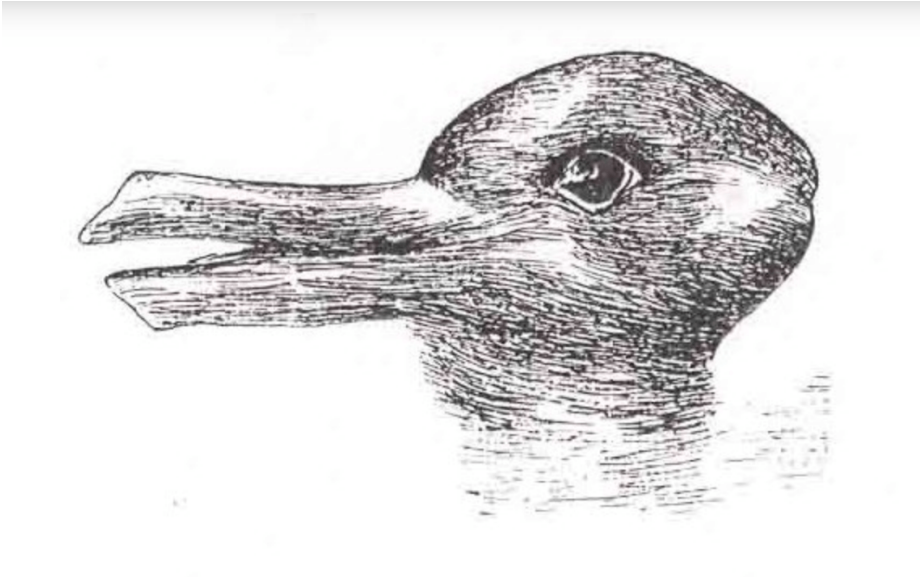


Figure 4.3.2

A final important debate concerns whether non-perceptual states like thinking and understanding might have special qualia associated with them. For example, quickly add together the numbers 17 and 48 in your head, and in doing so, consider what feelings or qualities are associated with the experience. Was there a distinctive kind of feeling that accompanied your thoughts about the numbers? Some philosophers have suggested that there is indeed a kind of special experience associated with thinking and understanding.[3] One argument for this kind of "cognitive qualia" (or cognitive phenomenology, as it is also known) comes from cases of hearing a foreign language. Imagine that Jack, an English speaker, and Jacques, a French speaker, are both listening to a French radio broadcast. Jack cannot understand what he is hearing, but Jacques can. Intuitively, it seems like there is a difference in the quality of their two experiences arising from the differences in their understanding (or lack thereof). Again, the existence of these cognitive qualia is hotly contested. Some philosophers claim, for example, that the qualities associated with experiences like thinking and understanding can be understood just in terms of regular perceptual qualia, like colors and shapes, occurring as images in our minds. Hence, perhaps any qualia you experienced in thinking through the math problem above were just a matter of seeing or hearing the numbers in your "mind's eye."

SKEPTICISM ABOUT QUALIA

We have been talking in this chapter about qualia as though their existence, at least, was uncontroversial. In one sense, that is surely true: no one could deny that we genuinely experience colors and tastes, for example. Some philosophers remain skeptical about qualia, however, insisting that the very idea is a confused one. The philosopher Daniel Dennett is one such famous skeptic. In a classic paper, "Quining Qualia," he gives a number of examples of cases in which the idea of qualia as used by philosophers seems to invite impossible and perhaps nonsensical questions (1988). Consider, for example, the case of two people, one of whom loves cauliflower, and the other of whom despises it. Should we say in such an instance that they must therefore have different qualia when they taste cauliflower, or instead say that they have different reactions to the same qualia? Dennett would have us believe that such questions barely make sense.

To illustrate the point further, he invites us to imagine that we ourselves go from despising cauliflower to loving it (an experience many of us have had with one food item or another). Even in such a case, he suggests, we are not able to say whether our qualia have changed or our attitudes have changed. If that is right, then it seems that some questions about qualia cannot be answered from the first-person perspective; but given that qualia are supposedly private and ineffable, it would seem to follow that they cannot be answered at all! Rather than embrace such mysterious entities, Dennett suggests, we would do better to abandon the very idea of qualia as confused.

Another kind of skepticism about qualia concerns their relationship to the objects of our experience. For a long time, many philosophers thought of qualia as things we could observe in our experience in their own right, quite separate from our experience of objects in the world (hence the term "raw feels" sometimes used to describe them). Other philosophers have more recently challenged this idea, instead claiming that insofar as we experience qualia at all, we experience them as properties of objects in the world (Harman 1990). This is a complex debate, but in essence, these philosophers claim that in looking at a green tree, we

do not experience “raw greenness.” Rather, what we might call the “qualia of greenness” are actually experienced as properties of an object in the world, namely the tree itself. If this transparency thesis is correct, then it suggests that even if qualia exist, they might simply be an aspect of our awareness of real objects in the world, rather than some mysterious “mental paint” (Block 1996). If so, cognitive science might enable us to understand qualia via the broader philosophical and scientific project of explaining how perception makes us aware of the world.

CONCLUSION

Qualia remain one of the deepest puzzles in all of philosophy, and this chapter has only offered a cursory survey of some of the most important debates in which they feature. Even while science has given us tremendous new insights into difficult questions like the origins of the universe and the human genome, the problem of how to explain qualia seems still tantalizingly out of reach of standard scientific enquiry. Despite or perhaps because of this, many philosophers and scientists view qualia as a vital and exciting frontier for human understanding.

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1. Mary's Room is also discussed in Chapter 4.
2. See, e.g., Michael Tye, *Ten Problems of Consciousness*, 171-77 (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995).
3. See Galen Strawson, *Mental Reality* (MIT Press, 1994), Ch.1.

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4.4: PHILOSOPHY OF MIND

Some of the main questions for the philosophy of mind are metaphysical questions about the nature of minds and mental states. “What is the mind?” quickly proves to be too big a question. We might say that for a being to have a mind is just for it to have mental states like beliefs, desires, perceptions, memories, emotions, and so forth. And this leads us towards somewhat more tractable questions like “What is a belief (desire, memory, perception…)?” Thephilosophy of mind has seen tremendous progress since Descartes proposed his dualist view of mind and body. Contemporary philosophical analyses of mental states and processes are among the key components of a rapidly emerging new science of mind. Philosophers of mind, along with cognitive psychologists, information scientists, and neuro-scientists have begun to work out detailed explanations of how our physical brains realize and carry out the functions of many mental states. In this chapter we will cover some of the progress philosophy of mind has contributed over the past century. As we will see by the end, some hard philosophical questions about the nature of mind persist.

Descartes’ Dualism

As with many topics, modern philosophy of mind begins with Descartes and soon moves on. Descartes’ dualism holds that the mind is composed of a fundamentally different kind of substance than the body. Bodies are composed of matter that exists in space and time, and behaves in accordance with laws of nature. Minds, however, are spiritual in nature according to Descartes. Their existence is not spatio-temporally bound, and unlike physical stuff, minds have free will. The critical faults in Descartes’ view were quickly spotted by Princess Elisabeth of Bohemia. The central problem lies in accounting for how the mind and the body can have any influence on each other. Clearly the physical world has effects on the mind, as when I perceive things. And it seems equally obvious that the mind has effects in the physical world, as when I act on my will. But if mind and body are so completely different, it is hard to see how this can happen at all. How does something that exists outside of space and time have any influence over the body that exists in space and time? How can the behavior of my causally determined body be influenced by a freely willing mind? The problem of mind/body interaction is a major stumbling block for Cartesian dualism about the mind and the body.

Descartes’ correspondence with Princess Elisabeth can be found in a heavily edited form here: http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/pdf/descelis.pdf. The full original text of Descartes’correspondence with Elisabeth includes some ornate literary flirtation in the first couple letters. By today’s standards, Descartes could be accused of sexual harassment for much of his flattery of Elisabeth. But the patronizing flattery pretty much disappears in later letters as Descartes comes to appreciate the seriousness of the Elisabeth’s incisively argued challenge. Elisabeth provides a brilliant illustration of how to deal most effectively with patronizing behavior whether it is of sexist variety or some other kind: just be competent and this will show that you deserve to be taken seriously. Here is helpful summary of the debate between Descartes and Elisabeth:

www2.fiu.edu/~hauptli/DescartesandPprincess

ElisabethCorrespondenceLectureSupplement.htm

4.4.1: The Brain State Identity Theory

4.4.2: Functionalism

4.4.3: Consciousness and Property Dualism

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4.4.1: The Brain State Identity Theory

Ryle's behaviorism attempts to make talk of mental states empirically respectable by defining mental terms in terms of observable conditions and behaviors. One concern raised about this approach was that mental state terms are to be understood entirely in terms of observable things going on outside the person. This seems to take the mind out of the person. There is no place in behaviorism for any account of our inner lives or even the notion that my beliefs and desires are in some sense in me or part of me. The Brain State Identity Theory, most ably advanced by J. J. C. Smart, goes some ways towards remedying this apparent defect (though Ryle would not have counted it as a defect). The Brain State Identity Theory proposes that mental states are identical with brain states. Contrary to Descartes' dualism, the Identity Theory takes mind to be a physical thing. Namely, it takes the mind to be identical with the brain. For this reason, we count the Identity Theory as a **physicalist** view of the mind.

According to the Identity theory, the belief that Obama was president of the USA in 2002 just is a certain neuro-chemical state of the brain. Note that a great many people share this belief. When we speak of the belief as a view about what is true, one that might be shared by many people, we are speaking of a belief type. My belief that Obama was the American president in 2002 is just one token of that shared belief type. This distinction between types and tokens is important to understanding what the identity theory says. The Identity Theory originally proposed that mental state types are identical with brain state types. So for you to have the mental property of believing that Obama was president of the USA in 2002 is just for your brain to have a certain specific neuro-chemical property. The identity theory holds that for anyone to have the belief that Obama was president in 2002 is just for them to have that same specific neuro-chemical property. A popular and plausible example of such mental state/brain state type identity was that pain just is C-fibers, a certain kind of neuron, firing.

We have scientific evidence that very roughly points in the direction for something like the Identity Theory. Cases of localized brain injuries indicate that different parts of the brain carry out different functions. People who suffer lesions in specific areas of the brain tend to find specific mental functions impaired while other functions are left perfectly intact. It is through analyzing such cases that we began to map areas of the brain according to the functions they perform.

In the Identity Theory we witness a significant point of intersection between the philosophy of mind and the science of mind. Philosophical speculation has given rise to a great many scientific hypotheses. Here we have an example of how this can happen. We have a theory about the metaphysical nature of mental states that turns out to be empirically testable. The Identity Theory says that mental state types are identical with brain state types. Types are properties, so this view tells us that all of your mental properties are physical properties of your brain. We have learned a great deal about how brains store and process information since this hypothesis was popular. The science of mind is not yet mature, but well past its infancy and the broad outlines of how brains work are more or less in place. What the science tells us is that different brains store and process the same information in very different ways. That is, the Identity Theory is wrong. My belief that Obama was president in 2002 involves many properties of my brain. But your belief that Obama was president in 2002 involves your brain having different properties.

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4.4.2: Functionalism

Belief is the spring of action. We explain people's actions in terms of their mental states. People do what they do because of what they believe, desire, fear, hope for, and so forth. The behaviorists were on to something in thinking about mental states in terms of dispositions. But recall that the behaviorists were looking for a way to analyze talk about mental states entirely in terms of observable things like behavior. They wanted to avoid positing unobservable things going on in the head. Talk of dispositions for the behaviorists was not talk of underlying and possibly unobservable brain states that give rise to behavior. Rather it was merely talk of tendencies that might allow us to understand mental state terms as synonymous with complex"if. . . then. . ." conditional statements. The behaviorists sought a way to avoid understand mental terms as referring to unobservable things going on in the head. To many, taking the mental out of the head seemed a problematic feature of behaviorism. But this is just what behaviorists set out to do, understand talk of the mental in public, observable terms.

The functionalists would understand talk of mental dispositions differently. To have a mental disposition is not, by definition, just to satisfy a certain "if . . ., then. . ." claim. Rather, to be in a mental state is to be in some underlying state, perhaps unobservable, that fulfills a certain functional role. The molecular structure that makes the spring flexible might not be observable to us. But for the spring to be flexible, for it to have this disposition, is for it to be in some underlying state that makes the spring such that if we exert a force on it, it will bend and absorb that energy. We can call that underlying state that accounts for something having a disposition the **causal basis of the disposition**. With this idea in hand, we can mark a difference in how a behaviorist and a functionalist would understand the idea of a disposition. For the behaviorist, talking of mental states as dispositions does not involve the attribution of any causal basis, it only gives us a way of translating talk of the mental into talk of observable behavior by means of complicated "if . . ., then . . ." statements. For functionalism, on the other hand, talking of mental states as dispositions does involve attributing underlying causal base properties. To be in a mental state is to have some underlying causal basis for behaving in this way if these conditions are met, or behaving in that way if those conditions are met, etc.

Given this differing treatment of talk of mental dispositions, the functionalist avoids a problem we raised for behaviorism. We seem to understand what it means to believe that Obama was president in 2002. But if this mental state attribution is really just a shorthand way of expressing a complex behavioral disposition, then we ought to be able to fill in the associated "if . . then . .." claim. But we can't. So talk of mental states can't simply be regarded as synonymous with talk of behavioral dispositions. Unlike the behaviorist, the functionalist is not trying to define away talk of the mental in terms of talk of observable behavior. The functionalist is happy to leave the mental in the head. Talk of behavioral dispositions don't define mental terms for the functionalist, they rather provide a means for specifying what it is for an underlying brain state to realize, or be a causal basis for, a mental state type.

We were lead to functionalism by the idea that a given mental state might be realized by various different states in different brains. This suggests a physicalist interpretation of functionalism, a view that insists that mental states are realized by physical states. But note that functionalism needn't be restricted in this way. Any state, physical or otherwise, can realize a mental state so long as it fulfills the appropriate role. Being guided by spirits in the appropriate way might, in principle, be the causal basis for having a certain mental disposition. So, strictly speaking, unlike the brain state identity theory, functionalism is not committed to physicalism, the view that the mental is ultimately physical. One could be a functionalist about mental states and a Cartesian dualist.

Here is a link to further reading on functionalism: http://www.iep.utm.edu/functism/

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4.4.3: Consciousness and Property Dualism

While one could, in principle, be a functionalist and a Cartesian dualist, the intractable problem of mind/body interaction has lead scientists of the mind to reject Descartes' substance dualism. The difficulty of understanding consciousness, however, has led some leading contemporary thinkers, notably David Chalmers, to another kind of dualism: property dualism. On this view, though the world consists of just one kind of stuff, matter, that stuff has fundamentally different kinds of properties including those we can regard as purely physical, like mass, charge and so forth, and other kinds of properties, like consciousness, that are irreducibly mental. Let's start by thinking about how consciousness is special and especially difficult to analyze in terms of physical properties.

Functionalism gives us a promising approach for understanding some kinds of mental states in terms of physical states fulfilling functional roles describable in terms of complex dispositions. According to functionalism, for me to believe that my cat is sleeping on the sofa only requires that my brain be in some state that plays an appropriate function role. I can't specify the functional role completely, but it might include walking softly when I go to refill my tea, notplaying loud music on the stereo, saying "no" if my wife asks me if the cat is outside, etc. Thestate of my brain that fulfills this mental functional role might be one that can be entirely specified in physical terms. It is just the state of having certain connections between networks of neurons activated in certain ways. With enough neurophysiology, we could completely describe this brain state in terms of physical chemical and electrical properties. A great many kinds of mental phenomena might yield completely to such functional explanation in purely physical terms. Scientists of the mind have already made tremendous progress at understanding memory, shape recognition, belief, and desire in terms of functional roles that could have purely physical bases. But then there is our subjective conscious experience, what it is like for me to perceive something, for instance, or how I experience desiring something, believing something, remembering something.

Consciousness does not yield to functional analysis in the same way. An interesting kind of thought experiment suggests that consciousness can't be understood in purely functional terms or in terms of physical properties and processes at all. First we need to talk about zombies. The zombies we are familiar with from horror stories are easily recognizable. They walk in menacing dull witted ways in spite of broken legs and open wounds. They are the reanimated dead. This is not at all like philosophical zombies, the beings that populate philosophical zombie thought experiments in the philosophy of mind. The idea of a philosophical zombie is the idea of being that functions exactly like a conscious person in every observable respect. The only difference between a philosophical zombie and a normal person is that the philosophical zombie lacks conscious experience. Imagine a physical duplicate of yourself, a doppelganger that is molecule for molecule exactly like you and fully operational. It functions just like you, so it would give the same replies you would give to questions and the same responses to stimuli. It is just as subtly expressive as you in every conceivable way because it is functionally just like you. Your mother or your lover could never tell the difference. The only difference there is, is that the zombie lacks the conscious experiences that you have.

There is philosophical debate about whether such a being is metaphysically possible. There don't appear to be any logical contradictions involved, but that may not settle the issue. However, if such a zombie is possible, this possibility would demonstrate something interesting. Since your zombie doppleganger is exactly like your conscious self in every physical and functional respect down to the atomic level, yet differs from you mentally because it lacks conscious experience, the mere possibility of such a being would show that whatever consciousness is, it can't be understood in terms of functioning or the kinds of physical biochemical properties that ground your functioning (provide the causal bases for you various dispositions to behave.

Chalmers thinks philosophical zombies are possible, so consciousness can't be understood purely in terms of physical properties or the functional processes they ground. He instead proposes that we understand some properties of minds, like consciousness, as fundamentally mental properties that are not reducible, even in principle, to physical properties. While no distinct kinds of non- physical substance is proposed, Chalmers is offering a kind of dualism we now call property dualism. Property dualism in the philosophy of mind is the view that among the primitive most fundamental properties of our world, there are both basically physical properties and basically mental properties.

Here is David Chalmers' clear and accessible paper "Facing up to the Problem of Consciousness": http://consc.net/papers/facing.pdf

Here is the IEP reference article on consciousness: http://www.iep.utm.edu/consciou/

Here is a collection of SEP entries on Mind, largely edited by David Chalmers: http://consc.net/guide.html

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4.5: THE MIND- BODY PROBLEM

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4.5.1: Overview

4.5.2: The Mind Body Problem

4.5.3: Dualism

4.5.4: Monism- Idealism

4.5.5: Monism- Materialism

4.5.6: Conclusion

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4.5.1: Overview

The topics of this and the next chapter share a few things in common. One of the more interesting things is that most people raised in the last half of the twentieth century are probably carrying two different sets of ideas with regard to both the idea of the human mind and to that of human freedom. Many people are operating with ideas that are inconsistent and some that are outright contradictions of one another. The stories or "myths" concerning "mind" and "freedom" cannot all be true at the same time. In this chapter, and in the next as well, the inconsistencies and conflicts will be noted and then explored. For many thinkers these are some of the most perplexing issues in Philosophy. Certainly these topics are associated with a core list of issues that are termed "perennial". These questions arise within each culture. They have been approached from different perspectives. Answers have been offered. No one answer or solution has gained acceptance by an overwhelming majority of thinkers let alone worldwide acceptance. So prepare yourself to explore important matters. These materials might cause you to reexamine your beliefs and alter your position. Be prepared to become a little unsettled. For some you may be more than just a little disturbed. You may be disturbed that beliefs you have held may need to be reexamined or abandoned. You may be disturbed that there is no one official correct answer to the questions that you will confront. So it is with many questions in Philosophy, some of which you have already experienced. It could just be that despite the fact that a great many people derive great comfort from these commonly held beliefs, that these beliefs may, nonetheless, be untrue! What is to be put in their place if you find that you can no longer hold to what you once believed? The questions are basic. The answers are very difficult to explain and defend.

Do you have a mind?

What makes you think so?

Do you have free will?

What makes you think so?

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4.5.2: The Mind Body Problem

No doubt about it, we are acculturated with the idea that we have minds. Yes, MIND! We are taught in many different ways that we have both minds and bodies. Very few doubt this and very few think much about the meaning of this belief that we have both a body and a mind. We learn of this view from many sources and as those around us appear to share in the same view, we have no reason to doubt it or question it. However, there are problems with the view and more and more people are changing their beliefs and positions as experience, critical thinking and science appear to provide reasons and evidence that challenge the popular belief.

We believe that we have a body and a mind and that they are some how different from one another. Our language reinforces this view as well. Many common expressions assume this view that humans have minds. Consider the following fairly common expressions in the English language:

What's on your mind?	Are you losing your mind?
Are you out of your mind?	A mind is a terrible thing to waste.
You are always on my mind.	Great minds think alike!
Free your mind.	What are you a master mind or something?
It is a matter of mind over matter.	I have a mind to ...
He has a mind like a steel trap.	back of one's mind
bear in mind	blow one's mind
boggle the mind	bring to mind
call to mind	cross one's mind
change one's mind	come to mind
frame of mind	go out of one's mind
great minds	half a mind
have a good mind to	in one's mind's eye

in one's right mind	know one's own mind
load off one's mind	lose one's mind
make up one's mind	meeting of the minds
never mind	of two minds
one-track mind	on one's mind
open mind	closed minded
piece of one's mind	presence of mind
prey on one's mind)	put one in mind of
read someone's mind	set one's mind at rest
slip one's mind	speak one's mind
to my mind.	its all in your mind
don't mind	put your mind to it
mind bending	narrow minded
messing with your mind	mind games
mind boggling	state of mind
out of sight (out of mind)	peace of mind
mind over matter	no doubt in my mind

wrap your mind around this	in my mind's eye
set your mind to it	get your mind out of the gutter
a meeting of the minds	great minds think alike
peace of mind	beyond my mind's comprehension
put your mind at ease	

· **IDIOMS some are** Explained at yourdictionary.com

Back of one's mind: http://idioms.yourdictionary.com/back-of-one-s-mind

· Bear in mind: http://idioms.yourdictionary.com/bear-in-mind

· Blow One's Mind: http://idioms.yourdictionary.com/blow-one-s-mind

· Boggle the mind: http://idioms.yourdictionary.com/boggle-the-mind

· bring to mind: http://idioms.yourdictionary.com/bring-to-mind

· call to mind: http://idioms.yourdictionary.com/call-to-mind

· cross one's mind: http://idioms.yourdictionary.com/cross-one-s-mind

· change one's mind: http://idioms.yourdictionary.com/change-one-s-mind

· come to mind: http://idioms.yourdictionary.com/come-to-mind

· frame of mind: http://idioms.yourdictionary.com/frame-of-mind

· go out of one's mind: http://idioms.yourdictionary.com/go-out-of-one-s-mind

· great minds*: http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/Great+minds [def'n from Cambridge Idioms Dictionary, 2nd ed]

· half a mind: http://idioms.yourdictionary.com/half-a-mind

· have a good mind to: http://idioms.yourdictionary.com/have-a-good-mind-to

· in one's mind's eye: http://idioms.yourdictionary.com/in-one-s-mind-s-eye

· in one's right mind: http://idioms.yourdictionary.com/in-one-s-right-mind

· know one's own mind: http://idioms.yourdictionary.com/know-one-s-own-mind

· load off one's mind*: http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/a+load+off+mind [def'ns from McGraw-Hill and Cambridge Dictionaries of American Idioms]

· lose one's mind: http://idioms.yourdictionary.com/lose-one-s-mind

· make up one's mind: http://idioms.yourdictionary.com/make-up-one-s-mind

· meeting of the minds: http://idioms.yourdictionary.com/meeting-of-the-minds

· never mind: http://www.yourdictionary.com/nevermind [note: in the list "never mind" is two words but in the definition it is only one]

· of two minds*: http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/of+two+minds [def'ns from McGraw-Hill and Cambridge Dictionaries of American Idioms]

· one track mind: http://idioms.yourdictionary.com/one-track-mind

· on one's mind: http://idioms.yourdictionary.com/on-one-s-mind

· open mind: http://idioms.yourdictionary.com/open-mind

· piece of mind: http://idioms.yourdictionary.com/piece-of-one-s-mind [note: link is to "piece of *one*'s mind"]

· presence of mind: http://idioms.yourdictionary.com/presence-of-mind

· prey on one's mind*: http://www.sky-net-eye.com/eng/english/idioms/american/i_p/6312-prey-on-ones-mind [def'n from A Dictionary of American Idioms]

· put one in mind of: http://idioms.yourdictionary.com/put-one-in-mind-of

· read someone's mind: http://idioms.yourdictionary.com/read-someone-s-mind

· set one's mind at rest: http://idioms.yourdictionary.com/set-one-s-mind-at-rest

· slip one's mind: http://idioms.yourdictionary.com/slip-one-s-mind

· speak one's mind: http://idioms.yourdictionary.com/speak-one-s-mind

· to my mind: http://idioms.yourdictionary.com/to-my-mind

· out of sight (out of mind): http://idioms.yourdictionary.com/out-of-sight

(Can you add to this list? If so, send the additions to your instructor.)

There are a number of movies that have been made that contain in them ,as themes or as devices, the exchange of minds or the migration of a mind from one body to another. In these movies the idea is clearly in view and assumed that the mind is an entity that is not physical and can move from one body (brain) to another and along with it goes the person. There are movies in which minds are switched between two persons of opposite sex, or skin color or ethnicity or social or economic status. Consider these:

- **Big**
- **All of Me**
- **17 Again**
- **Vice Versa**
- **Like Father Like Son**
- **Dream a Little Dream**
- **Man with Two Brains**
- **Prelude to a kiss**
- **Ghost**
- **Chances Are**
- **Family Man**
- **Mr. Destiny**
- **Frequency**
- **Freaky Friday**
- **Wish Upon a Star**
- **Source Code**
- **Travelers**
- **Get Out**
- **The Change Up**
- **Switch**
- **The Hot Chick**
- **The Shaggy Dog**
- **18 Again**
- **Down to Earth**

(Can you add to this list? If so, send the additions to your instructor.)

In all of them there is the common element that the mind of a person is the seat of that person's being and identity. Further, the films appear to teach us that the mind of a person can "move" from one site or physical human body (brain) to another. We shall not consider whether or not such "switching" is possible. (At least not as a planned part of this course.) Instead just focus on the idea of a mind as something that can, at least in theory and in the movies, occupy one or another human body. It is not

something physical and can move right through matter, the brain, the wall, and the atmosphere and arrive inside of another head, skull and brain. The are many films that depict minds or soul moving through physical barriers and entering another human body. Now people viewing these films don't generally get up a leave the theatre or change the channel because they believe that such events are not possible and are preposterous. No, quite the contrary, audiences are prepared to accept the possibility that such events might occur and they remain to follow the rest of the action in the film. These films tend to be comedies. They are part of the culture. The result is that we have a great number of people who believe that they possess a mind and that it is something that makes them what they are or it is what houses their personal identities. Further, they believe that the mind is not a physical entity but that it is non-physical, even spiritual, and can survive outside of the physical body and somehow can survive the death of the body and over half of the world's peoples believe that it is capable of entering into another body and having another life (reincarnation, metempsychosis, the transmigration of souls). This view that we have both a non- physical mind and a physical body is known as **dualism**.

Now there are some that have come to doubt and disbelieve in such a view. They have been brought up with another belief system or have come to disbelieve in dualism due to a consideration of evidence and the implications of the claims of the dualists. Of those who do not believe that we have both a body and a mind are those who do not believe that we have bodies. These are known as **idealists**. Another group, growing larger all the time, believes that we do not have mind at all, at least not as a separate and non-physical entity apart from our physical bodies. What we have are only physical bodies, which include the brain, which is responsible for what previously was thought to be the work of the mind. These thinkers are known as **materialists**.

How is it that there is a problem with the commonly held belief that human beings have both minds and bodies? How is it that there are a number of different views on this? What is the correct view? If there is a problem, what is the solution?

The problem comes about once you really consider what the implications are of believing that minds are not physical objects and that they do still somehow or other influence the physical object that is our brain in order to get our bodies to do what they do. Nothing seems more obvious to most people but that our minds do interact with our bodies. I make up my mind to type something and my mind gets my brain to stimulate the neurons that continue to excite other neurons through my body down to my arms, hands and fingers which strike the keys according to the ideas and the plan that my mind is directing them to follow. It is quite obvious. But wait. Lots of things have been obvious at one time or another and then have turned out not to be true. Could this be one of them? That sun looks not so big, not so hot, not so far away and that it is moving and yet I know now that despite how it appears and how I thought of the sun, that it simply isn't true. The truth is quite otherwise. Could this be the case with the idea that I have a mind? More and more people are coming to think so. Why? Well consider.

What is a mind? Do you have a mind that is separate from your brain? Are you sure? How do you know this?

Rene Descartes thought he had proven that we have minds and that they are not material and that we do not need to have a body to have a mind. He arrived at the following idea as his first indubitable idea or clear and distinct idea or obvious truth.

Cogito, Ergo Sum: I think, therefore I am (Rene Descartes)

Ok, so you know you have a mind. You must have one because you think. Because you think you also know that you exist in some way. But, is the mind -the thing you think with -the same sort of thing as the body, or is it different? If it is different, how is it different? According to Descartes there are two very different sorts of things that exist or SUBSTANCES: the physical and the spiritual or non-physical. Brains are part of the physical realm and minds are part of the non-physical realm. The two realms make up all that is real. DUALISM.

Physical Realm-Matter	**Non-Physical Realm -Spirit**
Bodies	Minds
have mass, density	Have no mass, density
have location	Have no location

have tactile properties	Have no tactile properties
have taste, smell, etc.	No taste, smell, etc.
have duration	No duration
They are physical!!!	They are non-physical !!!

So, for Descartes and many people before and since his writing the Mind is distinct from the body - they are two different sorts of things. **Dualism :** The view that there are two sorts of substance in the universe - physical and non-physical. With Dualism comes many problems concerning the existence and relation of the two substances. One of those problems is the one we focus one here. **So, how does the non-physical mind bring about a causal change (motion) in a physical substance?**

Finally, we have it! This is **the PROBLEM!**

How does the non-physical mind bring about a causal change (motion) in a physical substance?

VIEW: The mind-body problem: problem of interaction

Think of it this way: a mind, being non-physical, would not be able to contact, touch, move, tingle, excite, push, shove, a physical object such as a brain, a neuron, a synaptic fluid or molecule of any type because they are all physical. Consider it this way: in the films that show minds being changed or that show non-physical or spiritual beings, these entities are shown to move right through walls, skulls, windows, brains and all other physical objects. So, if a mind is not physical and moves through physical objects, then how does the mind get the brain to react or act or to do anything, for that matter. The mind is not made of matter, the brain is. How can something not made of matter or energy cause something made of matter and energy to do anything????

Descartes thought that it was through the Pineal Gland! (He thought it was the master control unit where the soul contacted the brain (body) because it was singular and not doubled as are other parts of the brain.) Scientific investigation has now proven that the pineal gland does not function as a central control unit for the brain.

PROBLEM! : the Pineal Gland is still a physical thing - how does the mind excite it? Or excite the neurons, for that matter? Suppose you would think that it is through a **Harmonic Vibration! PROBLEM! :** How does a non-physical thing, Vibrate?

PROBLEM!: How do we explain the interaction of the mind and body?

Mind certainly seems to effect the body: just move your fingers, toes, etc. and some evidence suggests that mind can heal the body. Body certainly seems to effect the mind: Strokes are physical, yet effect the cognitive. Drugs and a high fever can disturb our abilities to think, to focus, concentrate, calculate etc... Mental states can effect changes in the body. There appears to be plenty of evidence from experience in support of some type of interact going on between the mind and the brain! Or is it the brain and the body?

PROBLEM!: If the mind is a non-physical entity and not the physical brain then harm to the physical brain should not cause any changes in the functioning of the mind. Yet when the brain suffers a physical change from:

- **physical blow to the brain**
- **electrical shock to the brain**
- **disease growths in the brain**
- **chemical imbalance in the brain**
- **chemicals induced into the brain**

all of these physical events produce a change in the way people remember, feel, think and act. If the mind is not physical and not the brain then why do these changes in the brain make any difference to how the mind operates? We know that the physical events do make those changes but how can that be explained if the Dualists are correct there should be no consequence to the

mind if it is not physical it can not be touched by physical agents and acts.

Think of all the stories you have read and heard about the mind and what it is supposed to do or to have. Is it your mind that thinks and hopes and dreams and has memories and feelings and calculates and can imagine things ? Our own experiences and the careful study of scientists challenge the part of the story that claims that the mind is non-physical and separate from our bodies. Neuroscience and research is indicating that the entire list is accounted for without need of postulating or claiming or believing in some non-physical mind. Memories, hopes, emotions, plans are all being located in electrical and chemical and physical entities in the brain.

Chemicals influence the physical brain. Chemical enter the brain cells and alter emotions and alter perceptions and alter moods and alter abilities and more. When they do so it is evidence that there is no non-physical mind. Why? The chemicals are physical , they influence the physical brain, the brain influences the feelings and memory and thinking of the person. In this there is no non-physical mind involved. If there was a non-physical mind it would not be influenced by physical blows or chemicals in the brain since the non-physical mind can not be touched by physical agents.

So the Mind Body Problem is located in this precise question of how is it that non-physical entities called minds can have any influence over the physical brain or interact with it or cause it to do anything?

3 Traditional and Most Logical Options:

·1. **Dualism:** Two kinds of substance Mind and Body (brain) that Interact or are coordinated in some way.

·**Monism**: One kind of substance.

·2. Materialism - only material substance exists, there is no spirit.

·3. Idealism - only spiritual substance exists, there is no matter.

We shall examine all the options and then you shall decide for your self what you should believe.

Possible Approaches to the Mind - Body Problem

I. Dualism MIND and BODY both Exist

There are the ESSENTIALISTS who believe that MIND does exist. They believe in such concepts as the SELF, the I, the EGO and other ideas indicating that there is in the human being an entity that exists and yet is not physical but occupies or associates with the physical body. Among philosophers who have thought so are: PLATO ARISTOTLE DESCARTES LEIBNIZ

Variations

A. **Interactionism** - minds and bodies exist and interact in some way

B. **Epiphenomenalism** - body acts on mind but minds do NOT act on bodies

C. **Double Aspect Theory**-there is one substance with two aspects (mind/body)

D**. Parallelism** -minds and bodies exist in separate dimensions and are coordinated

i. Pre-Established Harmony-minds and bodies are set in motion and coordinated from the beginning of time by a deity that creates the universe

ii. Occasionalism- on the occasion of the mind making a decision the body is moved by the creator (deity) to do whatever the mind has decided to make the body do.

II. Monism :Materialism - **only Body exists there are no minds.** The brain accounts for the activities previously associated with the Mind. Among those who have thought this way: B.F. SKINNER, HOBBES, DENNENT

Variations

- **A. Behaviorism**

- **B. Logical behaviorism**
- **C. Semantic behaviorism**
- **D. Folklore**
- **E. Functionalism**
- **F. Structuralism**

III. Monism: Idealism - **there are no bodies only minds**. All that exists is ideas. All is idea in the MIND of the Creator. Each human is a subset of ideas in the Mind of the Creator. We have similar ideas at similar times and think that we have bodies and are experiencing the same computers and rooms and chairs as other people because all is coordinated in the mind of the creator of all. The divine creator thought of the creation and there it was, as ideas in the mind of the creator.

In this world Hinduism holds for a form of this and Christian Scientists hold similar views.

These questions are part of a branch or sub area of Philosophy known as **Philosophy of Mind.** It is one of the most modern of the areas within Philosophy. Today it has been influenced by questions being asked in Computer Science, Psychology, Neurophysiology, etc. Why?

First computers could do amazing things:

·once programmed, more accurate than humans

·faster at complex computations than humans

These devices raise interesting questions, such as: What was the machine doing? Could a machine think?”

To assist us we have a variety of disciplines, each with a great deal of knowledge and a number of theories and each with its own problems.

·Neurophysiology - Knows a lot about how the brain works as a biological mechanism, but can not find thought anywhere.

·Computer science - A great deal of information with respect to the computer, but no knowledge of how to program "thought" into the machine.

·Psychology - Knowledge of how people behave, but not of consciousness itself or internationality.

·Philosophy - Many theories about all of the above- no consensus

So now we shall examine each of the options.

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For some the Mind-Body problem has been split into two different problems:

> *The problem of "qualia" and the problem of "intentionality." Both problems use similar intuition pumps: For qualia, we imagine a robot that is indistinguishable from us in every objective respect, but it lacks subjective experiences; it is mindless. For intentionality, we again imagine a robot that is indistinguishable from us in every objective respect but its "thoughts" lack "aboutness"; they are meaningless.* - -Steven Harnad

See how this is explained and then reduced again to a single problem in There Is Only One Mind/Body Problem by Steven Harnad (1992)

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READ PHILOSOPHY of MIND:

VIEW: Dr. Richard Brown **Contemporary Philosophy of Mind: Dualism and Materialism**

Suggested: MIND BODY PROBLEM: Overview:

See also this material on the problem

If you are interested in Science and Computers and Artificial Intelligence you might want to "get into" this subject by examining the material at this site listed below:

Science Fiction Setting the Scene:

Cyberspace and Neuroscience

Cyberspace and Philosophy

Bridging the Gap between Philosophy and Neuroscience

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4.5.3: Dualism

Now we shall examine dualism. It is the first of the options on the Mind Body Problem. It is the most popular conception, it appears as the most obvious answer to the problem and it is the source of the problem all at the same time!

dualism, Cartesian interactionist - The view that: (1) the mental and the material comprise two different classes of substance and; (2) both can have causal effects on the other.

Plato

Plato thought that the soul could and would exist apart from the body and would exist after the death of the body. He offered a "proof" for this position and was the first to do so in writing that we have any evidence of doing so. He offered several different proofs or arguments none of which are convincing today. They are held to be specious arguments or terribly flawed and unconvincing. He held that humans were composed of bodies and souls but the soul was more important and immortal. His arguments used premises which we question today. For example, Plato thought that he could conclude that the soul could exist independent of the body because it acted independently from the body when it engaged in pure thought. This is no longer accepted as true since it is equally evident today that without a physical brain thought appears unlikely to occur. Plato thought that the only way to explain how people come to know things is that they are remembering the knowledge implanted in their souls when the souls were in the realm of pure thought and eternal forms before entering into the body after which they forgot as they became confused by physical emotions an feelings and limited experiences through the senses. This is no longer accepted as the best explanation of how people come to have knowledge. None the less, Plato is credited with being the first human to attempt to set out any sort of a proof that humans had souls and that they survived the death of the body and that they were immortal. He offered these arguments in the Dialogue he wrote titled the Phaedo

Descartes also believed that the soul existed prior to and separate from the body (see Meditation II of **Meditations on First Philosophy**) and so was immortal. In his view all of reality consisted of two very different substances: matter or the physical and spirit or the non-physical. The physical was what would be extended in time and space and the non-physical would not be so characterized. For Descartes the soul of a human exists prior to and separate from the body. His proof consisted of argumentation that has been seriously criticized and rejected. He thought that if he could in some form demonstrate that humans can prove that they exist without first proving that they have physical bodies then that would prove that they did not need a physical body in order to exist. He thought that his famous claim that " I think therefore I am" established not just that he existed but that he existed without a body as a "thinking thing". A "thinking thing" is a thing that thinks and by that would be included: imagining, conceiving, hoping, dreaming, desiring, fearing, conjecturing, reasoning, remembering and more. For him a "thinking thing" needed no physical parts to do what it does. Modern science has established that there is no evidence of humans that are without a physical body and its brain. There is no evidence that thought is possible without a brain. There is much evidence that what has been associated with Descartes' "thinking thing" is now explained solely in terms of the brain and how the brain is physically structured and the functioning of the brain.

(NOTE: You must read only those linked materials that are preceded by the capitalized word **READ.**)

READ Wikipedia on this dualism

Variations on Dualism

A. **Interactionism** - minds and bodies exist and interact in some way

B. **Epiphenomenalism** - body acts on mind but minds do NOT act on bodies

C. **Double Aspect Theory**-there is one substance with two aspects (mind/body)

D**. Parallelism** -minds and bodies exist in separate dimensions and are coordinated

i. Pre-Established Harmony-minds and bodies are set in motion and coordinated from the beginning of time by a deity that creates the universe

ii. Occasionalism- on the occasion of the mind making a decision the body is moved by the creator (deity) to do whatever the mind has decided to make the body do.

A. Interactionism: History and Critics **René Descartes to William James by Robert H. Wozniak**

READ:

I. RENÉ DESCARTES AND THE LEGACY OF MIND/BODY DUALISM

1. René Descartes

2. The 17th Century: Reaction to the Dualism of Mind and Body

3. The 18th Century: Mind, Matter, and Monism

4. The 19th Century: Mind and Brain

5. Mind, Brain, and Adaptation: the Localization of Cerebral Function

6. Trance and Trauma: Functional Nervous Disorders and the Subconscious Mind

II. THE RISE OF EXPERIMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY

7. The 17th and 18th Centuries: The Epistemology of Mind

8. The 19th Century: The Epistemology of the Nervous System

9. Mind, Brain, and the Experimental Psychology of Consciousness

III. PSYCHOLOGY IN AMERICA

1. Mind, Body, and Culture: American Psychology before William James
2. Biological Consciousness and the Experience of the Transcendent: William James and American Functional Psychology By Eugene Taylor, Harvard University Medical School

Definitions of DUALISM

READ Philosophy Dictionary on Dualism

1.Non-physical entities do not have spatial properties, so there is no need to locate them in physical space. Such entities have there own metaphysical laws to follow. God. Mind, spirit, souls all operate within that realm.

Objection: What are those laws and how do they account for the results in the physical universe?

2. Dualists claim that:

a. substances do not need to be similar in order to interact. b.There is also ample evidence that they do interact.

Objections: a) It was the dualists who established that the two substances were so different that they could not interact. The source of the problem is the dualist distinctions of the two different substances!

b) the evidence for interact could be explained in terms of brain actions alone! The obviousness of one's causing one's body to move by an act of the mind is not as obvious as it seems.

3.The mind may not add energy to a closed system, it may be simply redirecting the energy already present.

Objection: How does the mind affect the redirection if the mind is not itself made of energy or matter?

4.Dualists claim there is a compelling reason to hold that there are two substances and not just one. They claim it is needed to account for all phenomena of human experience including consciousness.

Objection: The monists claim that it is not necessary at all and that they have a satisfactory explanation of such phenomena.

Please do view these two VIDEO from QualiaSoup on **Substance Dualism - a good philosophical overview of the idea and**

problems with it.

Substance Dualism Pt 1: (10:45)

Substance Dualism Pt 2: (10:48)

The Other Variations on Mind Body Dualism

Here are some of the dualists' responses to these points and objections to them or criticisms of them.

A. **Interactionism** - minds and bodies exist and interact in some way (covered above)

B. Epiphenomenalism - body acts on mind but minds do NOT act on bodies

The Theory of William James (covered above)

C. Double Aspect Theory-there is one substance with two aspects (mind/body)

The Theory of Spinoza criticized as equating to Interactionism

Objection: The two aspects of the one substance are either illusory or if real then there is the dualism issue once again as to how they are to interact.

D. **Parallelism -**minds and bodies exist in separate dimensions and are coordinated

i. **PRE ESTABLISHED HARMONY**-minds and bodies are set in motion and coordinated from the beginning of time by a deity that creates the universe.

Objection: This theory seriously challenges notions of human freedom.

ii. **OCCASSIONALISM -** on the occasion of the mind making a decision the body is moved by the creator (deity) to do whatever the mind has decided to make the body do.

When a person wills to move a finger, that serves as the occasion for God to move the finger; when an object suddenly appears in a person's field of view, that serves as the occasion for God to produce a visual perception in the person's mind.

Objection: This theory would make God an accomplice in every evil act.

Each attempt to defend the **dualism** of MIND and BODY meets with objections.

If you want to take the dualist position that we have both a physical and non-physical mind that position needs to be defended with reasoning and evidence and not merely made to rest on FAITH BASED CLAIM. In Philosophy it must be supported by reasoning and evidence. There must be both the exposition of the problem with the dualist claim and its solution. The dualist position creates the mind body problem! What is needed is a response to all the criticisms of the dualist position? Remember it is the one position that creates the problem. A dualist needs to account for all the evidence that disproves dualism and then needs to bridge the gap between the non-physical and the physical and solve the problem of interaction.

Dualists also nee to be aware that there is no claim about what a non-physical mind does that has not been demonstrated to be the result of BRAIN activity and functioning. Neuroscience discredits the claim of a non-physical mind. What evidence is offered by contemporary dualists of the existence of a non-physical mind?

Mind refers to the aspects of intellect and consciousness manifested as combinations of thought, perception, memory, emotion, will and imagination, including all of the brain's conscious and unconscious cognitive processes. "Mind" is often used to refer especially to the thought processes of reason. Subjectively, mind manifests itself as a stream of consciousness. READ http://en.Wikipedia.org/wiki/Mind

If this is the definition of mind then reflexes, controlled responses, survival instincts are not part of the mind but actually a part of the brain. http://en.Wikipedia.org/wiki/Brain

Here is another view of the problem.

So, with dualism comes a number of problems. The most conspicuous and troublesome are:

1. Where does the interaction take place?
2. How does the interaction take place?
3. The idea of the mental causing the physical to act appears to violate the principle of the conservation of energy
4. The idea of two realities appears to violate Ockam's Razor, the principle of Simplicity, which holds that if there is no need to postulate additional entities one should avoid doing so..

Variations

There are two variations on dualism with regard to the Mind Body Problem. Each involves the agency of an all powerful deity. IF there is no logically valid and sound proof for the existence of such a deity that is a problem.

READ OCCASSIONALISM

With Occasionalism the deity becomes an accomplice in all manner of heinous actions of humans.

READ PRE ESTABLISHED HARMONY

With Pre-Established Harmony the existence of Free Will in humans becomes a problem is all human actions have been predetermined from the beginning of time.

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4.5.4: Monism- Idealism

Metaphysical view:

Things are composed of 1. sensible properties and 2. matter

Matter:

Matter was seen as necessary for differentiating one object from another.

Suppose you had two objects with the same properties --

· a list of the properties of both would be identical.

· how would you know that you had two objects?

Matter itself had no properties of it's own.

Problem with Matter:

According to Berkeley - once you took away all of the sensible properties of a thing, you should be left with the bare matter. But, if it has no properties of it's own, how would you know it? This led him to conclude that a thing is nothing more than its sensible properties.

Things are nothing but their properties:

Consider a bucket of water at room temperature.

Hold your right hand in another pail of hot water, your left hand in a pail of cold water.

After a few minutes, place both hands in the bucket of room temp water.

How does the water feel to the right hand?

How does the water feel to the left hand?

Aha! What can we conclude from this experiment?

The "hotness" or "coolness" of the water is not in the water.

So where is the sensation of "hotness" or "coolness" existing?

In our Minds?

Idealism:

·If the sensible properties of things exist in the mind (not in the things themselves).

·and things are nothing more than bundles of sensible properties, then.....

· Things must exist in the mind only (as ideas).

Problems:

Similarity of perception (of objects): Why do things seem the same to all of us?

Persistence of objects: Do things continue to exist when no one is perceiving them?

Problem of Other Minds: How do I know other minds exist?

Similarity of Perception:

Why do things appear the same to all of us if they are just bundles of ideas in our (individual) minds?

Response 1 - They might not - the wall may be "blue" because we have all been taught to call it that, not because it really is "blue "

Persistence of Objects:

Do things continue to exist when no one is looking at them?

Does the floor outside the room still exist?

Does your car still exist in the parking lot?

Response 1:

Well, someone is out there right now "seeing" it - this keeps it in existence until I get back.

But what if no one is out there right now?

Response 2:

Someone always is "seeing" all the things in the world at once.

Couldn't that be God?

Persistence of Objects and Similarity of Perceptions

Both can be explained by positing an All-knowing (All-seeing) God.

Idealists use God to explain how these things continue to exist.

They are as they are because God perceives them.

The Problem of Other Minds:

Dualist response -

best explanation for what we see in the behavior of others

Biological similarity between bodies makes it even stronger.

But - In Idealism there is no such physical similarity! Only way to connect the two is to posit some sort of spiritual similarity.

Conclusion:

Because of the lack of evidence for other minds, and because of the (supposed) lack of any perceptive faculty by which we can know God (who is needed to solve other problems) Idealism will not work as an explanation of how MIND and BODY interact.

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4.5.5: Monism- Materialism

So now we arrive at the real challenge to the dualist view and the solution to the Mind-Body Problem that is attracting more and more adherents. In this view there are no minds at all. At least there are no minds separate from the brain. There are no non-physical entities. The mental activities are accounted for in terms of the brain and what it does. There are a variety of approaches to explaining the MIND in terms of the BRAIN. This approach is a form of monism for it claims or assumes that there is but one substance: matter. It is a physicalism.

(NOTE: You must read only those linked materials that are preceded by the capitalized word READ.)

There will be a great deal of material here. It is put here to challenge your belief that you have a mind. More and more people are coming to think differently. The belief in a mind has been held by so many and for so long that it takes some doing to demonstrate that perhaps it just is not true!

The claim is made that there is no non-physical mind. All that we do and experience is accounted for in physical terms. When the day comes that humans interact with a very well made and very complex computer, perhaps in the form of a human body, a robot-android, and the humans can not tell that it is a silicon based form of activity then humans will realize that they are not really different from the robot. Humans are a carbon-based life form. The android-robot will be a silicon-based life form. If humans and androids both act alike and speak of "feelings" and "thoughts" and so forth then humans will know that the mind is just another name for the physical brain. So, the views presented here will quickly get to the cases of computers and robots as a means of offering proof of the non-existence of a non-physical mind.

What is there really that you or a human being does that indicates that they have this non-physical entity associated with the behavior. Robots can be programmed to speak, to write, to calculate, to learn and even to make other robots (first step successful in the year 2000). Robots, androids, can be made to speak of feelings and to report that when for example fluid intake over 4 hours drops below 50cc to say, "I'm thirsty" or some other appropriate phrase. The android could be programmed to say what the humans say when fluid intake drops to a low point. Is there any thing more to "feeling thirsty" than that? As the behaviorist, B.F. Skinner, claims, we know that someone is thirsty because they drink. We should not think that they drink because they are thirsty. Neurologists have been busy at work identifying the locations in the brain responsible for memory, speech, creativity and motor control as well as anger, depression and even love, both the physical attraction stage and the "romantic" stage. There have been numerous examples of people who have had their basic behavior change as a result of brain injuries , illnesses and chemical imbalances. With all of this mounting evidence there arte many people who believe that there are NO NON-PHYSICAL MINDS , that we have only BRAINS.

Variations on the Materialist Position

- **A. Behaviorism**
- **B. Logical behaviorism**
- **C. Semantic behaviorism**
- **D. Folklore**
- **E. Functionalism**
- **F. Structuralism**

A brief explanation of each: more details will be supplied below.

A. Behaviorism- Some psychologists believe that they can account for all of human behavior in terms of operant conditioning. All that a human does (including ideas and feelings) are behaviors that can be explained in terms of basic physical factors:

1. Genetic Inheritance
2. Physical Drives
3. Individual human history of interactions
4. Conditioning-learned behavior patterns

There is no essential difference between a human and any other mammal. Humans use language according to what they were reinforced for saying or writing. There is no mind. There is only the brain as with any other mammal. Human thought is simply brain behavior (activity) that has been learned (reinforced) and associated with some stimuli and evoking some response.

B. Logical behaviorism- The word "MIND" is the result of a mistake, an error in logic. If a person arrived on the campus of a large college or university and asked someone in the parking lot, "Where is the college?" That person might point out one building after another saying something like: "Well that's the administration building over there. That's the gym building way down there. That's the new science building over there." Then the visitor interjects with " No, I want to know where is the college?" Well the visitor is making the mistake of thinking that the college is a place as are the buildings instead of the college being a name for the entire collection of buildings, programs, instructors, students etc.. The visitor is making an error. Well, in like manner the word MIND has been mistaken for a THING when it is just a NAME for a collection of activities of the brain.

C. Semantic behaviorism-Holders of this view believe that the word MIND has been improperly associated with the existence of an entity that exists apart from the body, the brain. Those who speak of the mind as if it where a non-physical entity have been reinforced in this inappropriate behavior and incorrect association.

D. Folklore- All talk of the MIND as distinct from the brain originates from an earlier time when people were not as well informed as we are today. Most people have had to abandon thinking of many things that were part of the old folklores:

1. the earth is flat
2. the earth is at the center of the universe
3. the sun moves
4. the moon is a goddess
5. lightning is sent by superhuman beings from above

Well, now that more is known of brain functioning and structure, humans will need to abandon all talk of the mind as a non-physical entity.

E. Functionalism- The MIND is really the name given to the collection of brain functions. See more below.

F. Structuralism- The MIND is a name given to a collection of brain structures. Each mental event is accounted for in terms of the various arrangements and operations of parts of the brain.

Here are two overviews and they shall be followed by more detailed presentations on the various materialist positions.

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" **Materialism" by H. Elliot**

Another form of Monism: only one kind of substance in the universe and only material substance exists - there is no non-physical substance. This view had important implications for existence of God, soul, angels etc..

3 Main points:

1. Uniformity of (physical) Laws
2. Denial that there is “intelligent” purpose
3. Denial of non-physical entities

Uniformity of Law

Physical Laws are descriptive: They don’t say how it ought to be, but rather they describe how things actually behave. Physical Laws describe a universe which operates according to regular, uniform laws. 1. Every event has a cause 2. Same causes under same conditions get same effects.

Denial of Intelligent Purpose:

One challenge to materialism is that it must be able to explain “intentionality” of actions. Elliot meets the challenge by denying that any action is intentional -

- acts can serve a purpose - like blinking reflex
- but acts occur because the laws of physics hold true - not because they are directed by someone.

Denial of Non-Physical entities:

Where are they? Can we spot such things?

Why do we need to suppose they exist?

Non-physical entities are proposed out of ignorance of the true nature of things.

Once we realize that there are only physical causes for things, we will look for (and find) just those sorts of causes.

Summation:

Uniformity of Law establishes that:

·every event has a cause

Denial of "intelligent" purpose establishes:

- that every cause/effect relationship depends on another cause/effect relationship.

Denial of non-physical entities establishes:

- that the only causes of events are physical.

Consequences:

- There is no "Ghost in the machine" (the non-physical MIND), there is only the machine.
- We are organic machines, nothing more, nothing less.
- This does not minimize the nature of the human brain ,taken as a machine it is still the best and most efficient machine of its type.

Brain as Machine:

The fastest computers:

Cray II (Cray Technologies) - .

- 8 teraflops

“Connectionist Machine”

- 2 teraflops (theoretical speed - too expensive to build)

All of the above use an architecture known as “Massive Parallel Processing”

Human Brain

- 60 teraflops - (estimated)

Brain as Machine:

The mere act of catching an object thrown to us requires an enormous amount of processing power and speed.

- Calculate trajectory
- Moving to intercept object on its trajectory
- Coordinating grasping motions along with recovery from motion in 3 dimensional space.

So what do we do with mentalistic terms?

Thought = a particular brain process

Mind = our collective awareness of our own brain processes

Memory = a physical process of information storage and retrieval

Dreaming = testing and establishing relationships between information stored in memory.

Conclusions:

- Materialism does not allow for spiritual entities:
- NO God, soul, angels or devils.

Problem is,

- Idealism may lead us into a Radical Solipsism: the view that I am the only being in the world
- Yet, Dualism cannot explain how the mind and body interact.

Other Conclusions:

If we as humans are just a form of organic machine, then:

- Is it possible to construct a non-organic machine which can do the same things?
- Could we create an artifact which was intelligent?
- This will require that we know what intelligence is!
- It will also require that we understand how it is that humans are intelligent!

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READ: MIND as IDENTICAL to the BRAIN

Physicalism - The view that everything that is real is, in some sense, really physical.

As used in the philosophy of science, physicalism is the view that all factual knowledge can be formulated as a statement about physical objects and activities. Thus, the language of science can be reduced to third person descriptions.

The positivists defined the physical as that which can be described in the concepts of a language with an intersubjective observation basis. This could be called unity of science physicalism. It is the primary meaning of physicalism in the philosophy of science. Another type of physicalism might be called causal physicalism, the view that all causes are physical causes.

There is a lot of confusion in the philosophy of mind literature stemming from a tendency to take physicalism and materialism to be interchangeable.

Suggested Readings: Armstrong's Materialist Theory of Mind The Nature of Mind and Other Essays. Cornell University Press (1981). [ISBN 0801413532]

EVIDENCE in support of Materialist Position: for examples of experiments to support the claim that thoughts and images are simply physical actions in a physical brain see this: (1) reading ideas in a brain and (2) implanting images and ideas into a brain see these experiments

VIDEO: Consciousness: How the Brain Creates the Mind by Sid Koulder cognitive neuroscientist neuro-biological basis for consciousness presentation at at NYUAD conference 74 minutes

VIDEO: brain hallucinates your conscious reality by neuroscientist Anil Seth 17 minutes

His position is that as result of evolution the brain constructs predictive perceptions for survival of the sentient being.

Opposing position of post Materialist Science

VIDEO: Is Consciousness More than the Brain? | Interview with Dr. Gary Schwartz,Univ of Arizona 14 minutes

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FUNCTIONALISM

Definition:

What is FUNCTIONALISM? By Ned Block

The mind is what the brain does; we are (very sophisticated) biological machines.

According to functionalism, 'Mind' refers to the brain's activity of thinking; the MIND is not a special kind of thing or substance--not a spiritual thing or a physical thing--but rather a certain kind of activity that is carried out by a physical thing, in the case of humans, by the brain.

ANALOGY #1: Other Bodily Functions

Digestion is what the stomach does. Circulating the blood is what the heart does. Cleansing the blood is what the kidneys do. Thinking is what the brain does.

Some machines can do the job of our organs when they fail. Artificial organs are growing more common (cornea implants, kidney machines, artificial hearts). If thinking is simply the function performed by the brain, it might some day be possible to replace parts of the brain (maybe even the whole brain!) with artificial parts.

But what does the Brain do?

The brain processes information gathered by the senses and stored in memory. The outputs of this processing include the things we say, think and do. In effect, thinking is a form of computation. The mind is to the brain as software is to hardware.

Two important considerations have added plausibility to this view of the mind.

1. Computers can be made of almost anything.

In principle, it is possible to build a computer out of almost anything. Early electronic computers were made with vacuum tubes. Current computers are made with transistors and silicon chips. But any device that can be used to "read" and "write" from a "tape" on which are symbols that represent "1's" and "0's" can be used to build a computer. In 1833 Charles Babbage conceived a design for a mechanical computer made from interlocking gears and levers. He called his computer "the Analytical Engine." The problem with using mechanical components is that computers made from them perform their computations so slowly, they are practically useless.

Nature, however, found a way to build a computer using biological components, without silicon chips and transistors. We call it the brain.

2. Levels of Explanation or What Do Psychologists Study Anyway?

Psychology started out as the study of the mind, and by "mind," most early psychologists meant something like the Cartesian soul. When souls fell from fashion, psychologists faced a problem: If there are no souls, and if neurologists study brains, what's left for psychologists to study?

When Behaviorism was "in" psychology became the study of behavior. But now Behaviorism is "out," so what is psychology the science of? Answer: Psychology is now the study of cognitive and other processes carried on in the brain.

Levels of Explanation in Computers and the Brain

Computers

Physical level: From one point of view (the engineer's) all that is going on in a computer is a series of electronic changes.

Design Level: From another point of view (the programmer's) the machine is running a program.

Commonsense Level: From our point of view (the user) the computer is word processing or solving an equation.

Brains

Physical level: From one point of view (the neuro-biologist's) all that is going on in a brain is a series of chemical changes.

Design Level: From another point of view (the psychologist's) the brain is running a program.

Commonsense Level: From our point of view (the user) the brain is thinking.

Thus, most psychologists are functionalists, the MIND is to the BRAIN as a PROGRAM is to a COMPUTER.

Is a Thinking Computer a Possible Thing?

Since both computers and brains are computational/information processing devices, it should be possible, in principle, to build a computer that thinks.

OBJECTION 1: It is impossible to build a computer that can do X. (where X = your favorite example, write a poem, tell a joke, discover a new theory, etc.)

Three step recipe for building a computer that can do X.

Step 1: Figure out how we do X, or alternatively, how anything at all could do X, and write out a detailed explanation of your discovery.

Step 2: Convert the detailed explanation from Step 1 into an algorithm or program.

Step 3: Load the program onto a computer and run it.

Note: The hard part is step 1, not step 2! It's not that a computer could never do X, it's just that we aren't yet smart enough to figure out how we, or anything at all, could manage to do X.

OBJECTION 2: Computers are predictable. Humans are not.

False. Even for relatively simple computers, like the personal computers we use every day, it is practically impossible to predict what they will do under all circumstances. That's why program "bugs" are so hard to prevent, and sometimes hard to eliminate.

Conversely, many of the things that humans do are very predictable. We are creatures of habit and daily routines. The people who know you best can predict the clothes you like, the food you eat, what you do to relax, even what you are likely to say next, etc., etc.

OBJECTION 3: A computer can only do what it is programmed to do. We aren't programmed; we decide what we will do.

Analogy

Computer Program + Input History = What the computer will do next.

Genetic Make-up + Experience = What you will do next.

Your behavior is the product of the Nature of your genes and the Nurture of your experience. The computer's behavior is the product of the Nature of its program and the Nurture of its input. So what's the difference?

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So there are those who think that humans are just very complex organic machines, that humans are not essentially different from a organic computing device! When a computer is made that acts so much like a human that most people would not be able to tell that it was a computer then we shall know that humans do not have a non-physical mind or a non-physical soul but that we are hydro-carbon life forms that have complex information processing units (Brains) that are capable of behavior indicating awareness.

There are numerous works of science fiction and movies and television series that have had robots in human form, **androids.** These robots or thinking machines have been mistaken for being human or have acquired so many human traits as to be deemed worthy of being accorded human rights! e.g.,

- **Data** on ***Star Trek: The Next Generation***
- Several androids , including **Bishop,** in the ***Alien*** Series of Movies
- **Gadget from *Short Circuit***
- Robot in ***Terminator***

Well ,when the day actually arrives that such machines have been created and do function in that manner as to be mistaken for being human, thinkers such as Alan Turing believe we will have all the evidence that we would need that we have no non-physical minds.

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Other Bodies, Other Minds: A Machine Incarnation of an Old Philosophical Problem

Harnad, S. (1991) "Other bodies, Other minds: A machine incarnation of an old philosophical problem", *Minds and Machines* **1**: 43-54.

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B. Mind –Brain Resources

THE TURING TEST

Alan Turing was the Philosopher and Mathematician who thought of the Test which is named after him. Turing held that computers would in time be programmed to acquire abilities rivaling human intelligence. As part of his argument Turing put forward the idea of an 'imitation game', in which a human being and a computer would be interrogated under conditions where the interrogator would not know which was which, the communication being entirely by textual messages. Turing argued that if the interrogator could not distinguish them by questioning, then it would be unreasonable not to call the computer intelligent. Turing's 'imitation game' is now usually called 'the Turing test' for intelligence. **READ:** Turing's 'imitation game'_Prize for closest candidate to pass the test

You are invited to take a simple form of the test by going to this site to interact with the award winning program for both 2000 and 2001. INTERACT with ALICE Bot

Alan Turing HOMEPAGE:

THE TURING TEST IS NOT A TRICK: TURING INDISTINGUISHABILITY IS A SCIENTIFIC CRITERION

by Stevan Harnad
Artificial Intelligence Information

This page contains a directory of AI organisations and associations around the world. It is maintained by Amruth N. Kumar (amruth@ramapo.edu).

History of Artificial Intelligence and much more!!

DICTIONARY of PHILOSOPHY Of MIND

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Here are some other variations on the materialist approach.

The New Materialism: Francis Crick

Contrary to the assumptions of cognitive scientists, philosophers, and others, Francis Crick, co-discoverer of the structure of DNA, believes that one cannot achieve true understanding of consciousness or any other mental phenomenon by treating the brain as a black box. Only by examining neurons and the interactions between them could scientists create truly scientific models of consciousness, models analogous to those that explain transmission of genetic information by DNA.

He writes in his 1994 book *The Astonishing Hypothesis: The Scientific Search for the Soul*, "Your joys and your sorrows, your memories and your ambitions, your sense of personal identity and free will, are in fact no more that the behavior of a vast assembly of nerve cells and their associated molecules." This is not a new idea, it is materialism. What makes Crick's argument so notable is that advances in neuroscience are showing that it is not too soon to start examining the scientific basis of consciousness. He is the person most responsible for the recent interest in consciousness.

Some philosophers feel that Crick is sidestepping the philosophical aspects of consciousness and the subjective nature of experience. He points out that life once seemed impossibly complex--before the discovery of DNA's structure revealed how information is passed from one generation to another. He believes that much of the mystery veiling the mind will evaporate once scientists learn more about how the brain works.

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Not everyone agrees with Turing's view. John Searle is one that argues that such a view would not necessarily establish the non-existence of the non-physical mind. Searle does not want to equate mind with brain functioning. John Searle has an interesting critique of this approach to the Mind Body Problem.

VIDEOS of

The Chinese Room Experiment

John Searle and THE CHINESE ROOM

Jason Zarri's critique of John Searle's Chinese Room Argument, as read by Philosobot.

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Summary by : Omonia Vinieris (2002)

Searle's Chinese Room Experiment

Philosopher John Searle counters the attribution of cognitive states to computers as promoters of AI (Artificial Intelligence) propose that computers essentially have minds. Through experimentation attesting that machines, or computers, cannot match human intelligence, Searle attempts to disprove cognition of these computational apparati. Despite their successful aping of human behavior, computers do not have possession of beliefs or convictions and consciousness, nor do they hold the power to desire (intentionality). In order to match the functions of the human brain, first they must be bestowed causal capacities. Searle argues that computers are simply prearranged exploiters of syntax and these attributes are not akin to those which are adequate to generate intentionality.

The Chinese Room experiment would work as follows: Imagine that you are merely a native speaker of English and you have no multilingual endowment by any means. Thus, you have no inkling of spoken or written Chinese. You are asked to enter a room alone where a set of English instructions and consignments of Chinese writing are made available to you. Upon following the instructions given to you, you compute and perform operations that enable you to ultimately write messages in Chinese. Certainly, you are unable to decipher and make sense out of the logographic lexis that you have put in writing, but you progressively familiarize yourself with this mechanical process of output and become efficient. Now and again, you slide your output in Chinese under the door. Apparently to those outside of the room, you are a fluent Chinese speaker with intellectual capacity of the Chinese tongue as they peruse your responses. However, this is far from the truth. All you are doing is following instructions accordingly, and actually have no conception of Chinese, although you may have subsequently become acquainted with the process of responding in this language foreign to you. According to Searle, you function very much in the manner that a computer functions. This lack of understanding on your part provides evidence that computers do not truly understand Chinese seeing as they operate this way as well. They are just senseless mechanical operators and have no perception, awareness of what they are employing. They also do not have any intentions behind their operations because they are unaware and hence are oblivious to the intentionality and consciousness of their productivity.

There are many rejoinders to Searle's Chinese Room experiment, but two of the most common are the *systems* and *robot replies*.

The *systems reply* basically states that although the individual itself in the room may not understand Chinese, the system in its entirety (the individual, the instructions, the batches of Chinese writing, etc.) does wholly grasp the language. Searle responds that if the individual were to memorize the operations of each and every part of the system, and consequently function as a whole system, then it would still be unable to understand Chinese. Rather the individual would become very adept at the entire process. The *robot reply* maintains that the individual's deficiency of understanding originates from its isolation from reality where essential interaction with its surroundings must occur in order to make sense of the symbols it processes. If a mobile robot could, in fact, be released into the world and intermingle with Chinese speakers it would appropriately understand their tongue. Searle refutes this by asserting that whether an individual is isolated in a room or put inside a robot that it still could not comprehend Chinese as it performs the same operations. He further adds that supporters of AI in accordance with the *robot reply* unconsciously admit to their erroneous premise that suggests cognition is analogous to the manipulation of symbols because they contend that the robot must not be inaccessible to experiences in order to be cognizant of its output.

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John Searle '**s Critique of Artificial Intelligence (AI)** using Consciousness and Intentionality can be seen at these sites:

John Searle's **Chinese Room Thought Experiment:**

Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy

READ: John Searle 's Papers:

On the Problem of Consciousness
On Is the Brain a Digital Computer?

Other papers on Searle and AI

Hayes, P., Harnad, S., Perlis, D. & Block, N. Virtual Symposium on Virtual Mind.

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A critique of the Chinese Room Experiment clarifying what it does and does not prove:

Minds, Machines and Searle **by** Stevan Harnad

Minds, Machines and Searle 2: What's Right and Wrong About the Chinese Room Argument **by** Stevan Harnad

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VIEW: The mind-body problem: problem of consciousness and intentionality

FOLK PSYCHOLOGY THEORY

Paul Churchland Cognitive Scientist, American

Churchland argues that our everyday, commonsense view of psychological phenomena, which conceives of thought in terms of propositional attitudes such as beliefs and desires, is an empirical "folk" theory. He calls this theory "folk psychology" and argues that it is inadequate as an empirical (scientific) theory and therefore ought to be rejected. He concludes from this that the postulated entities of folk psychology, namely propositional attitudes such as beliefs and desires, do not exist.

Churchland argues that the normative function of folk psychology could just as well be played by another theory with different categories for describing the content of our mental lives. He admits that what the theory of cognition that will eventually emerge from neuroscience will look like is a matter of pure speculation, but insists that given the current state of our knowledge it is highly unlikely that the categories of folk psychology will play any part in it

Churchland website:

Articles about Churchland

·**Do Seated Souls Experience Slumberous Sensations? : A Review of *The Engine of Reason, The Seat of the Soul* by Paul Churchland at**

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The New Epiphenomenalism: **Daniel Dennett:**

A philosopher at Tufts University, is a forceful proponent of the idea that consciousness is "no big deal." He claims that it does not exist except in the eye of the beholder.

Scientists have shown that information coming into the brain is broken down into separate processing streams. But no one has yet found any "place" where all the information comes together, presenting a whole picture of what is being felt or seen or experienced. The temptation, he said, is to believe that the information is transduced by consciousness. But it is entirely possible that the brain's networks can assume all the roles of an inner boss. Mental contents become conscious by winning a competition against other mental contents, Dennett says. No more is needed. Consciousness is an epiphenomenon, a mere side-effect.

Daniel Dennett website:

Center for Cognitive Studies, Tufts University:

Articles by Prof Dennent:

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Lacking the Machinery: Colin McGinn

There are those who argue that people can never understand consciousness. The mystery is too deep. Colin McGinn, a philosopher from Rutgers University, argues that because our brains are products of evolution, they have cognitive limitations. Just as rats and monkeys cannot even conceive of quantum mechanics, humans may be prohibited from understanding certain aspects of existence, such as the relation between mind and matter. He says that for humans to grasp how subjective experience arises from matter might be like "slugs trying to do Freudian psychoanalysis--they just don't have the conceptual equipment." Consciousness, in other words, may remain forever beyond human understanding.

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Quantum Consciousness: Roger Penrose

One form of dualism involves the mysteries of quantum mechanics. Roger Penrose from the University of Oxford argues that consciousness is the link between the quantum world, in which a single object can exist in two places at the same time, and the so-called classical world of familiar objects where this cannot happen. Speculation that quantum mechanics and consciousness are linked is based on the principle that the act of measurement--which ultimately involves a conscious observer--has an effect on quantum events.

Moreover, with Stuart Hameroff of the University of Arizona, he has proposed a theory that the switch from quantum to classical states occurs inside certain proteins call microtubules. The brain's microtubules, they argue, are ideally situated to perform this transformation, producing "occasions of experience" that with the flow of time give rise to stream of consciousness thought.

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The Hard Problem: David Chalmers

To explain this concept, David Chalmers, a philosopher at the University of California Santa Cruz, first describes the so-called easy problems of consciousness, the sorts of questions being tackled in neuroscience laboratories around the world: How does sensory information get integrated in the brain? How do we see and reach out for an object? How are we able to verbalize our internal states and report what we are doing or feeling?

Chalmers does not contend that these problems are trivial. He claims that they may take 100 years to solve, but that progress is being made.

He phrases the hard problem as this: What is the nature of subjective experience? Why do we have vividly felt experiences of the world?

Thus far, nothing in physics or chemistry or biology can explain these subjective feelings, Chalmers says. "What really happens when you see the deep red of a sunset or hear the haunting sound of a distant oboe, feel the agony of intense pain, the sparkle of happiness or meditative quality of a moment lost in thought?" he asks. "It is these phenomena, often called qualia, that pose the deep mystery of consciousness."

According to Chalmers, scientists need to come up with new fundamental laws of nature. Physicists postulate that certain properties--gravity, space-time, electromagnetism- are basic to any understanding of the universe, he said. His approach is to think of conscious experience itself as a fundamental property of the universe. Thus the world has two kinds of information, one physical, one experiential. The challenge is to make theoretical connections between physical processes and conscious experience.

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VLSI Models of Neural Systems

Semiconductor technology is advancing to the point where devices will have the complexity that is required to solve lower level perception tasks. The level of complexity required for higher cortical processing is still years away. This technology has made possible a new discipline--synthetic neurobiology. The thesis of this discipline is that it is not possible, even in principle, to claim a full understanding of a system unless one is able to build one that functions properly. This principle is already well accepted in molecular biology and more recently in genetics.

Because biological systems generate on very different principles than do conventional systems, the ability to synthesize models of biological function results in a new engineering discipline. Systems using this new discipline have demonstrated real-time operation requiring far less power consumption than digital systems performing the same function. An example of this work can be seen in the labs of Carver Mead and Cristof Koch at Caltech.

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Silicon Brains and Computational Neuroengineering

Almost everyday, surprising discoveries about the organization and mechanisms of nervous systems are being reported. The VLSI revolution has provided computer science with unprecedented tools to transform what we know about the brain into silicon. Silicon retinas and cochleas have already been designed and manufactured. Although it is nearly impossible to predict future technological breakthroughs, ever more sophisticated neuroengineering is in the offing. Neural networks, composed of silicon neurons, could be used to emulate intelligent circuits in the brain. These simulations could be used to investigate mechanisms of learning, memory, and cognition, and perhaps consciousness. Some scientists speculate that consciousness is some combination of short-term memory and attention, two neural processes that could conceivably be modeled by silicon networks. If scientists could simulate artificial consciousness (not to be confused with artificial intelligence), perhaps they can observe it, if not understand it.

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Computational Neuroscience and Reverse Engineering the Human Brain

Computational neuroscience is the study of how the brain represents and the world and how it computes. Being able to model the brain's neural circuits by computer is essential in finding out how neurons interact with each other to produce complex effects. Such effects include segregating a figure from its background and recognizing an object from different angles.

Neuroscience contributes three main ingredients to this effort: anatomical parameters, physiological parameters, and clues to the function of the human biological neural network and its computational mode of operation in executing that function.

Neural networks provide neurobiologists with a working model of the nervous system. This type of collaboration between computer modeling and neuroscience with insights into mixed modality, multiplexing, and understanding attention selectivity.

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Silicon Neurons

Neurons in the living body have electrical and chemical mechanisms that let them act together to represent and respond to behaviorally significant physical events. Over time, neurons have learned to manipulate how their membrane conducts various ions to produce electrical events that form a basis for computation.

Neuroscientists are learning about neural computation through reverse engineering. They combine experimental neuroscience with neuromorphic systems made from analog CMOS VLSI technology. Fortunately, the physical properties of analog CMOS are similar to those governing the electrical behavior of neurons and neural systems; therefore, analog CMOS is a convenient medium for building neuromorphic systems.The silicon neuron can emulate the behavior of any particular neuron in the nervous system simply by setting several parameters. Most of the cutting edge work on silicon neurons has been done in the lab of Rodney Douglas and Misha Mahowald.

People with online papers in philosophy Compiled by David Chalmers and another listing here

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Is consciousness something that is unique to organic life forms?

CONSCIOUSNESS: AN AFTERTHOUGHT by Stevan Harnad

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BRAIN as the basis for morality

Read about the book and theory of **The Ethical Brain b**y Michael Gazzaniga

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ROBOTS ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE and the EMERGENCE of CONSCIOUSNESS --contributions from Gabriella Pavesi and Justin Pierce (2012)

I – Robots==for examples of current robots, androids and AI see items here

"If every tool, when ordered, or even of its own accord, could do the work that befits it... then there would be no need either of apprentices for the master workers or of slaves for the lords." This is a quotation from philosopher Aristotle, and is dated back to 320 BC. Historically, the origins and primordial ideas for the development of "working machines" was the very wish to facilitate and simplify labor and work that were once developed only by men. Even though the robotic concept - as of androids - is considerably new, ideas on the development of robots and automata can be dated back to the 13th century.

Robots that make use of Artificial Intelligence started being built back in the 60's, and today it has reached stages as, for example, Androids that look like their creators (Geminoids) or the computer program who defeated all the major winners of the show "Jeopardy!".

As technology grows by minute, and humans face the possibility of sharing "space" with machines that will walk, look, talk, and even think and "feel" like them, many ethical and moral issues arise: what would their "human rights" be? Are they allowed to any "humanity", after all, they are not humans? Are we safe? Can they turn against humans? And even: could technology reach a point where turning a robot off would mean "killing" it?

II – Current state of Robots==for examples of current robots, androids and AI see items here

On the following videos, we can find endless examples of the achievements of robotics, with Robots that replicate human expressions and facial characteristics perfectly and also the many different and sometimes very controversial purposes to which they are used.

III – Artificial Intelligence AI is the field of robotics that focuses on the development of intelligent machines that can process thoughts, understand human thinking and mimic it. The idea of "copying" the human brain is extremely difficult, for is a very complex biological machine, working with billions of neurons.

==for examples of current robots, androids and AI see items here

IV – Emergence of consciousness on robots.

Consciousness is a widely studied topic in psychology and there are no standard modes of how to measure it, or define exactly what consciousness is. Therefore, when it comes to the possibility of having it simulated in AI, much is argued and discussed.

What is consciousness and where does it come from? Is it a product of the many electrical a neuronal activities on the brain? Is conscience the brain, or the mind? And are these two last words really two separate entities? These questions remit to the studies of metaphysics and the problem of Body +Mind. Many studies argue that, being consciousness a product of coordinated activities that occur in the human being, it is possible then to replicate these activities in an artificial intelligence model, therefore giving machine the ability to develop a conscious state.

One of the problems pointed out as for replicating consciousness is the “phenomenal experience”, extracted from this link from the University of Toronto.

Artificial Intelligence and Human Morality Do androids deserve human rights?

What if consciousness is a property that emerges from complex systems that process information and can and do monitor themselves as feedback ? What if humans build androids that appear to manifest consciousness? Would it be morally acceptable to unplug them or destroy them?

KARA

VIDEO:

YouTube Video

This interactive element is not available in this format. Visit the link or scan the QR code to access it online.

View this YouTube Video online

on Kara and what would be the emergence of consciousness and self awareness in an Android

The video shows a robotic female being assembled and having her functions described. She states that she doesn't need to be fed; her battery lasts for 173 years, she can take care of kids, clean a house, and is available as a sexual partner. After prompting by the unseen "Operator," she speaks fluently in French and German, before singing in Japanese.

Once the Operator has heard enough, he states that she's ready to be sold. Initially confused about this statement, she quickly realizes she's a piece of merchandise. The Operator is discouraged by this self-awareness, and orders robotic arms to start disassembling the “defective" model.

"I thought I was alive," Kara says. "I've only just been born. You can't kill me yet. Stop this, please stop! I'm scared!" As she says this, the robotic arms pause, retract, and the Operator tells her to "go and join the others." She's placed in a box with several identical models and whisked away.

SONNY – I ROBOT

Sonny is a Robot character in the motion picture I ROBOT. In this video recreation, he is being interrogated by a cop, in a future where robots are provided consciousness, but they have to follow “Robotic Laws” in order to live peacefully with humans. Sonny displays very unrobotlike but very human like behavior.

Machine Consciousness - Kask 531 MP2

This video looks at the possibility of machines developing a true form of consciousness. It takes a brief look at the developments in artificial intelligence, starting with early expert systems, then artificial general intelligence, and finally examines where AI is headed. This video was created for the UBC MET program, ETEC 531.

V – Philosophical issues

What is consciousness? Do we have consciousness because we are aware of it or are we aware of things because we possess consciousness? Why does it exist and, most importantly, how?

Materialists cannot accept that consciousness is a thing that exists as as non-physical entity. Then how to explain what does not appear to have characteristics as do physical objects and forces? Here is one idea. Water is made up of hydrogen and oxygen. 2 atoms of hydrogen to one atom of oxygen per single molecule of water or H2O

We know that this molecule manifests itself in different states according to its temperature or heat or speed of the molecules of water. It can manifest as a liquid , solid or gas. Depending on its state or temperature it has different qualities. As water it is liquid. The liquidity of water manifests from the the molecules and their motion. Now think of the human brain as manifesting consciousness as H2O manifests liquidity under certain circumstances.

For materialists there are no non-physical things, non-physical events or non-physical forces or any non-physical entities of any sort. Consciousness is a feature or quality of a physical entity (brain) or sate of that entity. Consciousness manifests itself or emerges form brain activity. Consciousness is the the brain as liquidity is to H2O.

The brain generates consciousness.

VIDEO: brain hallucinates your conscious reality by neuroscientist Anil Seth 17 minutes

His position is that as result of evolution the brain constructs predictive perceptions for survival of the sentient being.

If consciousness is a material thing or quality of a material thing then could it manifest with material things other than a human brain? Could it manifest from another physical thing that is as complex as a human brain and functioning in a manner similar to a human brain? The answers to all these questions are constantly debated in Philosophy, especially in Philosophy of Mind.

When it comes to Robotics and the expansion of technology towards AI, these arguments focus onto the consequences and the treatment of the new perspectives humans would face if technology reaches the ability to produce robots that can develop consciousness. Some of the questions brought to awareness are of how would conscious Androids be treated? Are they entitled to Human Rights, since they would possess, even if artificially, the same properties as human beings – feelings, awareness, consciousness, emotions? What to do if a conscious Android wouldn't fit into the expectations of its purpose? The first impulsive answer would be to simply "turn it off", but think again: could it be considered murder, since you are "removing" life from a conscious being?

Amongst the population, the idea of co-existing with conscious Androids brings not only questions and concerns, but also fears. But what are we really afraid of? Are we afraid that they might become dangerous? That the Androids may form an "army" and dominate humans, turning against their own "masters"? Or is it that we are not prepared to realize that humans may not be the last degree in the evolutionary scale we were always so proud and safe to dominate?

David Chalmers – On Emergence

David Chalmers is an Australian Philosopher specialized in the Philosophy of Mind and Philosophy of Language. In this video, he explains about the concepts of "Weak Emergence" and "Strong Emergence". Consciousness, in his opinion, is an example of Strong Emergence, and we are only aware of it because we experience it. To know more about David Chalmers, access his personal website.

Vernor Vinge is a retired professor of Mathematics and Computer Science from San Diego State University and a science fiction author. One of his most influential works is the essay "The Coming Technological Singularity", where he argues that, with the creation of superhuman artificial intelligence, the "human era" will end, in such way that no models of reality as we are aware now are capable to predict it.

In the following videos, Vinge explains more about the concept of singularity.

Vernor Vinge on Singularity – Part 1

Vernor Vinge on Singularity – Part 2

Singularity is the idea that machines could have the capacity to evolve at a faster pace than humans and is linked to the fear

of robots gaining too much control. I, Robot presents singularity through the idea of the "ghost in the machine" in which VICKI evolves in a harmful way. Other films used include Blade Runner, AI, and Bicentennial Man.

In Philip K. Dick's short novel , "Do Anroids dream of Electric Sheep?", made into the movie Blade Runner there are replicants who do not know that they are AI-androids. The test for detecting them-Voight Kampf Test- and distinguishing them from humans is quite complicated and the results not always dependable. A test result indicates the replicant is unaware it is a replicant and appears to have feelings.

This video is a 2007 lecture by Steve Omohundro for the Stanford University Computer Systems Colloquium (EEL 380). In his lecture, Omohundro presents the principles of "self-improving systems": computers that can improve themselves through the learning of their own operations.

The following videos are a Seminar presentation from Prof Mark Bishop, chair of Cognitive Computing at Goldsmiths, University of London. This presentation presents the views on the possibilities and consequences of future machine rebellion against humanity.

Mark Bishop – Seminar Part 1

Mark Bishop – Seminar Part 2

SOURCES USED:

*WIKIPEDIA

* http://www.psych.utoronto.ca/users/reingold/courses/ai/consciousness.html

* http://www.consciousness.it/CAI/CAI.htm

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4.5.6: Conclusion

So with the Mind Body Problem there are three Positions and several variations on each of them.

1. Dualism
2. Monism: Idealism
3. Monism: Materialism

Each has a certain appeal and each has weak points, problems and disadvantages. There are those who believe that they have solved the problem and that their position is far better than the alternatives . They have their reasons for maintaining the position that they do in the light of criticisms. The "Problem" does not as yet have such a clear solution that there is anything like a consensus amongst all the peoples of the world existing or even one forming.

For Philosophers and Scientists there is the rejection of dualism and idealism and the remaining challenges for the materialists would relate to an explanation of CONSCIOUSNESS and INTENTIONALITY. Consciousness as awareness and self awareness and intentionality as choosing from available options.

NEEDED: an explanation of CONSCIOUSNESS and INTENTIONALITY

How is it that humans have consciousness, intentionality—choosing options, making goals?

Is it possible that non-human machines could have consciousness, intentionality—choosing options, making goals?

When we think of this problem can we avoid being a specialist!!

Is it possible that there could emerge a form of consciousness from advanced super intelligent machines?

Some think consciousness emerges or manifests as a feature of brain operations or functions. Some think that consciousness can emerge or manifest from any complex information processing unit whether biological or non-biological. Some would restrict consciousness as being possible only from biological information processing units.

Can there be artificial non-biological general intelligent machines?

What is your position? Do you have a mind? Is it physical? Is it non-physical? Spiritual? Are you just a physical being? Will there be thinking robots some day who are entitled to basic rights as any other thinking being? What position can you best defend using reasoning and evidence?

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4.6: The Brain with David Eagleman (PBS)

The Role of the Conscious

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5: FREE WILL

5.1: Free Will, Determinism, and Responsibility

5.1.1: Determinism

5.1.2: The Illusion of Free Will

5.1.3: The Prisoner's Dilemma

5.2: Freedom and Determinism

5.2.1: Libertarianism

5.2.2: Determinism

5.2.3: Compatibilism

5.3: The Brain with David Eagleman (PBS)

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5.1: FREE WILL, DETERMINISM, AND RESPONSIBILITY

Free will is the ability to choose between different possible courses of action. It is closely linked to the concepts of responsibility, praise, guilt, sin, and other judgments which apply only to actions that are freely chosen. It is also connected with the concepts of advice, persuasion, deliberation, and prohibition. Traditionally, only actions that are freely willed are seen as deserving credit or blame. There are numerous different concerns about threats to the possibility of free will, varying by how exactly it is conceived, which is a matter of some debate.

Some conceive free will to be the capacity to make choices in which the outcome has not been determined by past events. Determinism suggests that only one course of events is possible, which is inconsistent with the existence of such free will. This problem has been identified in ancient Greek philosophy, and remains a major focus of philosophical debate. This view that conceives free will to be incompatible with determinism is called *incompatibilism*, and encompasses both metaphysical libertarianism, the claim that determinism is false and thus free will is at least possible, and hard determinism, the claim that determinism is true and thus free will is not possible. It also encompasses hard incompatibilism, which holds not only determinism but also its negation to be incompatible with free will, and thus free will to be impossible whatever the case may be regarding determinism.

In contrast, *compatibilists* hold that free will *is* compatible with determinism. Some compatibilists even hold that determinism is *necessary* for free will, arguing that choice involves preference for one course of action over another, requiring a sense of *how* choices will turn out. Compatibilists thus consider the debate between libertarians and hard determinists over free will vs determinism a false dilemma. Different compatibilists offer very different definitions of what "free will" even means, and consequently find different types of constraints to be relevant to the issue. Classical compatibilists considered free will nothing more than freedom of action, considering one free of will simply if, *had* one counterfactually wanted to do otherwise, one *could* have done otherwise without physical impediment. Contemporary compatibilists instead identify free will as a psychological capacity, such as to direct one's behavior in a way responsive to reason. And there are still further different conceptions of free will, each with their own concerns, sharing only the common feature of not finding the possibility of determinism a threat to the possibility of free will.

In Western philosophy

The underlying questions are whether we have control over our actions, and if so, what sort of control, and to what extent. These questions predate the early Greek stoics (for example, Chrysippus), and some modern philosophers lament the lack of progress over all these millennia.

On one hand, humans have a strong sense of freedom, which leads us to believe that we have free will. On the other hand, an intuitive feeling of free will could be mistaken.

It is difficult to reconcile the intuitive evidence that conscious decisions are causally effective with the scientific view that the physical world can be explained to operate perfectly by physical law. The conflict between intuitively felt freedom and natural law arises when either causal closure or physical determinism (nomological determinism) is asserted. With causal closure, no physical event has a cause outside the physical domain, and with physical determinism, the future is determined entirely by preceding events (cause and effect).

The puzzle of reconciling 'free will' with a deterministic universe is known as the *problem of free will* or sometimes referred to as the *dilemma of determinism*. This dilemma leads to a moral dilemma as well: How are we to assign responsibility for our actions if they are caused entirely by past events?

Compatibilists maintain that mental reality is not of itself causally effective. Classical compatibilists have addressed the dilemma of free will by arguing that free will holds as long as we are not externally constrained or coerced. Modern compatibilists make a distinction between freedom of will and freedom of *action*, that is, separating freedom of choice from the freedom to enact it. Given that humans all experience a sense of free will, some modern compatibilists think it is necessary to accommodate this intuition. Compatibilists often associate freedom of will with the ability to make rational decisions.

A different approach to the dilemma is that of incompatibilists, namely, that if the world is deterministic then, our feeling that we are free to choose an action is simply an illusion. Metaphysical libertarianism is the form of incompatibilism which posits that determinism is false and free will is possible (at least some people have free will). This view is associated with non-materialist constructions, including both traditional dualism, as well as models supporting more minimal criteria; such as the ability to

consciously veto an action or competing desire. Yet even with physical indeterminism, arguments have been made against libertarianism in that it is difficult to assign *Origination* (responsibility for "free" indeterministic choices).

Free will here is predominately treated with respect to physical determinism in the strict sense of nomological determinism, although other forms of determinism are also relevant to free will. For example, logical and theological determinism challenge metaphysical libertarianism with ideas of destiny and fate, and biological, cultural and psychological determinism feed the development of compatibilist models. Separate classes of compatibilism and incompatibilism may even be formed to represent these.

Below are the classic arguments bearing upon the dilemma and its underpinnings.

Incompatibilism

Incompatibilism is the position that free will and determinism are logically incompatible, and that the major question regarding whether or not people have free will is thus whether or not their actions are determined. "Hard determinists", such as d'Holbach, are those incompatibilists who accept determinism and reject free will. In contrast, "metaphysical libertarians", such as Thomas Reid, Peter van Inwagen, and Robert Kane, are those incompatibilists who accept free will and deny determinism, holding the view that some form of indeterminism is true. Another view is that of hard incompatibilists, which state that free will is incompatible with both determinism and indeterminism.

Traditional arguments for incompatibilism are based on an "intuition pump": if a person is like other mechanical things that are determined in their behavior such as a wind-up toy, a billiard ball, a puppet, or a robot, then people must not have free will. This argument has been rejected by compatibilists such as Daniel Dennett on the grounds that, even if humans have something in common with these things, it remains possible and plausible that we are different from such objects in important ways.

Another argument for incompatibilism is that of the "causal chain". Incompatibilism is key to the idealist theory of free will. Most incompatibilists reject the idea that freedom of action consists simply in "voluntary" behavior. They insist, rather, that free will means that man must be the "ultimate" or "originating" cause of his actions. He must be *causa sui*, in the traditional phrase. Being responsible for one's choices is the first cause of those choices, where first cause means that there is no antecedent cause of that cause. The argument, then, is that if man has free will, then man is the ultimate cause of his actions. If determinism is true, then all of man's choices are caused by events and facts outside his control. So, if everything man does is caused by events and facts outside his control, then he cannot be the ultimate cause of his actions. Therefore, he cannot have free will. This argument has also been challenged by various compatibilist philosophers.

5.1.1: Determinism

5.1.2: The Illusion of Free Will

5.1.3: The Prisoner's Dilemma

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5.1.1: Determinism

“Physical Determinism”[33]

Physical determinism generally refers to the assertion of a deterministic physical universe (greater physical system). This holds that a complete description of the physical state of the world at any given time and a complete statement of the physical laws of nature together entail every truth as to what physical events happen after that time. In a scientific context, the term 'event' is somewhat technical, depending upon which theory one is considering, and basically is the occurrence of some 'state' peculiar to that theory, for example, a quantum state or a thermodynamic state. Physical determinism includes (but is not restricted to) nomological determinism, which holds that all future events are governed by the past or present according to all-encompassing deterministic laws.

The concept of physical determinism has also been used to denote the predictability of a physical system, although this usage is uncommon. Physical determinism can also be viewed as an observed phenomenon of our experience, or a thesis only relevant to mathematical models of physics and other physical sciences. Physical determinism has also been used as a specific deterministic hypothesis about human behavior. Although somewhat unrelated to its standard context, physical determinism has also been used in social engineering theory.

History

The notion of physical determinism takes its classical form in the ideas of Laplace, who posited (in agreement with the physics of his time) that an omniscient observer (called sometimes Laplace's demon) knowing with infinite precision the positions and velocities of every particle in the universe could predict the future entirely. Although such an omniscient observer is a hypothetical construct, and infinite precision exceeds the capacities of human measurement, the illustration is presented as a statement of what in principle would be possible if physical determinism were true, and so reduction to practice is not an issue.

Physical determinism is currently under heavy debate in modern science. For example, physical indeterminism has been proposed to accommodate various interpretations of quantum mechanics. Suggestions have also been made to reformulate the conception of determinism with respect to its application to physical law.

Causal completeness

Physical determinism is related to the question of causal completeness of physics, which is synonymous with the weaker form of causal closure. This is the idea that every real event has a scientific explanation, that science need not search for explanations beyond itself. If causal completeness does not apply to everything in the universe, then the door is open to events that are not subject to physical law. For example, a relatively common view of mental events is that they are an epiphenomenon produced as a by-product of neurological activity, and without causal impact. In this case, only a failure of deterministic physical law would allow room for their causal significance.

Other formulations

A more modern formulation of physical determinism skirts the issue of causal completeness. It is based upon connections between 'events' supplied by a theory:

"a theory is deterministic if, and only if, given its state variables for some initial period, the theory logically determines a unique set of values for those variables for any other period."

— Ernest Nagel, Alternative descriptions of physical state p. 292

This quote replaces the idea of 'cause-and-effect' with that of 'logical implication' according to one or another theory that connects events. In addition, an 'event' is related by the theory itself to formalized states described using the parameters defined by that theory. Thus, the details of interpretation are placed where they belong, fitted to the context in which the chosen theory applies. Using the definition of physical determinism above, the limitations of a theory to some particular domain of experience

also limits the associated definition of 'physical determinism' to that same domain.

“Determinism”[34]

Determinism is the philosophical position that for every event there exist conditions that could cause no other event. "There are many determinisms, depending on what pre-conditions are considered to be determinative of an event or action." Deterministic theories throughout the history of philosophy have sprung from diverse and sometimes overlapping motives and considerations. Some forms of determinism can be empirically tested with ideas from physics and the philosophy of physics. The opposite of determinism is some kind of indeterminism (otherwise called nondeterminism). Determinism is often contrasted with free will.

Determinism often is taken to mean causal determinism, which in physics is known as cause-and-effect. It is the concept that events within a given paradigm are bound by causality in such a way that any state (of an object or event) is completely determined by prior states. This meaning can be distinguished from other varieties of determinism mentioned below.

Other debates often concern the scope of determined systems, with some maintaining that the entire universe is a single determinate system and others identifying other more limited determinate systems (or multiverse). Numerous historical debates involve many philosophical positions and varieties of determinism. They include debates concerning determinism and free will, technically denoted as compatibilistic (allowing the two to coexist) and incompatibilistic (denying their coexistence is a possibility).

Determinism should not be confused with self-determination of human actions by reasons, motives, and desires. Determinism rarely requires that perfect prediction be practically possible.

Varieties

Below are some of the more common viewpoints meant by, or confused with "determinism".

- **Causal determinism** is "the idea that every event is necessitated by antecedent events and conditions together with the laws of nature". However, causal determinism is a broad enough term to consider that "one's deliberations, choices, and actions will often be necessary links in the causal chain that brings something about. In other words, even though our deliberations, choices, and actions are themselves determined like everything else, it is still the case, according to causal determinism, that the occurrence or existence of yet other things depends upon our deliberating, choosing and acting in a certain way". Causal determinism proposes that there is an unbroken chain of prior occurrences stretching back to the origin of the universe. The relation between events may not be specified, nor the origin of that universe. Causal determinists believe that there is nothing in the universe that is uncaused or self-caused. Historical determinism (a sort of path dependence) can also be synonymous with causal determinism. Causal determinism has also been considered more generally as the idea that everything that happens or exists is caused by antecedent conditions. In the case of nomological determinism, these conditions are considered events also, implying that the future is determined completely by preceding events—a combination of prior states of the universe and the laws of nature. Yet they can also be considered metaphysical of origin (such as in the case of theological determinism).
- **Nomological determinism** is the most common form of causal determinism. It is the notion that the past and the present dictate the future entirely and necessarily by rigid natural laws, that every occurrence results inevitably from prior events. Quantum mechanics and various interpretations thereof pose a serious challenge to this view. Nomological determinism is sometimes illustrated by the thought experiment of Laplace's demon. Nomological determinism is sometimes called 'scientific' determinism, although that is a misnomer. Physical determinism is generally used synonymously with nomological determinism (its opposite being physical indeterminism).
- **Necessitarianism** is closely related to the causal determinism described above. It is a metaphysical principle that denies all mere possibility; there is exactly one way for the world to be. Leucippus claimed there were no uncaused events, and that everything occurs for a reason and by necessity.
- **Predeterminism** is the idea that all events are determined in advance. The concept of predeterminism is often argued by invoking causal determinism, implying that there is an unbroken chain of prior occurrences stretching back to the origin of the universe. In the case of predeterminism, this chain of events has been pre-established, and human actions cannot interfere with the outcomes of this pre-established chain. Predeterminism can be used to mean such pre-established causal determinism, in which case it is categorised as a specific type of determinism. It can also be used interchangeably with causal determinism—in the context of its capacity to determine future events. Despite this, predeterminism is often considered as independent of causal determinism. The term predeterminism is also frequently used in the context of biology

and hereditary, in which case it represents a form of biological determinism.

- **Fatalism** is normally distinguished from "determinism" and it is a form of teleological determinism. Fatalism is the idea that everything is fated to happen, so that humans have no control over their future. Fate has arbitrary power, and need not follow any causal or otherwise deterministic laws. Types of Fatalism include hard theological determinism and the idea of predestination, where there is a God who determines all that humans will do. This may be accomplished either by knowing their actions in advance, via some form of omniscience or by decreeing their actions in advance.
- **Theological determinism** is a form of determinism which states that all events that happen are pre-ordained, or predestined to happen, by a monotheistic deity, or that they are destined to occur given its omniscience. Two forms of theological determinism exist, here referenced as strong and weak theological determinism. The first one, strong theological determinism, is based on the concept of a creator deity dictating all events in history: "everything that happens has been predestined to happen by an omniscient, omnipotent divinity". The second form, weak theological determinism, is based on the concept of divine foreknowledge—"because God's omniscience is perfect, what God knows about the future will inevitably happen, which means, consequently, that the future is already fixed". There exist slight variations on the above categorisation. Some claim that theological determinism requires predestination of all events and outcomes by the divinity (i.e. they do not classify the weaker version as 'theological determinism' unless libertarian free will is assumed to be denied as a consequence), or that the weaker version does not constitute 'theological determinism' at all. With respect to free will, "theological determinism is the thesis that God exists and has infallible knowledge of all true propositions including propositions about our future actions", more minimal criteria designed to encapsulate all forms of theological determinism. Theological determinism can also be seen as a form of causal determinism, in which the antecedent conditions are the nature and will of God.
- **Logical determinism** or **Determinateness** is the notion that all propositions, whether about the past, present, or future, are either true or false. Note that one can support Causal Determinism without necessarily supporting Logical Determinism and vice versa (depending on one's views on the nature of time, but also randomness). The problem of free will is especially salient now with Logical Determinism: how can choices be free, given that propositions about the future already have a truth value in the present (i.e. it is already determined as either true or false)? This is referred to as the problem of future contingents.
- Often synonymous with Logical Determinism are the ideas behind **Spatio-temporal Determinism** or **Eternalism**: the view of special relativity. J. J. C. Smart, a proponent of this view, uses the term "tenselessness" to describe the simultaneous existence of past, present, and future. In physics, the "block universe" of Hermann Minkowski and Albert Einstein assumes that time is a fourth dimension (like the three spatial dimensions). In other words, all the other parts of time are real, like the city blocks up and down a street, although the order in which they appear depends on the driver (see Rietdijk–Putnam argument).
- **Adequate determinism** is the idea that quantum indeterminacy can be ignored for most macroscopic events. This is because of quantum decoherence. Random quantum events "average out" in the limit of large numbers of particles (where the laws of quantum mechanics asymptotically approach the laws of classical mechanics). Stephen Hawking explains a similar idea: he says that the microscopic world of quantum mechanics is one of determined probabilities. That is, quantum effects rarely alter the predictions of classical mechanics, which are quite accurate (albeit still not perfectly certain) at larger scales. Something as large as an animal cell, then, would be "adequately determined" (even in light of quantum indeterminacy).
- The **Many-worlds interpretation** accepts the linear casual sets of sequential events with adequate consistency yet also suggests constant forking of casual chains creating "multiple universes" to account for multiple outcomes from single events. Meaning the casual set of events leading to the present are all valid yet appear as a singular linear time stream within a much broader unseen conic probability field of other outcomes that "split off" from the locally observed timeline. Under this model causal sets are still "consistent" yet not exclusive to singular iterated outcomes. The interpretation side steps the exclusive retrospective casual chain problem of "could not have done otherwise" by suggesting "the other outcome does exist" in a set of parallel universe time streams that split off when the action occurred. This theory is sometimes described with the example of agent based choices but more involved models argue that recursive causal splitting occurs with all particle wave functions at play. This model is highly contested with multiple objections from the scientific community.

Philosophical connections

With nature/nurture controversy

Although some of the above forms of determinism concern human behaviors and cognition, others frame themselves as an answer to the debate on nature and nurture. They will suggest that one factor will entirely determine behavior. As scientific understanding has grown, however, the strongest versions of these theories have been widely rejected as a single-cause fallacy.

In other words, the modern deterministic theories attempt to explain how the interaction of both nature and nurture is entirely predictable. The concept of heritability has been helpful in making this distinction.

Biological determinism, sometimes called genetic determinism, is the idea that each of human behaviors, beliefs, and desires are fixed by human genetic nature.

Behaviorism involves the idea that all behavior can be traced to specific causes—either environmental or reflexive. John B. Watson and B. F. Skinner developed this nurture-focused determinism.

Cultural determinism or social determinism is the nurture-focused theory that the culture in which we are raised determines who we are.

Environmental determinism, also known as climatic or geographical determinism, proposes that the physical environment, rather than social conditions, determines culture. Supporters of environmental determinism often also support Behavioral determinism. Key proponents of this notion have included Ellen Churchill Semple, Ellsworth Huntington, Thomas Griffith Taylor and possibly Jared Diamond, although his status as an environmental determinist is debated.

With particular factors

Other 'deterministic' theories actually seek only to highlight the importance of a particular factor in predicting the future. These theories often use the factor as a sort of guide or constraint on the future. They need not suppose that complete knowledge of that one factor would allow us to make perfect predictions.

Psychological determinism can mean that humans must act according to reason, but it can also be synonymous with some sort of Psychological egoism. The latter is the view that humans will always act according to their perceived best interest.

Linguistic determinism claims that our language determines (at least limits) the things we can think and say and thus know. The Sapir–Whorf hypothesis argues that individuals experience the world based on the grammatical structures they habitually use.

Economic determinism is the theory which attributes primacy to the economic structure over politics in the development of human history. It is associated with the dialectical materialism of Karl Marx.

Technological determinism is a reductionist theory that presumes that a society's technology drives the development of its social structure and cultural values.

With free will

Philosophers have debated both the truth of determinism, and the truth of free will. Compatibilism refers to the view that free will is, in some sense, compatible with determinism. The three incompatibilist positions, on the other hand, deny this possibility. The hard incompatibilists hold that both determinism and free will do not exist, the libertarianists that determinism does not hold, and free will might exist, and the hard determinists that determinism does hold and free will does not exist.

The standard argument against free will, according to philosopher J. J. C. Smart focuses on the implications of determinism for 'free will'. However, he suggests free will is denied whether determinism is true or not. On one hand, if determinism is true, all our actions are predicted and we are assumed not to be free; on the other hand, if determinism is false, our actions are presumed to be random and as such we do not seem free because we had no part in controlling what happened.

In his book, The Moral Landscape, author and neuroscientist Sam Harris also argues against free will. He offers one thought experiment where a mad scientist represents determinism. In Harris' example, the mad scientist uses a machine to control all the desires, and thus all the behavior, of a particular human. Harris believes that it is no longer as tempting, in this case, to say the victim has "free will". Harris says nothing changes if the machine controls desires at random - the victim still seems to lack free will.

Harris then argues that we are also the victims of such unpredictable desires (but due to the unconscious machinations of our brain, rather than those of a mad scientist). Based on this introspection, he writes "This discloses the real mystery of free will: if our experience is compatible with its utter absence, how can we say that we see any evidence for it in the first place?" adding that "Whether they are predictable or not, we do not cause our causes." That is, he believes there is compelling evidence of absence of free will.

Some research (founded by the John Templeton Foundation) suggested that reducing a person's belief in free will is dangerous, making them less helpful and more aggressive. This could occur because the individual's sense of self-efficacy suffers.

With the soul

Some determinists argue that materialism does not present a complete understanding of the universe, because while it can describe determinate interactions among material things, it ignores the minds or souls of conscious beings.

A number of positions can be delineated:

1. Immaterial souls are all that exist (Idealism).
2. Immaterial souls exist and exert a non-deterministic causal influence on bodies. (Traditional free-will, interactionist dualism).
3. Immaterial souls exist, but are part of deterministic framework.
4. Immaterial souls exist, but exert no causal influence, free or determined (epiphenomenalism, occasionalism)
5. Immaterial souls do not exist — there is no mind-body dichotomy, and there is a Materialistic explanation for intuitions to the contrary.

With ethics and morality

Another topic of debate is the implication that Determinism has on morality. Hard determinism (a belief in determinism, and not free will) is particularly criticized for seeming to make traditional moral judgments impossible. Some philosophers, however, find this an acceptable conclusion.

Philosopher and incompatibilist Peter van Inwagen introduces this thesis as such:

Argument that Free Will is Required for Moral Judgments

1. The moral judgment that you shouldn't have done X implies that you should have done something else instead
2. That you should have done something else instead implies that there was something else for you to do
3. That there was something else for you to do implies that you could have done something else
4. That you could have done something else implies that you have free will
5. If you don't have free will to have done other than X we cannot make the moral judgment that you shouldn't have done X.

However, a compatibilist might have an issue with Inwagen's process because one can not change the past like his arguments center around. A compatibilist who centers around plans for the future might posit:

1. The moral judgment that you should not have done X implies that you can do something else instead
2. That you can do something else instead implies that there is something else for you to do
3. That there is something else for you to do implies that you can do something else
4. That you can do something else implies that you have free will for planning future recourse
5. If you have free will to do other than X we can make the moral judgment that you should do other than X, and punishing you as a responsible party for having done X that you know you should not have done can help you remember to not do X in the future.

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5.1.2: The Illusion of Free Will

The Illusion of Free Will[35]

80. Theologians repeatedly tell us, that man is free, while all their principles conspire to destroy his liberty. By endeavouring to justify the Divinity, they in reality accuse him of the blackest injustice. They suppose, that without grace, man is necessitated to do evil. They affirm, that God will punish him, because God has not given him grace to do good!

Little reflection will suffice to convince us, that man is necessitated in all his actions, that his free will is a chimera, even in the system of theologians. Does it depend upon man to be born of such or such parents? Does it depend upon man to imbibe or not to imbibe the opinions of his parents or instructors? If I had been born of idolatrous or Mahometan parents, would it have depended upon me to become a Christian? Yet, divines gravely assure us, that a just God will damn without pity all those, to whom he has not given grace to know the Christian religion!

Man's birth is wholly independent of his choice. He is not asked whether he is willing, or not, to come into the world. Nature does not consult him upon the country and parents she gives him. His acquired ideas, his opinions, his notions true or false, are necessary fruits of the education which he has received, and of which he has not been the director. His passions and desires are necessary consequences of the temperament given him by nature. During his whole life, his volitions and actions are determined by his connections, habits, occupations, pleasures, and conversations; by the thoughts, that are involuntarily presented to his mind; in a word, by a multitude of events and accidents, which it is out of his power to foresee or prevent. Incapable of looking into futurity, he knows not what he will do. From the instant of his birth to that of his death, he is never free. You will say, that he wills, deliberates, chooses, determines; and you will hence conclude, that his actions are free. It is true, that man wills, but he is not master of his will or his desires; he can desire and will only what he judges advantageous to himself; he can neither love pain, nor detest pleasure. It will be said, that he sometimes prefers pain to pleasure; but then he prefers a momentary pain with a view of procuring a greater and more durable pleasure. In this case, the prospect of a greater good necessarily determines him to forego a less considerable good.

The lover does not give his mistress the features which captivate him; he is not then master of loving, or not loving the object of his tenderness; he is not master of his imagination or temperament. Whence it evidently follows, that man is not master of his volitions and desires. "But man," you will say, "can resist his desires; therefore he is free." Man resists his desires, when the motives, which divert him from an object, are stronger than those, which incline him towards it; but then his resistance is necessary. A man, whose fear of dishonour or punishment is greater than his love of money, necessarily resists the desire of stealing.

"Are we not free, when we deliberate?" But, are we masters of knowing or not knowing, of being in doubt or certainty? Deliberation is a necessary effect of our uncertainty respecting the consequences of our actions. When we are sure, or think we are sure, of these consequences, we necessarily decide, and we then act necessarily according to our true or false judgment. Our judgments, true or false, are not free; they are necessarily determined by the ideas, we have received, or which our minds have formed.

Man is not free in his choice; he is evidently necessitated to choose what he judges most useful and agreeable. Neither is he free, when he suspends his choice; he is forced to suspend it until he knows, or thinks he knows, the qualities of the objects presented to him, or, until he has weighed the consequences of his actions. "Man," you will say, "often decides in favour of actions, which he knows must be detrimental to himself; man sometimes kills himself; therefore he is free." I deny it. Is man master of reasoning well or ill? Do not his reason and wisdom depend upon the opinions he has formed, or upon the conformation of his machine? As neither one nor the other depends upon his will, they are no proof of liberty. "If I lay a wager, that I shall do, or not do a thing, am I not free? Does it not depend upon me to do it or not?" No, I answer; the desire of winning the wager will necessarily determine you to do, or not to do the thing in question. "But, supposing I consent to lose the wager?" Then the desire of proving to me, that you are free, will have become a stronger motive than the desire of winning the wager; and this motive will have necessarily determined you to do, or not to do, the thing in question.

"But," you will say, "I feel free." This is an illusion, that may be compared to that of the fly in the fable, who, lighting upon the pole of a heavy carriage, applauded himself for directing its course. Man, who thinks himself free, is a fly, who imagines he has power to move the universe, while he is himself unknowingly carried along by it.

The inward persuasion that we are free to do, or not to do a thing, is but a mere illusion. If we trace the true principle of our actions, we shall find, that they are always necessary consequences of our volitions and desires, which are never in our power. You think yourself free, because you do what you will; but are you free to will, or not to will; to desire, or not to desire? Are not your volitions and desires necessarily excited by objects or qualities totally independent of you?

81. "If the actions of men are necessary, if men are not free, by what right does society punish criminals? Is it not very unjust to chastise beings, who could not act otherwise than they have done?" If the wicked act necessarily according to the impulses of their evil nature, society, in punishing them, acts necessarily by the desire of self-preservation. Certain objects necessarily produce in us the sensation of pain; our nature then forces us against them, and avert them from us. A tiger, pressed by hunger, springs upon the man, whom he wishes to devour; but this man is not master of his fear, and necessarily seeks means to destroy the tiger.

82. "If every thing be necessary, the errors, opinions, and ideas of men are fatal; and, if so, how or why should we attempt to reform them?" The errors of men are necessary consequences of ignorance. Their ignorance, prejudice, and credulity are necessary consequences of their inexperience, negligence, and want of reflection, in the same manner as delirium or lethargy are necessary effects of certain diseases. Truth, experience, reflection, and reason, are remedies calculated to cure ignorance, fanaticism and follies. But, you will ask, why does not truth produce this effect upon many disordered minds? It is because some diseases resist all remedies; because it is impossible to cure obstinate patients, who refuse the remedies presented to them; because the interest of some men, and the folly of others, necessarily oppose the admission of truth.

A cause produces its effect only when its action is not interrupted by stronger causes, which then weakens or render useless, the action of the former. It is impossible that the best arguments should be adopted by men, who are interested in error, prejudiced in its favour, and who decline all reflection; but truth must necessarily undeceive honest minds, who seek her sincerely. Truth is a cause; it necessarily produces its effects, when its impulse is not intercepted by causes, which suspend its effects.

83. "To deprive man of his free will," it is said, "makes him a mere machine, an automaton. Without liberty, he will no longer have either merit or virtue." What is merit in man? It is a manner of acting, which renders him estimable in the eyes of his fellow-beings. What is virtue? It is a disposition, which inclines us to do good to others. What can there be contemptible in machines, or automatons, capable of producing effects so desirable? Marcus Aurelius was useful to the vast Roman Empire. By what right would a machine despise a machine, whose springs facilitate its action? Good men are springs, which second society in its tendency to happiness; the wicked are ill-formed springs, which disturb the order, progress, and harmony of society. If, for its own utility, society cherishes and rewards the good, it also harasses and destroys the wicked, as useless or hurtful.

84. The world is a necessary agent. All the beings, that compose it, are united to each other, and cannot act otherwise than they do, so long as they are moved by the same causes, and endued with the same properties. When they lose properties, they will necessarily act in a different way. God himself, admitting his existence, cannot be considered a free agent. If there existed a God, his manner of acting would necessarily be determined by the properties inherent in his nature; nothing would be capable of arresting or altering his will. This being granted, neither our actions, prayers, nor sacrifices could suspend, or change his invariable conduct and immutable designs; whence we are forced to infer, that all religion would be useless.

85. Were not divines in perpetual contradiction with themselves, they would see, that, according to their hypothesis, man cannot be reputed free an instant. Do they not suppose man continually dependent on his God? Are we free, when we cannot exist and be preserved without God, and when we cease to exist at the pleasure of his supreme will? If God has made man out of nothing; if his preservation is a continued creation; if God cannot, an instant, lose sight of his creature; if whatever happens to him, is an effect of the divine will; if man can do nothing of himself; if all the events, which he experiences, are effects of the divine decrees; if he does no good without grace from on high, how can they maintain, that a man enjoys a moment's liberty? If God did not preserve him in the moment of sin, how could man sin? If God then preserves him, God forces him to exist, that he may sin.

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5.1.3: The Prisoner’s Dilemma

The Prisoner’s Dilemma[37]

The prisoner's dilemma is a standard example of a game analyzed in **game theory** that shows why two completely "rational" individuals might not cooperate, even if it appears that it is in their best interests to do so. It was originally framed by Merrill Flood and Melvin Dresher working at RAND in 1950. Albert W. Tucker formalized the game with prison sentence rewards and named it, "prisoner's dilemma" (Poundstone, 1992), presenting it as follows:

Two members of a criminal gang are arrested and imprisoned. Each prisoner is in solitary confinement with no means of communicating with the other. The prosecutors lack sufficient evidence to convict the pair on the principal charge. They hope to get both sentenced to a year in prison on a lesser charge. Simultaneously, the prosecutors offer each prisoner a bargain. Each prisoner is given the opportunity either to: betray the other by testifying that the other committed the crime, or to cooperate with the other by remaining silent. The offer is:

- If A and B each betray the other, each of them serves 2 years in prison
- If A betrays B but B remains silent, A will be set free and B will serve 3 years in prison (and vice versa)
- If A and B both remain silent, both of them will only serve 1 year in prison (on the lesser charge)

It is implied that the prisoners will have no opportunity to reward or punish their partner other than the prison sentences they get, and that their decision will not affect their reputation in the future. Because betraying a partner offers a greater reward than cooperating with them, all purely rational self-interested prisoners would betray the other, and so the only possible outcome for two purely rational prisoners is for them to betray each other. The interesting part of this result is that pursuing individual reward logically leads both of the prisoners to betray, when they would get a better reward if they both kept silent. In reality, humans display a systemic bias towards cooperative behavior in this and similar games, much more so than predicted by simple models of "rational" self-interested action. A model based on a different kind of rationality, where people forecast how the game would be played if they formed coalitions and then maximized their forecasts, has been shown to make better predictions of the rate of cooperation in this and similar games, given only the payoffs of the game.

An extended "iterated" version of the game also exists, where the classic game is played repeatedly between the same prisoners, and consequently, both prisoners continuously have an opportunity to penalize the other for previous decisions. If the number of times the game will be played is known to the players, then (by backward induction) two classically rational players will betray each other repeatedly, for the same reasons as the single-shot variant. In an infinite or unknown length game there is no fixed optimum strategy, and Prisoner's Dilemma tournaments have been held to compete and test algorithms.

The prisoner's dilemma game can be used as a model for many real world situations involving cooperative behaviour. In casual usage, the label "prisoner's dilemma" may be applied to situations not strictly matching the formal criteria of the classic or iterative games: for instance, those in which two entities could gain important benefits from cooperating or suffer from the failure to do so, but find it merely difficult or expensive, not necessarily impossible, to coordinate their activities to achieve cooperation.

Strategy for the prisoner's dilemma

Both cannot communicate, they are separated in two individual rooms. The normal game is shown below:

- Prisoner A stays silent (cooperates) & Prisoner B stays silent (cooperates): Each serves 1 year
- Prisoner A stays silent (cooperates) & Prisoner B betrays (defects): Prisoner A gets 3 years & Prisoner B goes free
- Prisoner A betrays (defects) & Prisoner B stays silent (cooperates): Prisoner A goes free & Prisoner B gets 3 years
- Prisoner A betrays (defects) & Prisoner B betrays (defects): Each serves 2 years

It is assumed that both understand the nature of the game, and that despite being members of the same gang, they have no loyalty to each other and will have no opportunity for retribution or reward outside the game. Regardless of what the other decides, each prisoner gets a higher reward by betraying the other ("defecting"). The reasoning involves an argument by dilemma: B will either cooperate or defect. If B cooperates, A should defect, because going free is better than serving 1 year. If B defects, A should also defect, because serving 2 years is better than serving 3. So either way, A should defect. Parallel reasoning will show that B should defect.

Because defection always results in a better payoff than cooperation, regardless of the other player's choice, it is a dominant strategy. Mutual defection is the only strong Nash equilibrium in the game (i.e. the only outcome from which each player could only do worse by unilaterally changing strategy). The dilemma then is that mutual cooperation yields a better outcome than mutual defection but it is not the rational outcome because from a self-interested perspective, the choice to cooperate, at the individual level, is irrational.

Real-life examples

The prisoner setting may seem contrived, but there are in fact many examples in human interaction as well as interactions in nature that have the same payoff matrix. The prisoner's dilemma is therefore of interest to the social sciences such as economics, politics, and sociology, as well as to the biological sciences such as ethology and evolutionary biology. Many natural processes have been abstracted into models in which living beings are engaged in endless games of prisoner's dilemma. This wide applicability of the PD gives the game its substantial importance.

In environmental studies

In environmental studies, the PD is evident in crises such as global climate-change. It is argued all countries will benefit from a stable climate, but any single country is often hesitant to curb CO_2 emissions. The immediate benefit to an individual country to maintain current behavior is perceived to be greater than the purported eventual benefit to all countries if behavior was changed, therefore explaining the impasse concerning climate-change in 2007.

An important difference between climate-change politics and the prisoner's dilemma is uncertainty; the extent and pace at which pollution can change climate is not known. The dilemma faced by government is therefore different from the prisoner's dilemma in that the payoffs of cooperation are unknown. This difference suggests that states will cooperate much less than in a real iterated prisoner's dilemma, so that the probability of avoiding a possible climate catastrophe is much smaller than that suggested by a game-theoretical analysis of the situation using a real iterated prisoner's dilemma.

Osang and Nandy provide a theoretical explanation with proofs for a regulation-driven win-win situation along the lines of Michael Porter's hypothesis, in which government regulation of competing firms is substantial.

In animals

Cooperative behavior of many animals can be understood as an example of the prisoner's dilemma. Often animals engage in long term partnerships, which can be more specifically modeled as iterated prisoner's dilemma. For example, guppies inspect predators cooperatively in groups, and they are thought to punish non-cooperative inspectors.

Vampire bats are social animals that engage in reciprocal food exchange. Applying the payoffs from the prisoner's dilemma can help explain this behavior:

- C/C: "Reward: I get blood on my unlucky nights, which saves me from starving. I have to give blood on my lucky nights, which doesn't cost me too much."
- D/C: "Temptation: You save my life on my poor night. But then I get the added benefit of not having to pay the slight cost of feeding you on my good night."
- C/D: "Sucker's Payoff: I pay the cost of saving your life on my good night. But on my bad night you don't feed me and I run a real risk of starving to death."
- D/D: "Punishment: I don't have to pay the slight costs of feeding you on my good nights. But I run a real risk of starving on my poor nights."

In psychology

In addiction research / behavioral economics, George Ainslie points out that addiction can be cast as an intertemporal PD problem between the present and future selves of the addict. In this case, *defecting* means *relapsing*, and it is easy to see that not defecting both today and in the future is by far the best outcome. The case where one abstains today but relapses in the future is the worst outcome — in some sense the discipline and self-sacrifice involved in abstaining today have been "wasted" because the future relapse means that the addict is right back where he started and will have to start over (which is quite demoralizing,

and makes starting over more difficult). Relapsing today and tomorrow is a slightly "better" outcome, because while the addict is still addicted, they haven't put the effort in to trying to stop. The final case, where one engages in the addictive behavior today while abstaining "tomorrow" will be familiar to anyone who has struggled with an addiction. The problem here is that (as in other PDs) there is an obvious benefit to defecting "today", but tomorrow one will face the same PD, and the same obvious benefit will be present then, ultimately leading to an endless string of defections.

John Gottman in his research described in "the science of trust" defines good relationships as those where partners know not to enter the (D,D) cell or at least not to get dynamically stuck there in a loop.

In economics

Advertising is sometimes cited as a real-example of the prisoner's dilemma. When cigarette advertising was legal in the United States, competing cigarette manufacturers had to decide how much money to spend on advertising. The effectiveness of Firm A's advertising was partially determined by the advertising conducted by Firm B. Likewise, the profit derived from advertising for Firm B is affected by the advertising conducted by Firm A. If both Firm A and Firm B chose to advertise during a given period, then the advertising cancels out, receipts remain constant, and expenses increase due to the cost of advertising. Both firms would benefit from a reduction in advertising. However, should Firm B choose not to advertise, Firm A could benefit greatly by advertising. Nevertheless, the optimal amount of advertising by one firm depends on how much advertising the other undertakes. As the best strategy is dependent on what the other firm chooses there is no dominant strategy, which makes it slightly different from a prisoner's dilemma. The outcome is similar, though, in that both firms would be better off were they to advertise less than in the equilibrium. Sometimes cooperative behaviors do emerge in business situations. For instance, cigarette manufacturers endorsed the making of laws banning cigarette advertising, understanding that this would reduce costs and increase profits across the industry.[] This analysis is likely to be pertinent in many other business situations involving advertising.[]

Without enforceable agreements, members of a cartel are also involved in a (multi-player) prisoner's dilemma. 'Cooperating' typically means keeping prices at a pre-agreed minimum level. 'Defecting' means selling under this minimum level, instantly taking business (and profits) from other cartel members. Anti-trust authorities want potential cartel members to mutually defect, ensuring the lowest possible prices for consumers.

In sport

Doping in sport has been cited as an example of a prisoner's dilemma.

Two competing athletes have the option to use an illegal and/or dangerous drug to boost their performance. If neither athlete takes the drug, then neither gains an advantage. If only one does, then that athlete gains a significant advantage over their competitor, reduced by the legal and/or medical dangers of having taken the drug. If both athletes take the drug, however, the benefits cancel out and only the dangers remain, putting them both in a worse position than if neither had used doping.

Multiplayer dilemmas

Many real-life dilemmas involve multiple players. Although metaphorical, Hardin's tragedy of the commons may be viewed as an example of a multi-player generalization of the PD: Each villager makes a choice for personal gain or restraint. The collective reward for unanimous (or even frequent) defection is very low payoffs (representing the destruction of the "commons"). A commons dilemma most people can relate to is washing the dishes in a shared house. By not washing dishes an individual can gain by saving his time, but if that behavior is adopted by every resident the collective cost is no clean plates for anyone.

The commons are not always exploited: William Poundstone, in a book about the prisoner's dilemma (see References below), describes a situation in New Zealand where newspaper boxes are left unlocked. It is possible for people to take a paper without paying (*defecting*) but very few do, feeling that if they do not pay then neither will others, destroying the system. Subsequent research by Elinor Ostrom, winner of the 2009 Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel, hypothesized that the tragedy of the commons is oversimplified, with the negative outcome influenced by outside influences. Without complicating pressures, groups communicate and manage the commons among themselves for their mutual benefit, enforcing social norms to preserve the resource and achieve the maximum good for the group, an example of effecting the best case outcome for PD.

In international politics

In international political theory, the Prisoner's Dilemma is often used to demonstrate the coherence of strategic realism, which holds that in international relations, all states (regardless of their internal policies or professed ideology), will act in their rational self-interest given international anarchy. A classic example is an arms race like the Cold War and similar conflicts. During the Cold War the opposing alliances of NATO and the Warsaw Pact both had the choice to arm or disarm. From each side's point of view, disarming whilst their opponent continued to arm would have led to military inferiority and possible annihilation. Conversely, arming whilst their opponent disarmed would have led to superiority. If both sides chose to arm, neither could afford to attack the other, but at the high cost of developing and maintaining a nuclear arsenal. If both sides chose to disarm, war would be avoided and there would be no costs.

Although the 'best' overall outcome is for both sides to disarm, the rational course for both sides is to arm, and this is indeed what happened. Both sides poured enormous resources into military research and armament in a war of attrition for the next thirty years until the Soviet Union could not withstand the economic cost. The same logic could be applied in any similar scenario, be it economic or technological competition between sovereign states.

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5.2: FREEDOM AND DETERMINISM

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An Introduction to Philosophy (Pecorino)

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5.2.1: Libertarianism

5.2.2: Determinism

5.2.3: Compatibilism

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5.2.1: Libertarianism

(NOTE: You must read only those linked materials that are preceded by the capitalized word **READ**.) Overview of **The Problem of Freedom**

On the definition of freedom and suggested links: READ: http://www.philosophypages.com/dy/f9.htm#free

For those of you who believe that you are free and have a free will and can make free decisions, here are some interesting definitions and presentations of the basic issues

FREE WILL -Definition

Definition 2:

Those who hold that we have free will must deny that we are determined. One form of this position is incompatibilism.

Libertarianism

Human beings are free to choose amongst alternatives available and must be respected as such. This freedom is to be acknowledged and promoted. The believers in free will attempt to argue for their case against those that believe that all human actions are determined by previous events and the laws of the physical universe.

Below are several arguments in support of the Libertarian position.

The libertarians would ask that we consider the **DATA of experience:**

1. Experience of deliberation

a. I deliberate only about MY behavior

b. I deliberate only about future things

c. I cannot deliberate about what I shall do, if I already know what I am going to do.

d. I cannot deliberate unless I believe that it is "up to me."

2. Experience that it is "up to me" what to do.

They hold that there is no necessity governing human behavior. There is no causal or logical necessity. (Logical Necessity, e.g. principle of non-contradiction) (Causal necessity - physical law, e.g. gravity)

Suggested Reading: John Hospers, The Meaning of Freedom

A Brief Defense of Free Will by Tibor Machan

A Contemporary Defense of Free Will by Richard Taylor

TAYLOR'S DATA TO WHICH ANY THEORY MUST CONFORM

Richard Taylor is a modern American philosopher who has taught at the University of Rochester and at Hartwick College. Taylor proposes the following method for finding out whether or not determinism is true: We try to see whether it is consistent with certain data, “that is, by seeing whether or not it squares with certain things that everyone knows, or believes himself to know, or with things everyone is at least more sure about than the answer to the question at issue.” (*Metaphysics,* 4th ed., Englewood

Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1992, p. 38)

The following is from this source 2001.

Taylor's data

1. I sometimes deliberate, with the view to making a decision; a decision, namely, to do this thing or that.
2. Whether or not I deliberate about what to do, it is sometimes up to me what I do.

By "deliberation" Taylor means the experience of weighing something in one's mind, of trying out various options in one's mind. There are certain presuppositions of deliberation, namely,

1. I can deliberate only about my own behavior and never about the behavior of another.
2. I can deliberate only about future things, never about things past or present.
3. I can't deliberate about what I'm going to do if I already know what I'm going to do.
4. I can't deliberate about what to do, even though I may not know what I'm going to do, unless I believe that it is up to me what I'm going to do. (pp. 39-40)

These data are not consistent with the thesis of determinism. If determinism is true, then it is an illusion that I ever genuinely deliberate about anything or that anything is ever really up to me. If these data are true, then determinism is false. Taylor argues that it doesn't make any difference whether we are talking about a forthright, "hard" determinism, like that of Holbach, or a compatibilist, "soft" determinism, like that of Hume. According to "soft" determinism, an action is free just so long as it is caused by an internal state of the agent himself or herself. Against this, he proposes the counterexample of an ingenious physiologist who can induce in a subject any volition he pleases, so that, simply by pushing a button, he can cause the subject to have an internal state which the subject will experience as the desire to do a certain thing. If the subject then does that thing, unimpeded by any external obstacle, that action meets the criterion of being a "free" action, in accordance with the thesis of soft determinism. That is, the action is due to an internal state of the agent and is not opposed by any external factor. However, we see at once that this action is not free, because it was due to the subject's being in a certain internal state over which he or she had no control. Then Taylor points out that the supposition of the work of the ingenious physiologist isn't necessary to reach the same conclusion. As long as there is any cause of the internal state that was not under the control of the person whose internal state it is, the resulting action is not free.

There is a real choice that is not to be evaded, then, between accepting determinism and rejecting the data with which we began, on the one hand, or holding fast to our data and rejecting the thesis which is inconsistent with them. Taylor points out, however, that simply rejecting determinism and embracing the thesis of simple indeterminism, which says that some events are uncaused, brings us no closer to a theory explaining free actions that is consistent with our data. He asks the reader to imagine a case in which his or her right arm is free, according to this conception. That is, it just moves one way or another, without any cause whatever. Plainly, if the agent is not the cause for the arm movements, then those movements are not free, voluntary actions of the agent.

Accordingly, Taylor develops a theory of agency with the following elements:

1. An action that is free must be caused by the agent who performs it, and it must be such that no other set of antecedent conditions was sufficient for the occurrence of just that action.
2. An agent is a self or person, and not merely a collection of things or events, but a self-moving being. (pp. 51-52)

Taylor recognizes that this involves a metaphysical commitment to a special kind of causation, and he suggests that perhaps "causation" is not the best language to use to describe it. He proposes that we might want to say instead that an agent *originates, initiates*, or simply, *performs* an action. All other cases of causation we conceive of as a relation between events. One event or set of events is a sufficient, or necessary, or sufficient and necessary condition for the occurrence of another. However, an agent is not an event, and we certainly wouldn't say the mere existence of the agent is ever a sufficient condition for the occurrence of one of his or her free actions. Rather, it is only the free action of the agent that is the cause or the origination of the action. Since Taylor can offer no further explanation of how it that this occurs, he admits that it is possible that the data that this theory was developed to explain might be an illusion after all, and his essay ends on an inconclusive note.

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Richard Taylor: ***A Contemporary Defense of Free Will***

The idea of freedom operative in this view is one in which there is no obstacle or impediment that prevents behavior, no constraints, for it is constraints that force behavior. Freedom of the human agent is free activity that is unimpeded and unconstrained. So, there is the **Theory of Agency in which** there exist self-determining beings: free and rational. There exists the self or person, a substance and self-moving being. The libertarians believe that this theory is consistent with the data of human consciousness. But that DATA may be illusion!!

-*

Summary of Taylor's view by Omonia Vinieris (QCC, 2002)

In his work, *A Contemporary Defense of Free Will*, Taylor refutes the theories held by compatibilism (soft determinism) and simple indeterminism to illustrate their implausibility. He further goes on to affirm his theory of agency to articulate his libertarian standpoint.

Taylor clarifies the concept of deliberation as it is fundamentally the act of considering or assessing something in one's mind. According to Taylor, deliberation encompasses the following premises: One can deliberate solely about one's own conduct and by no means about that of another due to the simple fact that each person makes up one's own mind and never the mind of a different person. There is only deliberation of future actions and never of precedent ones because one can not deliberate about or consider an action that has already transpired. Deliberation is a conditional state that is unconfirmed because it entails the action before it takes place and therefore if one knows or confirms a future action, deliberation is invalid. Altogether, deliberation itself does not exist or ensue if one does not even believe that it is ever one's own consideration that accounts for one's decision to do anything because that is essentially the principle that deliberation embraces.

In his critique of soft determinism, Taylor explains primarily what line of reasoning it maintains and then pinpoints its incongruity to negate its veracity. Compatibilism is a position whose advocates renounce hard determinist thought. Hard determinist position asserts that we are not morally responsible for our own actions because we are not liable for anything we do. Yet, soft determinists say that freedom and determinism are compatible. Determinism is plausibly coherent with freedom as an agent is a carrier of volition and acts appropriately to his or her desires and wishes. On occasion it may be that one's actions are the product of one's deliberation or conditional forethought. Still, if compatibilism holds true it must simultaneously maintain the determinist idea that one's choices are preordained by prenatal events. If this is so, then how can it be possibly up to anyone to do anything?

Simple indeterminism is the denial of determinism. These indeterminists affirm that free agents are morally responsible for their actions which are tamed and controlled. If actions originate from noncausal events as indeterminists claim, then they are chaotic and untamed. Thus, Taylor considers it a contradiction to suggest that one's actions originate from uncaused events because neither is one really a free agent nor morally responsible for his or her actions. These actions are uncontrollable and irresponsible.

Taylor's theory of agency proclaims that all events are caused, but unlike determinist theory, some changes or actions have beginnings. A free action is triggered by the agent itself. An agent, in this case, is described as a human, a self-moving body, capable of being the first cause of motion in a causal sequence. It is important that no series of foregoing conditions is adequate for the actual happening of the action, otherwise it would not be free. He further specifies that we should not speak of causation in terms of his free agency. The agent, rather, initiates an action through its performance. An agent, he asserts, is not a set of events that executes causation and therefore it is the free action of the agent that is the cause of the action that occurred.

"In the case of an action that is free, it must be such that it is caused by the agent who performs it, but such that no antecedent conditions were sufficient for his performing just that action."

-*

John Searle on Free Will (2001)

The Freewill Problem:

1. The 'free will' problem:
    1. What is the nature of free agency and how is it related to the conditions of responsible behaviour?
    2. For instance, is the kind freedom that is necessary for moral responsibility freedom of the will, of the agent, of the agent's deliberations, of the agent's choices, or of the agent's actions?
2. Incompatibilism.
    1. Incompatibilism is the view that the kind of freedom necessary for moral responsibility is inconsistent (incompatible)

with the truth of determinism.
2. Incompatibilists form two camps: the hard determinists and the libertarians.
    1. Hard determinists argue that since determinism is true, it follows that there is no freedom and no moral responsibility.
    2. Libertarians argue that since we are both free and responsible, determinism must be false.
3. Incompatibilists generally hold that the kind of freedom necessary for moral responsibility is some kind of freedom of the will.
4. However, incompatibilists generally find it difficult to explain what is meant by the notion of freedom of the will.

3. Compatibilism.
    1. Compatibilism is the view that the kind of freedom necessary for moral responsibility is consistent (compatible) with the truth of determinism.
    2. Compatibilists generally hold that the kind of freedom necessary for moral responsibility is some kind of freedom of choice or freedom of deliberation.
    3. Compatibilists generally appeal to the social efficacy of our blaming practices in regulating behaviour in order to explain why this kind of freedom is sufficient for moral justification. However, social efficacy does not seem to be sufficient for moral justification as a socially efficacious practice may be morally unjust.

Searle's Solution to the Freewill Problem:

1. Reinterpreting the problem:
    1. The traditional debate conflates 2 problems:
        1. The question of the sort of freedom that is necessary for moral responsibility.
        2. The question of whether or not our actions are causally determined by their antecedents.
2. Consider the following situation:
    1. Agent A must choose between 2 options o1 and o2 at time t1. A chooses o1 and acts accordingly. A's action begins at t2 and ends at t3. Let us suppose that there is no time gap between t1 and t2, and that A's action was voluntary (in the normal sense).
3. There are 2 ways in which the brain might function in this situation (2 solutions to the freewill problem):
    1. The state of the brain at t1 was causally sufficient to determine the state of the brain at t2, and the state of the brain at t2 was sufficient to carry it over to t3. The psychologically real gap corresponds to no neurobiological reality.
    2. The state of the brain at t1 was not causally sufficient to determine the state of the brain at t2, and so forth. The psychologically real gap does correspond to some neurobiological reality.
4. Position A is the compatibilist position: psychological libertarianism with physiological determinism. This position is implausible because, whilst it is based on an attractively simple picture of the brain, it makes the psychological processes of rational decision-making into a very biologically expensive epiphenomenal illusion. Rational decision-making is useless because everything has already been determined in the brain.
5. Position B is more plausible but needs to be carefully stated.
    1. If stated in the form of a parallelogram, it gives a misleading picture of the relation between consciousness and the brain. This picture suggest that consciousness is a surface feature of the brain.
    2. It is not, it is a system feature in the same way that liquidity is a system feature of water. The whole system is conscious and the whole system moves towards a rational decision.
    3. Conscious states can act causally in a way that affects neurobiological elements of the system of which is they are a systemic feature.
        1. This is similar to Sperry's wheel example: consider any single molecule in a rolling wheel. The movements of the wheel may determine the movements of the molecule even though the wheel is nothing more than a collection of such molecules.
        2. The principle difference between the wheel and the conscious brain is that the movements of the former are causally determined whereas the movements of the latter are not.
        3. The conscious state of the brain at any given time is completely fixed by its neurobiology at that time. However, the conscious state of the brain at one time is not completely fixed by its neurobiology at another time. This gap can be explained by appeal to the self.
    4. This position becomes more plausible if you think of quantum mechanics (after all, there's no reason why we should stop at the level of neurobiology). Total determinism is not needed to make the universe intelligible. At the quantum level, the universe is not determined.
6. One possible criticism of position B is that it postulates randomness.
7. This criticism is unfounded. Rational agency is realized in the neurobiological structures of the brain and can causally affect those structures. Thus, the neurobiological structures are driven by the same rational agency as conscious agency.

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DEFENSE of Free Will Inspiring Philosophy Part One Part two

There are no greater defenders or representatives of the position that humans have free will than the existentialists. They may not offer strict philosophical proof but they do present some strong language in defense of freedom. The next section presents the existentialist view.

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5.2.2: Determinism

(NOTE: You must read only those linked materials that are preceded by the capitalized word **READ**.)

Are you free or not? Here is quite a bit of material on the determinist positions. After reading the basic positions and definitions, look at the end for a **presentation of the basic position.**

Universal Determinism: (Unarticulated assumption of humans, implicit in behavior.)

Everything is the effect of some cause or causes.

For everything that exists there are antecedent conditions.

Causal Determinism - every event has a cause

Thesis of determinism: everything whatever is caused.

All things follow natural law, regular patterns.

All events are predictable if enough is known.

Determinism and Human Behavior: all behaviors have a cause.

Hard determinism - causal determinism is true, and therefore, free action and moral responsibility are impossible. The metaphysical theory about human freedom and free will and ethical theories may be in conflict. Two theories may be in conflict with one another but one can't resolve the conflict by **assuming** either one to be true or false to resolve the conflict. Humans can not be held responsible for their behavior because they could not have acted otherwise.

READ: For a definition and some links to related materials

READ: an overview

READ: a lecture

READ: Baron D'Holbach on Strong Determinism

Society of Natural Science (Organization favoring TOTAL Determinism)

Definitions and Overviews of DETERMINISM

Definition One Two Overview

FATALISM AND DETERMINISM

UNIVERSAL CAUSATION + CAUSAL DETERMINATION OF ALL HUMAN BEHAVIOR

Fatalism concerning the past- it can not be changed

Fatalism concerning the future- it can not be changed

e.g., The future is already known by God- Divine Omniscience

Therefore, all events are unavoidable

AN ARGUMENT for FATALISM

Law of Excluded Middle

1. all statements are true or false

2. all statements about the future are true or false

3. statements that are true or false can not be changed, altered or avoided

Therefore, all future events are already determined and unavoidable. {and (perhaps) known by an omniscient being}

INVINCIBLE FATE

People make statements about "the" "future". Do these statements or claims exist as true or false statements?

If so , is the future already set , is it determined? If not then what is the meaning of such statements or claims?

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Behaviorism

A school of psychology that seeks to explain behavior entirely in terms of observable responses to environmental stimuli. Influenced by the conditioned-reflex experiments of PAVLOV, behaviorism was introduced in 1913 by J.B. WATSON, who, denying both the value of introspection and the concept of consciousness, emphasized laboratory techniques. B.F. SKINNER, the major modern proponent, concerned himself exclusively with the relationship of observable responses to stimuli and rewards.

Autobiography: B.F. Skinner Foundation

Notes on Skinner and Determinism by William O'Meara

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A presentation of the basic position of determinism.

There are laws that govern all physical events. Humans are physical and human actions are physical events. All events have their causes in prior events and the laws that govern the physical universe. Human actions are behaviors. Human behaviors are the result of their inherited genetic pattern, their chromosomes, and their basic physical drives and their prior experiences (conditioning, learned behaviors). All humans are animals and as such they have a drive for food, drink, sex, and rest. All humans have learned other behaviors from their interactions with their physical and social environments (other people). Humans have been conditioned by deliberate and accidental patterns of stimulus response reinforcements. Humans have been rewarded or punished for their behaviors. Humans repeat those behaviors they are rewarded for and avoid those behaviors they have been conditioned to associate with punishment. The conditioning may have been deliberate with hugs and kisses and food from parents for good behavior and frowns and scolding and denial of food or other experiences for behavior that was not to be repeated. Teachers in school act in a similar pattern offering rewards and punishments and so they condition our behavior as well. Siblings and friends act likewise towards us. So humans are the products of physical factors. All human actions are caused by those prior factors. Each of us knows that humans have behaviors that are predictable. The determinists believe that when they have greater knowledge of the laws of human behavior they will be able to:

1. predict exactly what a human will do under any set of circumstances
2. manipulate a human into any behavior.

All that would be needed would be :

1. knowledge of all the laws of human behavior
2. knowledge of all the prior conditioning any human has had

Each person knows of the following expressions:

1. **Everyone has a price**

2. **You know how to push his buttons**

These expressions support the determinist view. If someone has been conditioned for certain behaviors and one knows what those conditionings are (the buttons) then all one needs to do is to “push” them to get the response that has been conditioned or programmed into the human.

EVIDENCE:

Children learn quickly about conditioning. Small children learn what cries and screams will get their parents attention. They learn what hugs and kisses will get them the gift they want. Parents learn what rewards and punishments will get their children to do what the parent wants.

EVIDENCE:

Each of us knows that there have been time when someone has pushed our buttons and we have wished that we would not have lost control but that we did! We feel bad. We wanted to act otherwise, under control. But we lost it! They push our buttons, really got our goat, got to us and we behaved in a manner that we wished were otherwise.

Well, that little description of an experience we all can relate to establishes evidence in support of the determinist position. We are NOT FREE. We are the products of conditioning.

EVIDENCE:

Advertisers pay as great deal of money to people who believe that they know something of the laws of human behavior. Advertising is effective in raising the sales of products. People buy things to look classy or to fit in with a group. They often buy things that they can not afford and have little use for but do so because of the advertising. The ads push the buttons and get the response that has been conditioned. People make a great deal of money each year proving that this is so.

EVIDENCE:

At casinos people put money into slot machines and other games of chance. They don’t always win but they get a return often enough to keep them gambling. These behaviors are evidence of the laws of conditioning and of intermittent reinforcement.

If a person can get another to do what they want how can it be said that people are free? If every one has a price to do something and that price is met then they will do it. They will not refuse. They can not refuse.

EVIDENCE:

There is an expression to the effect that we all have a price. The price may not be money it could be the guaranteed safety of our children or fame, power, or something else. If this is true it lends support or evidence in support of the determinist position.

Is it possible for someone to turn down their price when it is offered? Would that not mean that their price was higher or something different than what was offered?

It appears that the claim that " Everyone has a price" is a very difficult claim to disprove. There is lots of evidence in support of it and none opposed to it because any instance of a price being turned down would be a case of the price being miscalculated by whoever made the offer. It would not be the real price. If this is so , there is something either very powerful about the claim or something wrong.

Some will claim that when offered money to do some act that "Never in a million years! You couldn't pay me enough to do that!" and even claim that for them there is no price.

This only means that the price for them has not been offered as yet.

What a person would NEVER do for money they would do to protect the lives of their children or for some other "price"

NO FREEDOM just different prices for different people for different acts!!!!

I do not know the personal histories of the students in my class. I do know some general things about people and what motivates

them. Money is one big conditioning agent.

In class I offer something to someone I think is particularly susceptible to a particular in return for a behavior I want exhibited. It has NEVER failed.

I select a student and take out a five-dollar bill. I offer the ten dollars in return for barking like a dog. He barks. I hand over the $5. I offer another student a ten dollar bill. The student must stand in front of the class and state " I am an ass". He does so and I hand over the $10. I then ask the class if there is anyone there who would turn down $100,000 in return for dropping out of the course and the college for a semester. No one has ever said that they would refuse. They all have a price and if I can meet it I can get them to do the act. I enter the room with an envelope. It is sealed. In it I have a slip a paper on which I have written the action I will make someone do. I have always succeeded. There is something I have the power to do that can get a student to get up and leave the room and the building for the duration of the class. I select a student I make the offer and they get up and leave. It does not cost me any money. They are happy. The class is left wondering whether or not the student could have said NO. I claim that the student COULD NOT HAVE REFUSED, once I met the price. If I know a person's buttons, their programming, their conditioning, and if I can push those buttons I can make that person do what I want.

(Have you figured out what I do? Do you have your price that I could meet? If you think that you know then you are confirming the claims about operant conditioning and behaviorism.)

VIDEO: The best current popular presentation of hard DETERMINISM is in **Sam Harris on Free Will 1:18:52** **http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pCofmZlC72g**

The video presents the basic argument in his book **FREE WILL** Free Press; Original edition (March 6, 2012) **ISBN-13:** 978-1451683400

There is NO FREEDOM of the WILL at all. We have been conditioned to believe in freedom. It is a silly and outmoded idea that stops us from being more effective in reducing criminal behavior and improving the quality of life for everyone. When criminals are found guilty they need to be reprogrammed, reconditioned to avoid the criminal behavior. We do not do that now because of the silly beliefs we have in souls, minds and freedom. Psychology and Neuroscience will continue to provide more and more evidence that people are not free and that we do not have minds. We have BRAINS and we have CONDITIONING. That is all. .

EVIDENCE:

The brain contains elements that determine what appear to be human decisions: the neurological basis for decision making.

The brain in its unconscious processing determines what appear to be conscious choices!!!

VIEW: Free Will with Richard Holton 7:43

VIEW: Philosophy Vibe 10:15

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Either you are forced to do something by some external agent or you are FORCED or MADE to do something by an internal agent such as a REASON or a MOTIVE or a FEELING or a AIM or a PURPOSE or a GOAL that you have.

Either way your behavior is DETERMINED by the forces working on you that make you who you are and make you do what you do.

NO FREEDOM.

When you claim that you decide to do X and that the decision to do X was FREE what do you mean?

What made you decide to do X?

Whatever made you decide to do X MADE YOU decide to do it.

It MADE YOU decide.

If I ask why did you decide to do X and you indicate that it was your values or motives or goals or aims or desires or prior

experiences then that is what MADE YOU decide. There is no freedom there is only determinism. Antecedent conditions and experiences have produced as a consequence the DECISION to do X.

****

The point is this is evidence that people act out of motives and you can get them to do things if you know what those motives are.

Motives are the result of prior experiences and so people are determined by their past to act in certain ways.

They can not help themselves. They have no free will.

They are conditioned to believe otherwise and they enjoy thinking that they are free but the evidence is that they are not.

****

FINAL PIECE of **EVIDENCE** in support of DETERMINISM

Would you stop reading this book or drop this course in return for $10,000? Tell the truth!

Would you really have a choice? If I met your price? You "gotta" do what you "gotta" do!

The "gotta" is your conditioning.

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William James Dilemma of Determinsim and John Hospers, The Meaning of Freedom

A discussion on Freedom and Determinism that focuses on what is meant by a FREE WILL.

Criticisms of Determinism

BOOKS:

Sam Harris, **Free Will**, New York ,Free Press, , 2012

Cris Evatt, **The Myth of Free Will**, Sausalito, CA, Café Essays , 2010.

Francis Crick, **The Astonishing Hypothesis**, New York, Touchstone-Simon & Schuster, 1994

VIDEOS: with Dr. Daniel C. Dennett, Professor of Philosophy at Tufts University

Is Science Showing That We Don't Have Free Will?

Free Will Determinism and Evolution

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5.2.3: Compatibilism

Soft determinism (or **compatibilism**) is the position or view that causal determinism is true, but we still act as free, morally responsible agents when, in the absence of external constraints, our actions are caused by our desires.

Compatibilism does not maintain that humans are free. Compatabilism does not hold that humans have free will.

Compatibilism holds that:

1) the thesis of determinism is true, and that accordingly all human behavior, voluntary or involuntary, like the behavior of all other things, arises from antecedent conditions, given which no other behavior is possible: all human behavior is caused and determined

2)voluntary behavior is nonetheless free to the extent that it is not externally constrained or impeded

3) the causes of voluntary behavior are certain states, events, or conditions within the agent: acts of will or volitions, choices, decisions, desires etc...

Compatibilism is NOT a position that combines the libertarian and determinist positions.

Compatibilismis NOT a compromise of the two other positions.

Compatibilism is NOT a position that holds that humans are "a little bit" free.

Compatibilism is NOT a position that holds that humans have "limited free will".

Compatibilism is NOT a position that holds that humans have some free will.

Compatibilism is determinism with a slight modification for the sake of appearances and for our language use. It is a position taken because of the perceived need to have some idea of accountability or responsibility for human behavior.

For those who hold this position humans can be held accountable for their actions and blameworthy if they act according to their will (however formed) and are not coerced or forced by external agencies or agents. If the motives or goals or other factors that form the will are the results of prior events and experienced and are so determined that does not nullify the idea that the human acts according to a will and has freedom of the will.

Humans are either free or they are not. They either possess free will and can use it or they do not have it at all. They either have it and can use it as often as they want to do so or they have only the appearance of free will and really never make decisions or choices devoid of prior influences that determine the outcome of the decision or choice making procedure.

That there may be social or physical constraints is not the issue here. Humans are not able to fly using only their own bodies to propel them through the air. You could say that humans are not "free " to do so but that would be to misuse the word free and change its meaning from "being able to choose" to "being physically able to do".

There may be repercussions or consequences for our actions so that a person might want to say something like "I am not free to rob a bank and by that mean that if they did they would be pursued and captures and imprisoned. If persons have free will they can make the choice to rob a bank and flee capture.

Freedom in this context of the freedom versus determinism issue has a meaning that identifies it with possessing free will or being able to make choices for ones self.

Definition and suggested links by Garth Kemerling READ:

READ: Wikipedia on compatibilism on Free Will

W. T. Stace position in from ***Religion and the Modern Mind***

Orthodox Christian View: A Dialogue on Free Will and Determinism : Deacon Father John Whiteford

Humean Compatibilism:

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Criticisms of Compatibilism:

The determinists criticize the compatibilists for for claiming that there is any freedom at all. The determinists think the compatibilists are defining freedom in a different manner in order to make the claim that there is some freedom of choice. The determinists hold that all apparent decision making or choices are determined by internal and external factors , including desires, motives, principles that are in turn the effects of prior causes.

The Libertarians criticize the compatibilists for being determinists in a different guise.

Criticism of the Compatibilist's Analysis of "Could Have Done Otherwise" by James Pryor

READ: INCOMPATIBILISM

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FURTHER READINGS:

David Hume: Our Freedom Reconciled with Determinism

Who's afraid of Determinism?
Article by Christopher Taylor and Daniel Dennett (Tufts University) against incompatibilism

Freedom and Determinism: A Naturalistic Approach
Article defending Dennett's compatibilism by David L. Thompson (Memorial University of Newfoundland)

The Nature of Freewill Defense of compatibilist position by Peter Voss

A Case for Free Will and Determinism
Collection of discussions on compatibilism by Ben Best

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5.3: The Brain with David Eagleman (PBS)

Who's in Control?

YouTube Video

This interactive element is not available in this format. Visit the link or scan the QR code to access it online.

View this YouTube Video online

Free Will

YouTube Video

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6: GOD

6.1: Philosophy of Religion

6.1.1: Science and Theology

6.1.2: Pascal's Wager

6.1.3: Anselm's Ontological Argument and Gaunilo's Lost Island

6.1.4: Aquinas' Cosmological Argument

6.1.5: Paley's Watchmaker Argument

6.1.6: Hume and "The Problem of Evil"

6.2: Philosophy of Religion and the Problem of God

6.2.1: Overview

6.2.2: Proofs for the Existence of God- Overview

6.2.3: Argument from Revelation

6.2.4: Argument from Reason- Ontological Argument

6.2.5: Argument from Reason- Cosmological Argument

6.2.6: Argument from Reason - Teleological Argument

6.2.7: Argument from Experience- Direct

6.2.8: Argument from Experience- Miracles

6.2.9: Argument from Experience- Psychic Phenomena

6.2.10: Argument- Pragmatism

6.2.11: Problem of Evil

6.2.12: Summary of Arguments

6.2.13: Religious Language and Worldviews

6.2.14: What is Religion?

6.2.15: Conclusion

6.3: 8-Bit Philosophy

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6.1: PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

Philosophy of religion according to the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* is, "the philosophical examination of the central themes and concepts involved in religious traditions." It is an ancient discipline, being found in the earliest known manuscripts concerning philosophy, and relates to many other branches of philosophy, including metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics.

The philosophy of religion differs from religious philosophy in that it seeks to discuss questions regarding the nature of religion as a whole, rather than examining the problems brought forth by a particular belief system. It is designed such that it can be carried out dispassionately by those who identify as believers or non-believers.

Field of study

Philosophy of religion covers alternative beliefs about God, the varieties of religious experience, the interplay between science and religion, the nature and scope of good and evil, and religious treatments of birth, history, and death. The field also includes the ethical implications of religious commitments, the relation between faith, reason, experience and tradition, concepts of the miraculous, the sacred revelation, mysticism, power, and salvation.

The philosophy of religion has been distinguished from theology by pointing out that, for theology, "its critical reflections are based on religious convictions". Also, "theology is responsible to an authority that initiates its thinking, speaking, and witnessing ... [while] philosophy bases its arguments on the ground of timeless evidence."

Basic themes and problems

Three considerations that are basic to the philosophy of religion concerning deities are: the existence of God, the nature of God, and the knowledge of God.

Existence of God

There are several main positions with regard to the existence of God that one might take:

1. Theism - the belief in the existence of one or more divinities or deities.
2. Pantheism - the belief that God exists *as* all things of the cosmos, that God is one and all is God; God is immanent.
3. Panentheism - the belief that God encompasses all things of the cosmos but that God is greater than the cosmos; God is both immanent and transcendent.
4. Deism - the belief that God does exist but does not interfere with human life and the laws of the universe; God is transcendent.
5. Monotheism - the belief that a single deity exists which rules the universe as a separate and individual entity.
6. Polytheism - the belief that multiple deities exist which rule the universe as separate and individual entities.
7. Henotheism - the belief that multiple deities may or may not exist, though there is a single supreme deity.
8. Henology - believing that multiple avatars of a deity exist, which represent unique aspects of the ultimate deity.
9. Agnosticism - (literally, *not knowing* or *without knowledge*) the belief that the existence or non-existence of deities or God is currently unknown or unknowable and cannot be proven. A weaker form of this might be defined as simply a lack of certainty about gods' existence or nonexistence.[]
10. Atheism - the rejection of belief in the existence of deities.
    1. Weak atheism is simply the absence of belief that any deities exist.
    2. Strong atheism is specifically the position that there are no deities.
11. Apatheism - a complete disinterest in, or lack of caring for, whether or not any deity or deities exists.
12. Possibilianism

These are not mutually exclusive positions. For example, agnostic theists choose to believe God exists while asserting that knowledge of God's existence is inherently unknowable. Similarly, agnostic atheists reject belief in the existence of all deities, while asserting that whether any such entities exist or not is inherently unknowable.

Natural theology

The attempt to provide proofs or arguments for the existence of God is one aspect of what is known as natural theology or the natural theistic project. This strand of natural theology attempts to justify belief in God by independent grounds. There is plenty of philosophical literature on faith (especially fideism) and other subjects generally considered to be outside the realm of natural theology. Perhaps most of philosophy of religion is predicated on natural theology's assumption that the existence of God can be justified or warranted on rational grounds. There has been considerable philosophical and theological debate about the kinds of proofs, justifications and arguments that are appropriate for this discourse.

The philosopher Alvin Plantinga has shifted his focus to justifying belief in God (that is, those who believe in God, for whatever reasons, are rational in doing so) through Reformed epistemology, in the context of a theory of warrant and proper cognitive function.

Other reactions to natural theology are those of Wittgensteinian philosophers of religion, most notably D. Z. Phillips. Phillips rejects "natural theology" and its evidentialist approach as confused, in favor of a grammatical approach which investigates the meaning of belief in God. For Phillips, belief in God is not a proposition with a particular truth value, but a form of life. Consequently, the question of whether God exists confuses the logical categories which govern theistic language with those that govern other forms of discourse (most notably, scientific discourse). According to Phillips, the question of whether or not God exists cannot be "objectively" answered by philosophy because the categories of truth and falsity, which are necessary for asking the question, have no application in the religious contexts wherein religious belief has its sense and meaning. In other words, the question cannot be answered because it cannot be asked without entering into confusion. As Phillips sees things, the job of the philosopher is not to investigate the "rationality" of belief in God but to elucidate its meaning.

Problem of evil

Main articles: Problem of evil and Theodicy

The problem of evil is the question of how to reconcile the existence of evil with that of a deity who is, in either absolute or relative terms, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnibenevolent. An argument from evil attempts to show that the co-existence of evil and such a deity is unlikely or impossible if placed in absolute terms. Attempts to show the contrary have traditionally been discussed under the heading of theodicy.

The nature of God

There exists many understandings of the term "God". It typically differs not only from religion to religion, but also from person to person who share the same religious beliefs. It is therefore hard to define "God" or list a complete array of characteristics (nature) of God that is applicable to all religions.

For the sake of simplicity, the concept of "God" is often described by philosophers of religion to be an " 1. Omniscient, 2. Omnipotent, 3. Omnibenevolent 4. Being". Any "God" that is referred to in most contexts of philosophy of religion must have the above four characteristics, including being a "Being". Note that this list is not exhaustive. There exists other characteristics of certain "God"s that are not included, for example, "omnipresent".

Above all, a simple "if" relationship exists between "God" and those four characteristics. That is to say. if X is a "God", X must possess all four characteristics. Yet, according to the above statement, the existence of those four characteristics together on Y might not be sufficient to lead to the conclusion that Y is a "God". However, the non-existence of one or more of the four characteristics on an object Z is sufficient to lead to the argument that Z is not a "God" that we have defined above.

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6.1.1: Science and Theology

13 Science and Theology

Science and Theology[17]

The relationship between science and theology has a long and complicated history that goes back four or five hundred years. This discussion blends into an even longer debate over the relationship between reason and revelation. In response to science theology has undergone a profound reformulation. The European Enlightenment and the rise of the historical-critical study of the Bible were also extremely important, but I will limit my attention to science. I am also focusing on the response of Protestant theology to science, since that is the area I know best.

I want to list four important challenges arising from science that called orthodox theology into question and brought about a major revision of Christian thought.

1. The first challenge was that the success of scientific method called into question truth claims based on supernatural revelation and tradition. Science has provided the modern world its most reliable standard of knowledge. Science is the dominant paradigm of truth about the world. At the extreme we get what can be called scientism: What cannot be known by science not only cannot be known but is not real. Along with this there was in many quarters a loss of confidence in speculative reason under the influence of philosophers like David Hume and Immanuel Kant. In the minds of many they demolished the traditional arguments for the existence of God. This took place in the context of the Enlightenment, which urged people to think for themselves. It called into question all ancient traditions, superstitions, and any claims about reality that could not stand the test of enlightened reason. The great themes of the Enlightenment were reason, nature, and progress. If we will use our reason to understand nature and history, we can make material and moral progress as we move toward an ultimate perfection of life on earth. Among the resources of reason none was more important than science in providing the truth that would enlighten us and help us make life better. Science was based on evidence we could test. It solved one problem after another. It worked. It was creating a picture of the world and of human beings that was so convincing to so many that it gradually weakened other ways of knowing or pushed them aside. For Christians it raised a disturbing question: If the Bible could be wrong in matters of fact, could it also be wrong about matters of faith?

2. The second challenge was that science undermined biblical cosmology. The Bible had provided Christian Europe its basic story of the origin of the cosmos and the structure of the natural world for 1500 hundred years. Between 1500-1900 of the Christian era, this understanding was demolished. The biblical picture was that of a three-story universe with the earth in the middle, heaven above, and hell below. This world came into being a few thousand years ago with all the species of plant and animal life reproducing after their kind. Adam and Eve were real people living in a garden that could roughly be located on a map. A series of discoveries from Copernicus to Darwin demonstrated that picture of the universe and of human origins to be in error. Copernicus showed that the earth was not in the center of the world. His suggestion that the sun was the center was also wrong, but that is another story. Next geology revealed the earth to be much older than the biblical chronology allowed. Then came Darwin with the big bombshell. In 1859 the world was shaken by the claim that present species of life have evolved over a long period of time by natural selection to produce the forms of life that now inhabit the earth. The most disturbing feature of this theory was that human beings did not descend from Adam and Eve a few thousand years ago but evolved from earlier species that could be traced back to the first beginnings of life on earth far in the distant past.

The Christian world was deeply disturbed. A few came pretty quickly to the conclusion that Darwin was right. They saw that there was no point in trying to resist. Others were upset and simply refused to believe it. They insisted that the Bible not science gave us the true picture. In England Bishop Wilberforce reacted with sarcasm. He asked Julian Huxley, the great scientist, whether it was on his mother's side or his father's side that he was descended from apes. An upper class, aristocratic British lady upon hearing about Darwin's theory said, "Oh dear, that is so dreadful. Let us hope it is not true. But if it is, let us keep quiet about it." In America Charles Hodge, the eminent Presbyterian theologian at Princeton, said that Darwinism is atheism. This was all taking place from 1860-1900. I saw a book by a fundamentalist Christian written in this century who said that he had seen performers in the circus riding two horses at one time, one foot on one horse and the other foot on the other. However, he noted that he had never seen this done when the horses were going in opposite directions. In his mind the Bible and evolution were going in opposite directions.

This, then, is the second impact of science. It undermined the biblical picture of the physical and biological world. The controversy

raised by Darwin goes on today. Liberal Christians accept evolution and revise their view of the Bible and of the world accordingly. Fundamentalists still insist that Darwin was wrong and the Bible is right. Some want creationism taught in the public schools along with evolution.

3. The third challenge was the fact that the scientific picture of a law-abiding world called into question the reality of miracle and the supernatural. Science pictures nature as a dynamic, causal network, self-contained and self-explanatory. There is one order of activities in which all events occur in a law-abiding fashion. In this view miracles are suspect. The Bible is full of miracles from the Red Sea incident to the Virgin Birth of Jesus and his Resurrection from the dead, to mention only a few. John Calvin had used miracles and the fulfillment of prophesy as evidence of the truth of Scripture. Now it was miracles themselves that were in question. Could Christians live everyday in a world that abided by the laws of nature and then go to church on Sunday and believe in miracles that violated them?

4. The fourth challenge was that the picture of nature as a self-contained causal system called into question the need for a supernatural creator or for any reference to divine purpose. From the 17th century beginnings until the 20th century revolutions in physical science, the natural order had been described by science in mechanistic, deterministic, materialist terms. Nature consists of bits of material stuff - matter - organized into a machine that operates in accordance with inexorable laws. The natural order is at best a neutral and at worst a meaningless process. There are causes but no reasons or purposes in nature. In nature there is no freedom, no meaning, or value. This is the most powerful and daunting challenge of all. Science seemed to imply a universe that needed no God to create it. It was a machine that required no explanation beyond itself. This machine did just what it did do, not knowing or caring what it did or having any purpose in doing it . In 1903 Bertrand Russell offered the most extreme summary of this outlook by saying that the world science presents for our belief is meaningless and void of purpose, an accidental collocation of atoms.[18] A lot of people, including myself, do not think that present-day science requires this world-view, but it prevailed for 300 years.[19] Moreover, many scientists today still hold that nature is full of causes but exemplifies no purpose.[20]

We could go on with this at great length. I have by no means given the complete picture, but let me turn now to the response of theology to these challenges. Let me speak briefly of two main types of response. I will then divide the second type into two sub-groups. This will leave out a lot that needs to be said to get the complete picture, but it will at least give some hint as to how Christian theology has met the challenge of modern science. I will call the two basic responses by the short-hand terms of fundamentalism and liberalism, recognizing that each of these schools of thought comes in many varieties. Moreover, some views would fall in between. To get the main point before us at once, let me say that fundamentalism says the Bible is right about everything, and that if science says something different, it must be rejected. Liberals say that science and the Bible are both right within their own legitimate spheres, but they deal with different aspects of reality. Therefore, there need not be any conflict between science and theology.

Fundamentalism: Fundamentalists hold the view that the Bible is inerrant, without error. It tells the truth about everything it mentions. It is right about nature, the universe, the origin of human beings, the reproduction of species, and so on. All of its historical claims are true. The miracle stories happened just the way the Bible says. There is to be no compromise of biblical truth. The Bible is the Word of God in a full, complete, total manner and in all respects. Hence, if the Bible teaches that Adam and Eve were literal people living a garden somewhere on earth that we could locate on earth, then that story is just true. If evolution teaches something contrary to what the right interpretation of Scripture requires, then it is wrong. True science is in harmony with the Bible. Whatever contradicts the Bible is bad science. Some conservatives have made a variety of accommodations to science with respect to biblical cosmology, the age of the earth, and even evolution. Some even venture to distinguish between matters of science not essential to religious truth and matters of faith in which the Bible is without any error at all. As the recognition of the authority of science grows with respect to its own legitimate field of inquiry, the closer it comes to blending in with a moderate liberal approach. At some point the boundaries between science and theology and between fundamentalism and liberalism may become fuzzy.

Liberalism: What all forms of liberalism agree on is that science is not to be contested on its own terms. If the scientific evidence shows conclusively that evolution occurred in the way that present-day science says it did, then it must be accepted. We simply have to come to terms with it. The basic way of doing that is to distinguish between the realms that science and religion deal with. Here let me distinguish very broadly between two sub-types of liberal thinking that make the distinction between science and theology in somewhat different ways. They agree with the basic liberal premise is that we must distinguish between two spheres of knowledge about reality.

1. The first approach is deeply influenced by the philosophy of Immanuel Kant. Kant distinguished between the realm of fact that science deals with and the realm of value that morality and religion deal with. It is true that science presents us with a world of fact that is law-abiding and void of freedom and value. However, we have another faculty of understanding as moral persons who are free, who can live in accordance with duty, and make value judgments. Theology interprets the moral and religious realms.

Science and religion cannot contradict each other since they deal with different spheres of human activity and deal with the world in different ways. Many theologians in the 19th and 20th centuries have taken their clues from Kant. Karl Barth, Emil Brunner, Rudolf Bultmann, and H. Richard Niebuhr fall into this camp. Existential theology under the joint influence of Kant and Kierkegaard takes this approach. The world, then, is one order of activities that human beings deal with in two different ways. On the one hand, we have the realm of fact, law, cause, and determinism. On the other hand, we have the realm of value, meaning, purpose, and freedom. Morality and religion are in this second sphere, and theology is the interpreter of the moral and religious experience of human beings in relation to God. Science neither contradicts or supports religion. It has its own methods and its own subject matter. The same is true of theology. It cannot call into question the findings of science, but it can accept them whatever they are and then go on to make its own claims based on Scripture, tradition, reason, and experience. However, it does mean that much of the Bible cannot be taken literally. The Bible is not a book of science. The creation stories Genesis have to be seen as myths that contain moral and religious truth for our lives today in a world that was produced by a long evolutionary process. Many liberals rejected the virgin birth and the literal resurrection of Jesus and many other miracle stories because these miracles are contrary to what science knows about physical and biological laws. Science tells us about facts. Religion tells us about values - to oversimplify the matter.

It is important to recognize that this view holds that it does not matter to faith what science says about the nature of the world. In the 19th century and on into the early 20th the prevailing scientific cosmology was materialistic, mechanistic, and materialistic. Nature is a realm without freedom, meaning, and value. If 20th century science after relativity, quantum mechanics, indeterminacy, and the like no longer implies this particular world-view, then it does not matter much. Faith does not look to science for its foundations, and it is not threatened by anything that science could possibly say. Hence, theology can be basically indifferent to any and all cosmologies that implied by the scientific account of nature and the world of observable objects. Faith has to do with the decisions and commitments of selves in quest of meaning and purpose as moral personalities. The two realms may converse with each other, but neither can undermine or support the other.[21]

2. The second type of liberal approach is very much like the first in many ways. It differs primarily in that it does not make a sharp division between science and theology or between facts and values. Instead of a dualism between the world as known by disinterested observers, on the one hand, and committed moral selves, on the other hand, this approach speaks of different dimensions of the same events or things as objective entities. Science gives us a partial picture of the whole. It gives us one perspective on the world. The full and complete reality has many dimensions, some of which are not discerned by scientific methods. The part it deals with by its particular approach is completely true within those limits. Science abstracts from the whole and investigates nature in so far as it can be observed by the senses or measured and quantified with the aid of technology. Philosophy is needed to ask about the nature and meaning of the totality, about reality in its fulness and wholeness. Science gives us a perspective on the whole, but it does not tell us the whole truth about the whole of reality. Philosophy must do that, and theology does the same with the special task of interpreting the meaning of the Christian tradition within this framework. Process theology under the influence of Alfred North Whitehead is the best example of this approach. It is much like the first liberal type but instead of a sharp dualism between science and theology or between facts and values, the second speaks of part and whole. Science deals with the dimension of reality that its methods allow it to examine. Philosophy deals with the whole from which science abstracts. Theology deals with the moral and religious dimensions of the whole of reality and focuses on the reality of God in relation to the world and human beings.

So each of these liberal types holds that science and theology deal with different subject matter or with the same subject matter in different ways. Theology can be true in its sphere, and science can be true in its sphere, and neither interferes with or contradicts the work of the other.

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6.1.2: Pascal's Wager

14 Pascal's Wager

The Wager[23]

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If there is a God, He is infinitely incomprehensible, since, having neither parts nor limits, He has no affinity to us. We are then incapable of knowing either what He is or if He is. This being so, who will dare to undertake the decision of the question? Not we, who have no affinity to Him.

Who then will blame Christians for not being able to give a reason for their belief, since they profess a religion for which they cannot give a reason? They declare, in expounding it to the world, that it is a foolishness, I Cor. 1. 21. ["For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."]; and then you complain that they do not prove it! If they proved it, they would not keep their word; it is in lacking proofs that they are not lacking in sense. "Yes, but although this excuses those who offer it as such and takes away from them the blame of putting it forward without reason, it does not excuse those who receive it." Let us then examine this point, and say, "God is, or He is not." But to which side shall we incline? Reason can decide nothing here. There is an infinite chaos which separated us. A game is being played at the extremity of this infinite distance where heads or tails will turn up. What will you wager? According to reason, you can do neither the one thing nor the other; according to reason, you can defend neither of the propositions.

Do not, then, reprove for error those who have made a choice; for you know nothing about it. "No, but I blame them for having made, not this choice, but a choice; for again both he who chooses heads and he who chooses tails are equally at fault, they are both in the wrong. The true course is not to wager at all."

Yes; but you must wager. It is not optional. You are embarked. Which will you choose then? Let us see. Since you must choose, let us see which interests you least. You have two things to lose, the true and the good; and two things to stake, your reason and your will, your knowledge and your happiness; and your nature has two things to shun, error and misery. Your reason is no more shocked in choosing one rather than the other, since you must of necessity choose. This is one point settled. But your happiness? Let us weigh the gain and the loss in wagering that God is. Let us estimate these two chances. If you gain, you gain all; if you lose, you lose nothing. Wager, then, without hesitation that He is. "That is very fine. Yes, I must wager; but I may perhaps wager too much." Let us see. Since there is an equal risk of gain and of loss, if you had only to gain two lives, instead of one, you might still wager. But if there were three lives to gain, you would have to play (since you are under the necessity of playing), and you would be imprudent, when you are forced to play, not to chance your life to gain three at a game where there is an equal risk of loss and gain. But there is an eternity of life and happiness. And this being so, if there were an infinity of chances, of which one only would be for you, you would still be right in wagering one to win two, and you would act stupidly, being obliged to play, by refusing to stake one life against three at a game in which out of an infinity of chances there is one for you, if there were an infinity of an infinitely happy life to gain. But there is here an infinity of an infinitely happy life to gain, a chance of gain against a finite number of chances of loss, and what you stake is finite. It is all divided; where-ever the infinite is and there is not an infinity of chances of loss against that of gain, there is no time to hesitate, you must give all. And thus, when one is forced to play, he must renounce reason to preserve his life, rather than risk it for infinite gain, as likely to happen as the loss of nothingness.

For it is no use to say it is uncertain if we will gain, and it is certain that we risk, and that the infinite distance between the certainly of what is staked and the uncertainty of what will be gained, equals the finite good which is certainly staked against the uncertain infinite. It is not so, as every player stakes a certainty to gain an uncertainty, and yet he stakes a finite certainty to gain a finite uncertainty, without transgressing against reason. There is not an infinite distance between the certainty staked and the uncertainty of the gain; that is untrue. In truth, there is an infinity between the certainty of gain and the certainty of loss. But the uncertainty of the gain is proportioned to the certainty of the stake according to the proportion of the chances of gain and loss. Hence it comes that, if there are as many risks on one side as on the other, the course is to play even; and then the certainty of the stake is equal to the uncertainty of the gain, so far is it from fact that there is an infinite distance between them. And so our proposition is of infinite force, when there is the finite to stake in a game where there are equal risks of gain and of loss, and the infinite to gain. This is demonstrable; and if men are capable of any truths, this is one.

"I confess it, I admit it. But, still, is there no means of seeing the faces of the cards?" Yes, Scripture and the rest, etc. "Yes, but

I have my hands tied and my mouth closed; I am forced to wager, and am not free. I am not released, and am so made that I cannot believe. What, then, would you have me do?"

True. But at least learn your inability to believe, since reason brings you to this, and yet you cannot believe. Endeavor, then, to convince yourself, not by increase of proofs of God, but by the abatement of your passions. You would like to attain faith and do not know the way; you would like to cure yourself of unbelief and ask the remedy for it. Learn of those who have been bound like you, and who now stake all their possessions. These are people who know the way which you would follow, and who are cured of an ill of which you would be cured. Follow the way by which they began; by acting as if they believed, taking the holy water, having masses said, etc. Even this will naturally make you believe, and deaden your acuteness. "But this is what I am afraid of." And why? What have you to lose?

But to show you that this leads you there, it is this which will lessen the passions, which are your stumbling-blocks.

The end of this discourse.-- Now, what harm will befall you in taking this side? You will be faithful, humble, grateful, generous, a sincere friend, truthful. Certainly you will not have those poisonous pleasures, glory and luxury; but will you not have others? I will tell you that you will thereby gain in this life, and that, at each step you take on this road, you will see so great certainty of gain, so much nothingness in what you risk, that you will at last recognize that you have wagered for something certain and infinite, for which you have given nothing.

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6.1.3: Anselm’s Ontological Argument and Gaunilo’s Lost Island

Anselm’s “Ontological Argument”[24]

Therefore, Lord, you who give knowledge of the faith, give me as much knowledge as you know to be fitting for me, because you are as we believe and that which we believe. And indeed we believe you are something greater than which cannot be thought. Or is there no such kind of thing, for "the fool said in his heart, 'there is no God'" (Ps. 13:1, 52:1)? But certainly that same fool, having heard what I just said, "something greater than which cannot be thought," understands what he heard, and what he understands is in his thought, even if he does not think it exists. For it is one thing for something to exist in a person's thought and quite another for the person to think that thing exists. For when a painter thinks ahead to what he will paint, he has that picture in his thought, but he does not yet think it exists, because he has not done it yet. Once he has painted it he has it in his thought and thinks it exists because he has done it. Thus even the fool is compelled to grant that something greater than which cannot be thought exists in thought, because he understands what he hears, and whatever is understood exists in thought. And certainly that greater than which cannot be understood cannot exist only in thought, for if it exists only in thought it could also be thought of as existing in reality as well, which is greater. If, therefore, that than which greater cannot be thought exists in thought alone, then that than which greater cannot be thought turns out to be that than which something greater actually can be thought, but that is obviously impossible. Therefore something than which greater cannot be thought undoubtedly exists both in thought and in reality.

Gaunilo’s “Lost Island Objection”

For example, they say there is in the ocean somewhere an island which, due to the difficulty (or rather the impossibility) of finding what does not actually exist, is called "the lost island." And they say that this island has all manner of riches and delights, even more of them than the Isles of the Blest, and having no owner or inhabitant it is superior in the abundance of its riches to all other lands which are inhabited by men. If someone should tell me that such is the case, I will find it easy to understand what he says, since there is nothing difficult about it. But suppose he then adds, as if he were stating a logical consequence, "Well then, you can no longer doubt that this island more excellent than all other lands really exists somewhere, since you do not doubt that it is in your mind; and since it is more excellent to exist not only in the mind but in reality as well, this island must necessarily exist, because if it didn't, any other island really existing would be more excellent than it, and thus that island now thought of by you as more excellent will not be such." If, I say, someone tries to convince me though this argument that the island really exists and there should be no more doubt about it, I will either think he is joking or I will have a hard time deciding who is the bigger fool, me if I believe him or him if he thinks he has proved its existence without having first convinced me that this excellence is something undoubtedly existing in reality and not just something false or uncertain existing in my mind.

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6.1.4: Aquinas' Cosmological Argument

16 Aquinas' Cosmological Argument

Summa Theologiae[25]

Article 1. Whether the existence of God is self-evident?

Objection 1. It seems that the existence of God is self-evident. Now those things are said to be self-evident to us the knowledge of which is naturally implanted in us, as we can see in regard to first principles. But as Damascene says (De Fide Orth. i, 1,3), "the knowledge of God is naturally implanted in all." Therefore the existence of God is self-evident.

Objection 2. Further, those things are said to be self-evident which are known as soon as the terms are known, which the Philosopher (1 Poster. iii) says is true of the first principles of demonstration. Thus, when the nature of a whole and of a part is known, it is at once recognized that every whole is greater than its part. But as soon as the signification of the word "God" is understood, it is at once seen that God exists. For by this word is signified that thing than which nothing greater can be conceived. But that which exists actually and mentally is greater than that which exists only mentally. Therefore, since as soon as the word "God" is understood it exists mentally, it also follows that it exists actually. Therefore the proposition "God exists" is self-evident.

Objection 3. Further, the existence of truth is self-evident. For whoever denies the existence of truth grants that truth does not exist: and, if truth does not exist, then the proposition "Truth does not exist" is true: and if there is anything true, there must be truth. But God is truth itself: "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6) Therefore "God exists" is self-evident.

On the contrary, No one can mentally admit the opposite of what is self-evident; as the Philosopher (Metaph. iv, lect. vi) states concerning the first principles of demonstration. But the opposite of the proposition "God is" can be mentally admitted: "The fool said in his heart, There is no God" (Psalm 53:2). Therefore, that God exists is not self-evident.

I answer that, A thing can be self-evident in either of two ways: on the one hand, self-evident in itself, though not to us; on the other, self-evident in itself, and to us. A proposition is self-evident because the predicate is included in the essence of the subject, as "Man is an animal," for animal is contained in the essence of man. If, therefore the essence of the predicate and subject be known to all, the proposition will be self-evident to all; as is clear with regard to the first principles of demonstration, the terms of which are common things that no one is ignorant of, such as being and non-being, whole and part, and such like. If, however, there are some to whom the essence of the predicate and subject is unknown, the proposition will be self-evident in itself, but not to those who do not know the meaning of the predicate and subject of the proposition. Therefore, it happens, as Boethius says (Hebdom., the title of which is: "Whether all that is, is good"), "that there are some mental concepts self-evident only to the learned, as that incorporeal substances are not in space." Therefore I say that this proposition, "God exists," of itself is self-evident, for the predicate is the same as the subject, because God is His own existence as will be hereafter shown (I:3:4). Now because we do not know the essence of God, the proposition is not self-evident to us; but needs to be demonstrated by things that are more known to us, though less known in their nature — namely, by effects.

Reply to Objection 1. To know that God exists in a general and confused way is implanted in us by nature, inasmuch as God is man's beatitude. For man naturally desires happiness, and what is naturally desired by man must be naturally known to him. This, however, is not to know absolutely that God exists; just as to know that someone is approaching is not the same as to know that Peter is approaching, even though it is Peter who is approaching; for many there are who imagine that man's perfect good which is happiness, consists in riches, and others in pleasures, and others in something else.

Reply to Objection 2. Perhaps not everyone who hears this word "God" understands it to signify something than which nothing greater can be thought, seeing that some have believed God to be a body. Yet, granted that everyone understands that by this word "God" is signified something than which nothing greater can be thought, nevertheless, it does not therefore follow that he understands that what the word signifies exists actually, but only that it exists mentally. Nor can it be argued that it actually exists, unless it be admitted that there actually exists something than which nothing greater can be thought; and this precisely is not admitted by those who hold that God does not exist.

Reply to Objection 3. The existence of truth in general is self-evident but the existence of a Primal Truth is not self-evident to us.

Article 2. Whether it can be demonstrated that God exists?

Objection 1. It seems that the existence of God cannot be demonstrated. For it is an article of faith that God exists. But what is of faith cannot be demonstrated, because a demonstration produces scientific knowledge; whereas faith is of the unseen (Hebrews 11:1). Therefore it cannot be demonstrated that God exists.

Objection 2. Further, the essence is the middle term of demonstration. But we cannot know in what God's essence consists, but solely in what it does not consist; as Damascene says (De Fide Orth. i, 4). Therefore we cannot demonstrate that God exists.

Objection 3. Further, if the existence of God were demonstrated, this could only be from His effects. But His effects are not proportionate to Him, since He is infinite and His effects are finite; and between the finite and infinite there is no proportion. Therefore, since a cause cannot be demonstrated by an effect not proportionate to it, it seems that the existence of God cannot be demonstrated.

On the contrary, The Apostle says: "The invisible things of Him are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made" (Romans 1:20). But this would not be unless the existence of God could be demonstrated through the things that are made; for the first thing we must know of anything is whether it exists.

I answer that, Demonstration can be made in two ways: One is through the cause, and is called "a priori," and this is to argue from what is prior absolutely. The other is through the effect, and is called a demonstration "a posteriori"; this is to argue from what is prior relatively only to us. When an effect is better known to us than its cause, from the effect we proceed to the knowledge of the cause. And from every effect the existence of its proper cause can be demonstrated, so long as its effects are better known to us; because since every effect depends upon its cause, if the effect exists, the cause must pre-exist. Hence the existence of God, in so far as it is not self-evident to us, can be demonstrated from those of His effects which are known to us.

Reply to Objection 1. The existence of God and other like truths about God, which can be known by natural reason, are not articles of faith, but are preambles to the articles; for faith presupposes natural knowledge, even as grace presupposes nature, and perfection supposes something that can be perfected. Nevertheless, there is nothing to prevent a man, who cannot grasp a proof, accepting, as a matter of faith, something which in itself is capable of being scientifically known and demonstrated.

Reply to Objection 2. When the existence of a cause is demonstrated from an effect, this effect takes the place of the definition of the cause in proof of the cause's existence. This is especially the case in regard to God, because, in order to prove the existence of anything, it is necessary to accept as a middle term the meaning of the word, and not its essence, for the question of its essence follows on the question of its existence. Now the names given to God are derived from His effects; consequently, in demonstrating the existence of God from His effects, we may take for the middle term the meaning of the word "God".

Reply to Objection 3. From effects not proportionate to the cause no perfect knowledge of that cause can be obtained. Yet from every effect the existence of the cause can be clearly demonstrated, and so we can demonstrate the existence of God from His effects; though from them we cannot perfectly know God as He is in His essence.

Article 3. Whether God exists?

Objection 1. It seems that God does not exist; because if one of two contraries be infinite, the other would be altogether destroyed. But the word "God" means that He is infinite goodness. If, therefore, God existed, there would be no evil discoverable; but there is evil in the world. Therefore God does not exist.

Objection 2. Further, it is superfluous to suppose that what can be accounted for by a few principles has been produced by many. But it seems that everything we see in the world can be accounted for by other principles, supposing God did not exist. For all natural things can be reduced to one principle which is nature; and all voluntary things can be reduced to one principle which is human reason, or will. Therefore there is no need to suppose God's existence.

On the contrary, It is said in the person of God: "I am Who am." (Exodus 3:14)

I answer that, The existence of God can be proved in five ways.

The first and more manifest way is the argument from motion. It is certain, and evident to our senses, that in the world some things are in motion. Now whatever is in motion is put in motion by another, for nothing can be in motion except it is in potentiality to that towards which it is in motion; whereas a thing moves inasmuch as it is in act. For motion is nothing else than the reduction of something from potentiality to actuality. But nothing can be reduced from potentiality to actuality, except by something in a state of actuality. Thus that which is actually hot, as fire, makes wood, which is potentially hot, to be actually hot, and thereby

moves and changes it. Now it is not possible that the same thing should be at once in actuality and potentiality in the same respect, but only in different respects. For what is actually hot cannot simultaneously be potentially hot; but it is simultaneously potentially cold. It is therefore impossible that in the same respect and in the same way a thing should be both mover and moved, i.e. that it should move itself. Therefore, whatever is in motion must be put in motion by another. If that by which it is put in motion be itself put in motion, then this also must needs be put in motion by another, and that by another again. But this cannot go on to infinity, because then there would be no first mover, and, consequently, no other mover; seeing that subsequent movers move only inasmuch as they are put in motion by the first mover; as the staff moves only because it is put in motion by the hand. Therefore it is necessary to arrive at a first mover, put in motion by no other; and this everyone understands to be God.

The second way is from the nature of the efficient cause. In the world of sense we find there is an order of efficient causes. There is no case known (neither is it, indeed, possible) in which a thing is found to be the efficient cause of itself; for so it would be prior to itself, which is impossible. Now in efficient causes it is not possible to go on to infinity, because in all efficient causes following in order, the first is the cause of the intermediate cause, and the intermediate is the cause of the ultimate cause, whether the intermediate cause be several, or only one. Now to take away the cause is to take away the effect. Therefore, if there be no first cause among efficient causes, there will be no ultimate, nor any intermediate cause. But if in efficient causes it is possible to go on to infinity, there will be no first efficient cause, neither will there be an ultimate effect, nor any intermediate efficient causes; all of which is plainly false. Therefore it is necessary to admit a first efficient cause, to which everyone gives the name of God.

The third way is taken from possibility and necessity, and runs thus. We find in nature things that are possible to be and not to be, since they are found to be generated, and to corrupt, and consequently, they are possible to be and not to be. But it is impossible for these always to exist, for that which is possible not to be at some time is not. Therefore, if everything is possible not to be, then at one time there could have been nothing in existence. Now if this were true, even now there would be nothing in existence, because that which does not exist only begins to exist by something already existing. Therefore, if at one time nothing was in existence, it would have been impossible for anything to have begun to exist; and thus even now nothing would be in existence — which is absurd. Therefore, not all beings are merely possible, but there must exist something the existence of which is necessary. But every necessary thing either has its necessity caused by another, or not. Now it is impossible to go on to infinity in necessary things which have their necessity caused by another, as has been already proved in regard to efficient causes. Therefore we cannot but postulate the existence of some being having of itself its own necessity, and not receiving it from another, but rather causing in others their necessity. This all men speak of as God.

The fourth way is taken from the gradation to be found in things. Among beings there are some more and some less good, true, noble and the like. But "more" and "less" are predicated of different things, according as they resemble in their different ways something which is the maximum, as a thing is said to be hotter according as it more nearly resembles that which is hottest; so that there is something which is truest, something best, something noblest and, consequently, something which is uttermost being; for those things that are greatest in truth are greatest in being, as it is written in Metaph. ii. Now the maximum in any genus is the cause of all in that genus; as fire, which is the maximum heat, is the cause of all hot things. Therefore there must also be something which is to all beings the cause of their being, goodness, and every other perfection; and this we call God.

The fifth way is taken from the governance of the world. We see that things which lack intelligence, such as natural bodies, act for an end, and this is evident from their acting always, or nearly always, in the same way, so as to obtain the best result. Hence it is plain that not fortuitously, but designedly, do they achieve their end. Now whatever lacks intelligence cannot move towards an end, unless it be directed by some being endowed with knowledge and intelligence; as the arrow is shot to its mark by the archer. Therefore some intelligent being exists by whom all natural things are directed to their end; and this being we call God.

Reply to Objection 1. As Augustine says (Enchiridion xi): "Since God is the highest good, He would not allow any evil to exist in His works, unless His omnipotence and goodness were such as to bring good even out of evil." This is part of the infinite goodness of God, that He should allow evil to exist, and out of it produce good.

Reply to Objection 2. Since nature works for a determinate end under the direction of a higher agent, whatever is done by nature must needs be traced back to God, as to its first cause. So also whatever is done voluntarily must also be traced back to some higher cause other than human reason or will, since these can change or fail; for all things that are changeable and capable of defect must be traced back to an immovable and self-necessary first principle, as was shown in the body of the Article.

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6.1.5: Paley’s Watchmaker Argument

17 Paley’s Watchmaker Argument

The Teleological Argument[26]

CHAPTER I.

STATE OF THE ARGUMENT.

IN crossing a health, suppose I pitched my foot against a stone, and were asked how the stone came to be there; I might possibly answer, that, for any thing I knew to the contrary, it had lain there for ever: nor would it perhaps be very easy to show the absurdity of this answer. But suppose I had found a watch upon the ground, and it should be inquired how the watch happened to be in that place; I should hardly think of the answer which I had before given, that, for any thing I knew, the watch might have always been there. Yet why should not this answer serve for the watch as well as for the stone? why is it not as admissible in the second case, as in the first? For this reason, and for no other, viz. that, when we come to inspect the watch, we perceive (what we could not discover in the stone) that its several parts are framed and put together for a purpose, e. g. that they are so formed and adjusted as to produce motion, and that motion so regulated as to point out the hour of the day; that, if the different parts had been differently shaped from what they are, of a different size from what they are, or placed after any other manner, or in any other order, than that in which they are placed, either no motion at all would have been carried on in the machine, or none which would have answered the use that is now served by it. To reckon up a few of the plainest of these parts, and of their offices, all tending to one result:-- We see a cylindrical box containing a coiled elastic spring, which, by its endeavour to relax itself, turns round the box. We next observe a flexible chain (artificially wrought for the sake of flexure), communicating the action of the spring from the box to the fusee. We then find a series of wheels, the teeth of which catch in, and apply to, each other, conducting the motion from the fusee to the balance, and from the balance to the pointer; and at the same time, by the size and shape of those wheels, so regulating that motion, as to terminate in causing an index, by an equable and measured progression, to pass over a given space in a given time. We take notice that the wheels are made of brass in order to keep them from rust; the springs of steel, no other metal being so elastic; that over the face of the watch there is placed a glass, a material employed in no other part of the work, but in the room of which, if there had been any other than a transparent substance, the hour could not be seen without opening the case. This mechanism being observed (it requires indeed an examination of the instrument, and perhaps some previous knowledge of the subject, to perceive and understand it; but being once, as we have said, observed and understood), the inference, we think, is inevitable, that the watch must have had a maker: that there must have existed, at some time, and at some place or other, an artificer or artificers who formed it for the purpose which we find it actually to answer; who comprehended its construction, and designed its use.

I. Nor would it, I apprehend, weaken the conclusion, that we had never seen a watch made; that we had never known an artist capable of making one; that we were altogether incapable of executing such a piece of workmanship ourselves, or of understanding in what manner it was performed; all this being no more than what is true of some exquisite remains of ancient art, of some lost arts, and, to the generality of mankind, of the more curious productions of modern manufacture. Does one man in a million know how oval frames are turned? Ignorance of this kind exalts our opinion of the unseen and unknown artist's skill, if he be unseen and unknown, but raises no doubt in our minds of the existence and agency of such an artist, at some former time, and in some place or other. Nor can I perceive that it varies at all the inference, whether the question arise concerning a human agent, or concerning an agent of a different species, or an agent possessing, in some respects, a different nature.

II. Neither, secondly, would it invalidate our conclusion, that the watch sometimes went wrong, or that it seldom went exactly right. The purpose of the machinery, the design, and the designer, might be evident, and in the case supposed would be evident, in whatever way we accounted for the irregularity of the movement, or whether we could account for it or not. It is not necessary that a machine be perfect, in order to show with what design it was made: still less necessary, where the only question is, whether it were made with any design at all.

III. Nor, thirdly, would it bring any uncertainty into the argument, if there were a few parts of the watch, concerning which we could not discover, or had not yet discovered, in what manner they conduced to the general effect; or even some parts, concerning which we could not ascertain, whether they conduced to that effect in any manner whatever. For, as to the first branch of the case; if by the loss, or disorder, or decay of the parts in question, the movement of the watch were found in fact to be stopped, or disturbed, or retarded, no doubt would remain in our minds as to the utility or intention of these parts, although we should

be unable to investigate the manner according to which, or the connexion by which, the ultimate effect depended upon their action or assistance; and the more complex is the machine, the more likely is this obscurity to arise. Then, as to the second thing supposed, namely, that there were parts which might be spared, without prejudice to the movement of the watch, and that we had proved this by experiment,--these superfluous parts, even if we were completely assured that they were such, would not vacate the reasoning which we had instituted concerning other parts. The indication of contrivance remained, with respect to them, nearly as it was before.

IV. Nor, fourthly, would any man in his senses think the existence of the watch, with its various machinery, accounted for, by being told that it was one out of possible combinations of material forms; that whatever he had found in the place where he found the watch, must have contained some internal configuration or other; and that this configuration might be the structure now exhibited, viz. of the works of a watch, as well as a different structure.

V. Nor, fifthly, would it yield his inquiry more satisfaction to be answered, that there existed in things a principle of order, which had disposed the parts of the watch into their present form and situation. He never knew a watch made by the principle of order; nor can he even form to himself an idea of what is meant by a principle of order, distinct from the intelligence of the watch-maker.

VI. Sixthly, he would be surprised to hear that the mechanism of the watch was no proof of contrivance, only a motive to induce the mind to think so:

VII. And not less surprised to be informed, that the watch in his hand was nothing more than the result of the laws of metallicnature. It is a perversion of language to assign any law, as the efficient, operative cause of any thing. A law presupposes an agent; for it is only the mode, according to which an agent proceeds: it implies a power; for it is the order, according to which that power acts. Without this agent, without this power, which are both distinct from itself, the law does nothing; is nothing. The expression, "the law of metallic nature," may sound strange and harsh to a philosophic ear; but it seems quite as justifiable as some others which are more familiar to him, such as "the law of vegetable nature," "the law of animal nature," or indeed as "the law of nature" in general, when assigned as the cause of phænomena, in exclusion of agency and power; or when it is substituted into the place of these.

VIII. Neither, lastly, would our observer be driven out of his conclusion, or from his confidence in its truth, by being told that he knew nothing at all about the matter. He knows enough for his argument: he knows the utility of the end: he knows the subserviency and adaptation of the means to the end. These points being known, his ignorance of other points, his doubts concerning other points, affect not the certainty of his reasoning. The consciousness of knowing little, need not beget a distrust of that which he does know.

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6.1.6: Hume and “The Problem of Evil”

18 Hume and “The Problem of Evil”

The Problem of Evil[27]

PART X.

It is my opinion, I own, replied Demea, that each man feels, in a manner, the truth of religion within his own breast, and, from a consciousness of his imbecility and misery, rather than from any reasoning, is led to seek protection from that Being, on whom he and all nature is dependent. So anxious or so tedious are even the best scenes of life, that futurity is still the object of all our hopes and fears. We incessantly look forward, and endeavour, by prayers, adoration, and sacrifice, to appease those unknown powers, whom we find, by experience, so able to afflict and oppress us. Wretched creatures that we are! what resource for us amidst the innumerable ills of life, did not religion suggest some methods of atonement, and appease those terrors with which we are incessantly agitated and tormented?

I am indeed persuaded, said Philo, that the best, and indeed the only method of bringing every one to a due sense of religion, is by just representations of the misery and wickedness of men. And for that purpose a talent of eloquence and strong imagery is more requisite than that of reasoning and argument. For is it necessary to prove what every one feels within himself? It is only necessary to make us feel it, if possible, more intimately and sensibly.

The people, indeed, replied Demea, are sufficiently convinced of this great and melancholy truth. The miseries of life; the unhappiness of man; the general corruptions of our nature; the unsatisfactory enjoyment of pleasures, riches, honours; these phrases have become almost proverbial in all languages. And who can doubt of what all men declare from their own immediate feeling and experience?

In this point, said Philo, the learned are perfectly agreed with the vulgar; and in all letters, sacred and profane, the topic of human misery has been insisted on with the most pathetic eloquence that sorrow and melancholy could inspire. The poets, who speak from sentiment, without a system, and whose testimony has therefore the more authority, abound in images of this nature. From Homer down to Dr. Young, the whole inspired tribe have ever been sensible, that no other representation of things would suit the feeling and observation of each individual.

As to authorities, replied Demea, you need not seek them. Look round this library of Cleanthes. I shall venture to affirm, that, except authors of particular sciences, such as chemistry or botany, who have no occasion to treat of human life, there is scarce one of those innumerable writers, from whom the sense of human misery has not, in some passage or other, extorted a complaint and confession of it. At least, the chance is entirely on that side; and no one author has ever, so far as I can recollect, been so extravagant as to deny it.

There you must excuse me, said Philo: Leibnitz has denied it; and is perhaps the first 9 who ventured upon so bold and paradoxical an opinion; at least, the first who made it essential to his philosophical system.

And by being the first, replied Demea, might he not have been sensible of his error? For is this a subject in which philosophers can propose to make discoveries especially in so late an age? And can any man hope by a simple denial (for the subject scarcely admits of reasoning), to bear down the united testimony of mankind, founded on sense and consciousness?

And why should man, added he, pretend to an exemption from the lot of all other animals? The whole earth, believe me, Philo, is cursed and polluted. A perpetual war is kindled amongst all living creatures. Necessity, hunger, want, stimulate the strong and courageous: fear, anxiety, terror, agitate the weak and infirm. The first entrance into life gives anguish to the new-born infant and to its wretched parent: weakness, impotence, distress, attend each stage of that life: and it is at last finished in agony and horror.

Observe too, says Philo, the curious artifices of Nature, in order to embitter the life of every living being. The stronger prey upon the weaker, and keep them in perpetual terror and anxiety. The weaker too, in their turn, often prey upon the stronger, and vex and molest them without relaxation. Consider that innumerable race of insects, which either are bred on the body of each animal, or, flying about, infix their stings in him. These insects have others still less than themselves, which torment them. And thus on each hand, before and behind, above and below, every animal is surrounded with enemies, which incessantly seek his misery and

distruction.

Man alone, said Demea, seems to be, in part, an exception to this rule. For by combination in society, he can easily master lions, tigers, and bears, whose greater strength and agility naturally enable them to prey upon him.

On the contrary, it is here chiefly, cried Philo, that the uniform and equal maxims of Nature are most apparent. Man, it is true, can, by combination, surmount all his real enemies, and become master of the whole animal creation: but does he not immediately raise up to himself imaginary enemies, the demons of his fancy, who haunt him with superstitious terrors, and blast every enjoyment of life? His pleasure, as he imagines, becomes, in their eyes, a crime: his food and repose give them umbrage and offence: his very sleep and dreams furnish new materials to anxious fear: and even death, his refuge from every other ill, presents only the dread of endless and innumerable woes. Nor does the wolf molest more the timid flock, than superstition does the anxious breast of wretched mortals.

Besides, consider, Demea: this very society, by which we surmount those wild beasts, our natural enemies; what new enemies does it not raise to us? What woe and misery does it not occasion? Man is the greatest enemy of man. Oppression, injustice, contempt, contumely, violence, sedition, war, calumny, treachery, fraud; by these they mutually torment each other; and they would soon dissolve that society which they had formed, were it not for the dread of still greater ills, which must attend their separation.

But though these external insults, said Demea, from animals, from men, from all the elements, which assault us, form a frightful catalogue of woes, they are nothing in comparison of those which arise within ourselves, from the distempered condition of our mind and body. How many lie under the lingering torment of diseases? Hear the pathetic enumeration of the great poet.

Intestine stone and ulcer, colic-pangs,

Demoniac frenzy, moping melancholy,

And moon-struck madness, pining atrohy,

Marasmus, and wide-wasting pestilence.

Dire was the tossing, deep the groans: DESPAIR

Tended the sick, busiest from couch to couch.

And over them triumphant DEATH his dart

Shook: but delay'd to strike, though oft invok'd

With vows, as their chief good and final hope.

The disorders of the mind, continued Demea, though more secret, are not perhaps less dismal and vexatious. Remorse, shame, anguish, rage, disappointment, anxiety, fear, dejection, despair; who has ever passed through life without cruel inroads from these tormentors? How many have scarcely ever felt any better sensations? Labour and poverty, so abhorred by every one, are the certain lot of the far greater number; and those few privileged persons, who enjoy ease and opulence, never reach contentment or true felicity. All the goods of life united would not make a very happy man; but all the ills united would make a wretch indeed; and any one of them almost (and who can be free from every one?) nay often the absence of one good (and who can possess all?) is sufficient to render life ineligible.

Were a stranger to drop on a sudden into this world, I would shew him, as a specimen of its ills, an hospital full of diseases, a prison crowded with malefactors and debtors, a field of battle strewed with carcases, a fleet foundering in the ocean, a nation languishing under tyranny, famine, or pestilence. To turn the gay side of life to him and give him a notion of its pleasures; whither should I conduct him? to a ball, to an opera, to court? He might justly think, that I was only shewing him a diversity of distress and sorrow.

There is no evading such striking instances, said Philo, but by apologies, which still further aggravate the charge. Why have all men, I ask, in all ages, complained incessantly of the miseries of life? . . . . They have no just reason, says one: these complaints proceed only from their discontented, repining, anxious disposition . . . . And can there possibly, I reply, be a more certain foundation of misery, than such a wretched temper?

But if they were really as unhappy as they pretend, says my antagonist, why do they remain in life? . . . .

Not satisfied with life, afraid of death.

This is the secret chain, say I, that holds us. We are terrified, not bribed to the continuance of our existence.

It is only a false delicacy, he may insist, which a few refined spirits indulge, and which has spread these complaints among the whole race of mankind. . . . And what is this delicacy, I ask, which you blame? Is it any thing but a greater sensibility to all the pleasures and pains of life? and if the man of a delicate, refined temper, by being so much more alive than the rest of the world, is only so much more unhappy, what judgment must we form in general of human life?

Let men remain at rest, says our adversary, and they will be easy. They are willing artificers of their own misery. . . . No! reply I: an anxious languor follows their repose; disappointment, vexation, trouble, their activity and ambition.

I can observe something like what you mention in some others, replied Cleanthes: but I confess I feel little or nothing of it in myself, and hope that it is not so common as you represent it.

If you feel not human misery yourself, cried Demea, I congratulate you on so happy a singularity. Others, seemingly the most prosperous, have not been ashamed to vent their complaints in the most melancholy strains. Let us attend to the great, the fortunate emperor, Charles V., when, tired with human grandeur, he resigned all his extensive dominions into the hands of his son. In the last harangue which he made on that memorable occasion, he publicly avowed, that the greatest prosperities which he had ever enjoyed, had been mixed with so many adversities, that he might truly say he had never enjoyed any satisfaction or contentment. But did the retired life, in which he sought for shelter, afford him any greater happiness? If we may credit his son's account, his repentance commenced the very day of his resignation.

Cicero's fortune, from small beginnings, rose to the greatest lustre and renown; yet what pathetic complaints of the ills of life do his familiar letters, as well as philosophical discourses, contain? And suitably to his own experience, he introduces Cato, the great, the fortunate Cato, protesting in his old age, that had he a new life in his offer, he would reject the present.

Ask yourself, ask any of your acquaintance, whether they would live over again the last ten or twenty years of their lives. No! but the next twenty, they say, will be better:

And from the dregs of life, hope to receive
What the first sprightly running could not give[9].

Thus at last they find (such is the greatness of human misery, it reconciles even contradictions), that they complain at once of the shortness of life, and of its vanity and sorrow.

And is it possible, Cleanthes, said Philo, that after all these reflections, and infinitely more, which might be suggested, you can still persevere in your Anthropomorphism, and assert the moral attributes of the Deity, his justice, benevolence, mercy, and rectitude, to be of the same nature with these virtues in human creatures? His power we allow is infinite: whatever he wills is executed: but neither man nor any other animal is happy: therefore he does not will their happiness. His wisdom is infinite: he is never mistaken in choosing the means to any end: but the course of Nature tends not to human or animal felicity: therefore it is not established for that purpose. Through the whole compass of human knowledge, there are no inferences more certain and infallible than these. In what respect, then, do his benevolence and mercy resemble the benevolence and mercy of men?

Epicurus's old questions are yet unanswered.

Is he willing to prevent evil, but not able? then is he impotent. Is he able, but not willing? then is he malevolent. Is he both able and willing? whence then is evil?

You ascribe, Cleanthes (and I believe justly), a purpose and intention to Nature. But what, I beseech you, is the object of that curious artifice and machinery, which she has displayed in all animals? The preservation alone of individuals, and propagation of the species. It seems enough for her purpose, if such a rank be barely upheld in the universe, without any care or concern for the happiness of the members that compose it. No resource for this purpose: no machinery, in order merely to give pleasure or ease: no fund of pure joy and contentment: no indulgence, without some want or necessity accompanying it. At least, the few phenomena of this nature are overbalanced by opposite phenomena of still greater importance.

Our sense of music, harmony, and indeed beauty of all kinds, gives satisfaction, without being absolutely necessary to the preservation and propagation of the species. But what racking pains, on the other hand, arise from gouts, gravels, megrims, toothaches, rheumatisms, where the injury to the animal machinery is either small or incurable? Mirth, laughter, play, frolic, seems gratuitous satisfactions, which have no further tendency: spleen, melancholy, discontent, superstition, are pains of the same

nature. How then does the Divine benevolence display itself, in the sense of you Anthropomorphites? None but we Mystics, as you were pleased to call us, can account for this strange mixture of phenomena, by deriving it from attributes, infinitely perfect, but incomprehensible.

And have you at last, said Cleanthes, smiling, betrayed your intentions, Philo? Your long agreement with Demea did indeed a little surprize me; but I find you were all the while erecting a concealed battery against me. And I must confess, that you have now fallen upon a subject worthy of your noble spirit of opposition and controversy. If you can make out the present point, and prove mankind to be unhappy or corrupted, there is an end at once of all religion. For to what purpose establish the natural attributes of the Deity, while the moral are still doubtful and uncertain?

You take umbrage very easily, replied Demea, at opinions the most innocent, and the most generally received, even amongst the religious and devout themselves: and nothing can be more surprising than to find a topic like this, concerning the wickedness and misery of man, charged with no less than Atheism and profaneness. Have not all pious divines and preachers, who have indulged their rhetoric on so fertile a subject; have they not easily, I say, given a solution of any difficulties which may attend it? This world is but a point in comparison of the universe; this life but a moment in comparison of eternity. The present evil phenomena, therefore, are rectified in other regions, and in some future period of existence. And the eyes of men, being then opened to larger views of things, see the whole connexion of general laws; and trace with adoration, the benevolence and rectitude of the Deity, through all the mazes and intricacies of his providence.

No! replied Cleanthes, No! These arbitrary suppositions can never be admitted, contrary to matter of fact, visible and uncontroverted. Whence can any cause be known but from its known effects? Whence can any hypothesis be proved but from the apparent phenomena? To establish one hypothesis upon another, is building entirely in the air; and the utmost we ever attain, by these conjectures and fictions, is to ascertain the bare possibility of our opinion; but never can we, upon such terms, establish its reality.

The only method of supporting Divine benevolence, and it is what I willingly embrace, is to deny absolutely the misery and wickedness of man. Your representations are exaggerated; your melancholy views mostly fictitious; your inferences contrary to fact and experience. Health is more common than sickness; pleasure than pain; happiness than misery. And for one vexation which we meet with, we attain, upon computation, a hundred enjoyments.

Admitting your position, replied Philo, which yet is extremely doubtful, you must at the same time allow, that if pain be less frequent than pleasure, it is infinitely more violent and durable. One hour of it is often able to outweigh a day, a week, a month of our common insipid enjoyments; and how many days, weeks, and months, are passed by several in the most acute torments? Pleasure, scarcely in one instance, is ever able to reach ecstasy and rapture; and in no one instance can it continue for any time at its highest pitch and altitude. The spirits evaporate, the nerves relax, the fabric is disordered, and the enjoyment quickly degenerates into fatigue and uneasiness. But pain often, good God, how often! rises to torture and agony; and the longer it continues, it becomes still more genuine agony and torture. Patience is exhausted, courage languishes, melancholy seizes us, and nothing terminates our misery but the removal of its cause, or another event, which is the sole cure of all evil, but which, from our natural folly, we regard with still greater horror and consternation.

But not to insist upon these topics, continued Philo, though most obvious, certain, and important; I must use the freedom to admonish you, Cleanthes, that you have put the controversy upon a most dangerous issue, and are unawares introducing a total scepticism into the most essential articles of natural and revealed theology. What! no method of fixing a just foundation for religion, unless we allow the happiness of human life, and maintain a continued existence even in this world, with all our present pains, infirmities, vexations, and follies, to be eligible and desirable! But this is contrary to every one's feeling and experience: it is contrary to an authority so established as nothing can subvert. No decisive proofs can ever be produced against this authority; nor is it possible for you to compute, estimate, and compare, all the pains and all the pleasures in the lives of all men and of all animals: and thus, by your resting the whole system of religion on a point, which, from its very nature, must for ever be uncertain, you tacitly confess, that that system is equally uncertain.

But allowing you what never will be believed, at least what you never possibly can prove, that animal, or at least human happiness, in this life, exceeds its misery, you have yet done nothing: for this is not, by any means, what we expect from infinite power, infinite wisdom, and infinite goodness. Why is there any misery at all in the world? Not by chance surely. From some cause then. Is it from the intention of the Deity? But he is perfectly benevolent. Is it contrary to his intention? But he is almighty. Nothing can shake the solidity of this reasoning, so short, so clear, so decisive; except we assert, that these subjects exceed all human capacity, and that our common measures of truth and falsehood are not applicable to them; a topic which I have all along insisted on, but which you have, from the beginning, rejected with scorn and indignation.

But I will be contented to retire still from this intrenchment, for I deny that you can ever force me in it. I will allow, that pain

or misery in man is compatible with infinite power and goodness in the Deity, even in your sense of these attributes: what are you advanced by all these concessions? A mere possible compatibility is not sufficient. You must prove these pure, unmixed, and uncontrollable attributes from the present mixed and confused phenomena, and from these alone. A hopeful undertaking! Were the phenomena ever so pure and unmixed, yet being finite, they would be insufficient for that purpose. How much more, where they are also so jarring and discordant!

Here, Cleanthes, I find myself at ease in my argument. Here I triumph. Formerly, when we argued concerning the natural attributes of intelligence and design, I needed all my sceptical and metaphysical subtilty to elude your grasp. In many views of the universe and of its parts, particularly the latter, the beauty and fitness of final causes strike us with such irresistible force, that all objections appear (what I believe they really are) mere cavils and sophisms; nor can we then imagine how it was ever possible for us to repose any weight on them. But there is no view of human life, or of the condition of mankind, from which, without the greatest violence, we can infer the moral attributes, or learn that infinite benevolence, conjoined with infinite power and infinite wisdom, which we must discover by the eyes of faith alone. It is your turn now to tug the laboring oar, and to support your philosophical subtilties against the dictates of plain reason and experience.

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6.2: PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION AND THE PROBLEM OF GOD

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6.2.1: Overview

We are going to think philosophically about a number of questions and issues related to religion. The purpose here is neither to convert believers into non-believers nor the other way around. The objective is to demonstrate and encourage applying philosophical thinking to matters of great importance. Religion is certainly of great importance. Philosophy is based upon reason and religion is based upon faith. With many of the issues we are about to examine the philosopher will attempt to give reasons and to look for reasons in support of beliefs. Some of the issues raised in this module and in the entire course may be disturbing to the belief systems of some. In life it is possible to live and live well based upon beliefs. It is possible to respond to some of the questions raised by philosophical reflection by simply declaring, “Well, I believe that.....” Now that response will probably be accepted by many people in many situations, in philosophy however, the “I believe, that’s why!” response is not acceptable. Philosophers need to have reasons for holding to a belief in particular after that belief has been called into question.

There are many ideas that people have concerning all things and religion in particular which may not be exactly true or not true at all. Be prepared for that possibility concerning issues related to God, Religion, Reality, Knowledge, Truth, Mind, Freedom and many other ideas that are common to our cultural heritage.

Concerning Religion there are many questions that Philosophers have been dealing with for some time. The very meaning of “Religion” is subject to philosophical reflection, speculation and criticism. After that the meaning and value of Religion are an important matters. For the religions of the West with their belief in the one god, the idea of god has come into a great deal of very careful thinking. In this module we shall examine those questions.

Theology -deals with religious beliefs in a rational manner and presumes faith

Philosophy of religion is rational thought about religious issues and concerns without a presumption of the existence of a deity or reliance on acts of faith.

1. What is Religion?
2. Characteristics of Religion
3. Religions of the West – the one GOD
4. Problem with the Attributes of deity (god)
5. Arguments for God's Existence: Are there any rational reasons to believe?
6. The Problem of Evil - Rational arguments for disbelief.
7. Faith vs. Reason - Are there other ways to find a basis for belief?
8. Religious Language-Meaning and Truth
9. Definition of Religion
10. Summary

What is Religion?

There are many definitions of religion. It is not that easy to pin down exactly what religion is and then to insure that the definition distinguishes religion from magic and from cults and sects. Many people offer definitions without much knowledge of the wide range of religious phenomena and the many different cultural manifestations of religion. It is a rather common misconception to think that religion has to do with god, or gods and supernatural beings or a supernatural or spiritual dimension or greater reality. None of that is absolutely necessary because there are religions that are without those elements.

In this millennium there are over 7 billion people on the planet earth. Most of them would declare that they are religious in some way. Rough estimates are made that place people in the various traditions.

Here is a tabulation from adherents.com and available

*(Sizes shown are **approximate estimates**, and are here mainly for the purpose of ordering the groups, not providing a definitive number. This list is sociological/statistical in perspective.)* Last modified August 2015.

*Sizes shown are **approximate estimates**, and are here mainly for the purpose of ordering the groups, not providing a definitive number. This list is sociological/statistical in perspective.)*

1. Christianity: 2.1 billion
2. Islam: 1.5 billion
3. Secular/Nonreligious/Agnostic/Atheist: 1.1 billion
4. Hinduism: 900 million
5. Chinese traditional religion: 394 million
6. Buddhism: 376 million
7. primal-indigenous: 300 million
8. African Traditional & Diasporic: 100 million
9. Sikhism: 23 million
10. Juche: 19 million
11. Spiritism: 15 million
12. Judaism: 14 million
13. Baha'i: 7 million
14. Jainism: 4.2 million
15. Shinto: 4 million
16. Cao Dai: 4 million
17. Zoroastrianism: 2.6 million
18. Tenrikyo: 2 million
19. Neo-Paganism: 1 million
20. Unitarian-Universalism: 800 thousand
21. Rastafarianism: 600 thousand
22. Scientology: 500 thousand

This information is from **Adherents.com** : a growing collection of over 62,000 adherent statistics and religious geography citations -- references to published membership/adherent statistics and congregation statistics for over 4,200 religions, churches, denominations, religious bodies, faith groups, tribes, cultures, movements, ultimate concerns, etc.

The three religions that are proselytizing religions, seeking more members actively are: Christianity, Islam and Buddhism. Islam is the fastest growing of the traditions and will most likely have the most adherents in the world by 2020.

Some of these religions have no belief in a god. Some have no belief in the survival of a soul. Some believe in more than one god. What do they have that makes them religion?

Here is the best definition I have ever come across that captures the common core and yet distinguishes religion from other institutions and phenomena. It is from Federick Ferre in his work *Basic Modern Philosophy of Religion*.

Religion is the most **comprehensive** and **intensive** manner of **valuing** known to human beings.

Characteristics of Religion

These are the common characteristics or family traits of those members of the category or "family" of religion. Just as with family members not every member must have every trait but most have most of the traits. The more any human phenomena demonstrates these traits the more likely it is that it will be included into this category of social institutions known as religion.

Common Characteristics: (family traits)

- notion of a deity or absolute, that which is of ultimate concern and importance
- ideas on the nature of human beings
- the idea of divine providence, destiny, fate
- the idea and meaning of human history
- problem of evil explained
- description of the central problem of human life and suffering idea of an afterlife-life after death
- a concept of the world
- ideas of human community and ethics-a moral code

Religions of the West – the one GOD

Religions of the West- Judaism-Christianity and Islam share in some common traits or characteristics that distinguish them from

other religions in this world.

1. belief in one god
2. belief in linear history
3. belief in a sacred scripture- the book

These common features bind the three traditions together. One god made the universes at the beginning of time and that one god will end the universe. Each human has a soul and at the death of the body the soul shall separate from the body and go one in another dimension. There is a judgment to be made concerning the moral worthiness of the soul at death for an eternal reward or lack thereof. Time is linear and there is but one period of existence for individuals and the entire universe. Other religions hold for multiple or no deities, cyclic time and reincarnation of souls, even multiple reincarnations.

Problem with the Attributes of deity (god)

Forms of theistic beliefs:

Monotheism- a belief that there is but one god.

- Theism- one god separate from the creation
- Pantheism- one god existing in the creation-i.e., world=god
- Panentheism-one god , the world is part of god who is greater than creation

Polytheism- is a belief that there are many gods.

Agnosticism-is no clear or definitive knowledge of whether there is a god or not

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from **Wikipedia**

Monotheistic definitions

Monotheism is the view that only one God exists (as opposed to multiple gods). In Western (Christian) thought, God is traditionally described as a being that possesses at least three necessary properties: omniscience (all-knowing), omnipotence (all-powerful), and omnibenevolence (supremely good). In other words, God knows everything, has the power to do anything, and is perfectly good. Many other properties (e.g., omnipresence) have been alleged to be necessary properties of a god; however, these are the three most uncontroversial and dominant in Christian tradition. By contrast, Monism is the view that all is of one essential essence, substance or energy. Monistic theism, a variant of both monism and monotheism, views God as both immanent and transcendent. Both are dominant themes in Hinduism.

Even once the word "God" is defined in a monotheistic sense, there are still many difficult questions to be asked about what this means. For example, what does it mean for something to be created? How can something be "all-powerful"?

Polytheistic definitions

The distinguishing characteristic of polytheism is its belief in more than one god(dess). There can be as few as two (such as a classical Western understanding of Zoroastrian dualism) or an innumerably large amount, as in Hinduism (as the Western world perceives it). There are many varieties of polytheism; they all accept that many gods exist, but differ in their responses to that belief. Henotheists for example, worship only one of the many gods, either because it is held to be more powerful or worthy of worship than the others. Ayyavazhi for example, accepts almost all polytheistic (gods) in Hinduism. But in Kali Yukam all gets unified into Ayya Vaikundar for destroying the Kaliyan. (some Christian sects take this view of the Trinity, holding that only God the Father should be worshipped, Jesus and the Holy Spirit being distinct and lesser gods), or because it is associated with their own group, culture, state, etc. (ancient judaism is sometimes interrpreted in this way). The distinction isn't a clear one, of course, as most people consider their own culture superior to others, and this will also apply to their culture's God. Kathenotheists have similar beliefs, but worship a different god at different times or places.

Pantheistic definitions

Pantheists assert that God is himself (or itself) the natural universe. The most famous Western pantheist is Baruch Spinoza, though the precise characterization of his views is complex.

Panentheism is a variation of pantheism which holds that the physical universe is part of God, but that God is more than this. While pantheism can be summed up by "God is the world and the world is God", panentheism can be summed up as "The world is God, but God is more than the world".

****

The belief system of the religions of the West holds for monotheism and most are theists as opposed to being pantheists. The attributes of the god of the Western religions are impressive. There is a problem when considering the entire set of attributes. There are questions concerning the meaning of some of the features of the deity and definitely problems with a being possessing so many traits at the same time. Over time the concept of the deity developed by the Israelites, the ONE GOD, has evolved and has taken in the influences of the Zoroastrians in Mesopotamia and then the Greeks and Romans in Europe. The Greek Philosophers worked with the idea of perfection and the single source of all things as being all perfect and all good. This concept was not associated with the deity of the Hebrews at the time of Moses. The god or deity of the Jews and then of the Christian and Islamic peoples came to have these characteristics associated with it:

Supreme Being
Eternal Being
All Perfect
Beneficent Being- All good
All Powerful- Omnipotent
All Knowing- Omniscient
All Good
All Present- Omnipresent
All Merciful
All Just
All Loving

In other words, if it is good thing, then the one god of the West was thought to have that feature and to have it to an infinite degree!

PROBLEM: Well the story of the one deity of the Hebrews became inconsistent with a being that was all good and all loving . Consider these stories of the single deity of the Hebrews and the **Atrocities** associated with acts of that deity or supported by that deity. Now these attributes certainly sound wonderful. However, do they make sense. How can a god that is all good and all knowing and all-powerful permit evil to occur? That is the Problem of Evil and it is covered in another section of this text. Here a brief consideration of of some of the characteristics will suffice to indicate the direction in which critical thinking moves.

All knowing and all loving and all kind and all merciful and yet there is evil and pain and suffering ??

All good and all knowing and all powerful and yet the is moral evil ??

All loving and all kind and all merciful and yet there is a place of eternal punishment-hell ?

VIDEO: HELL as an excessive Punishment

All perfect and yet there is the creation of the universe? Why? How could the deity then be all perfect if there is a reason for creation the being is not perfect because it has needs or purposes that need to be fulfilled.

A spiritual being can not be physical being.

A physical being can not be a spiritual being.

A PERFECT BEING can not be physical as it would be limited and finite and would be subject to change and to the laws of the physical universe and it would decay.

A PERFECT BEING can not be physical as it would need to be in time and space and thus have a beginning and an end.

And one more thing, the deity is written of and spoken of as male: GOD, the father. How is god to be thought of a male? To be a male a being would need a sexual nature. God would need to have what makes a male a male: DNA, chromosomes and genes, the xy chromosome pair in the 23 paired position of human DNA, sex organs. To be male god would need to have .... But that seems ridiculous and totally pointless. In other words it make no sense literally! How can a spiritual being have physical properties? What would the one god need those organs for?

How could it be possible?

PHILOSOPHY is about IDEAS and about REASONING and looking at IDEAS and BELIEFS and determining if they make SENSE or not. So philosophers look at the collection of ideas about the one deity , the supreme being deity, the deity of the Judeo-Christian-Islamic tradition.

There are problems with any single being having all the properties traditionally assigned to the deity of the Western religions.

If the deity is ALL POWERFUL would it not have the power to create beings that would know what GOOD was without knowing or committing EVIL? If this is not possible then how is the being ALL POWERFUL?

If the being must make EVIL to make GOOD then how is the being ALL GOOD?

If the being is ALL KNOWING and thus knows in advance that there will be a use of FREE WILL that produces EVIL and then goes and creates FREE WILL then the being has made EVIL and is not ALL GOOD.

So, there are problems with the SET OF BELIEFS associated with the one deity of the Western religions.

The idea of god that we have appears to be a combination of ideas from the oldest time of the Judaic tradition combining with ideas of the Greeks for the spread of the idea of the Jewish god by the Christians to the Greeks and Romans. The god of the Jews is described as a powerful and mean spirited god . The god of the Jews would order entire towns, almost all living humans on the planet to be killed. The deity of Plato and Aristotle, Greek philosophers, came to be seen as a spiritual and all perfect being. So the ideas of the early Christians combined features of the two traditions with some ideas of the Zoroastrians from Middle Eastern lands (Persia). Christianity is then characterized as Hellenized Hebraism! This means that the ideas of the Greeks (Hellenes, saviors of Helen of Troy) are placed over and combined with the ideas of the Hebrews.

In any exploration into what many people regard as the characteristics or properties associated with G-O-D, some would reflect on their ideas and perhaps notice a thing or two about them. For one, some of the qualities of the deity in combination produce a problem or two, as with EVIL. For another, ideas people have of the deity are very interesting when you consider the implications of those qualities.

VIEW: Problems with the concept of the deity of the West

Now for those who believe in the GOD of the Judeo-Christian –Islamic tradition they must believe in a single being with characteristics of being: SUPREME, ALL POWERFUL, ALL GOOD, ALL PERFECT, ALL KNOWING, ETERNAL etc... Why must they? Well, because they have no choice either they believe in the GOD of those traditions or else they make up their own ideas and they are then actually moving out of those traditions and are giving good example of the post modern relativistic, subjectivist tradition of the Twentieth Century. The religions of the West have very clear ideas about the DEITY they have at the center of their beliefs. These religions have doctrines and dogma that the faithful must accept. Now there are many people who think they are in the Judeo –Christian-Islamic tradition but in actuality are not because they have redefined their religions to suit their personal preferences. Even so, the idea of a SUPREME BEING that most people have is beset with problems not the least of which is the PROBLEM of EVIL. This problem comes about as a result of combining ideas of a deity found in the Hebrew Tradition with the ideas of perfection found in the works of the Greeks (Plato and Aristotle). The concept of G-O-D in Western religions results in some perplexing ideas.

Here is one more problem with the concept of the deity beside that of EVIL. Why would a perfect and supreme being create a universe? If it was for any reason then the being would be incomplete and not yet fulfilled and thus less than perfect. If it were for no reason other than fun, entertainment, play... then that raises another set of questions.

For those who alter their idea of the G-O-D to suit themselves and make the deity into something other than the classic idea of the Western religions, well they can avoid some of the problems but their G-O-D is not the GOD of Abraham and Moses as reported in the BIBLE.. They who have their own idea of G-O-D and insist that they have a right to do so would also be in violation of the first commandment that the God of the Western religions presented to Moses. The post modernists with their personal ideas of their own personal god have placed their god before the GOD of Abraham and Moses and Jesus and Mohammed. It is popular but certainly not orthodox. It is so popular that most who perform the substitution are unaware that they are holding ideas concerning the nature of god that would have had them condemned as heretics in prior centuries.

Another problem with the deity being ALL PERFECT is that the being would need to possess all perfections and if freedom is a perfection or a good thing as opposed to its opposite being not god then the deity that is all perfect would also need to be free and yet it cannot be free as it is not free to be or do anything that is less than perfect or the very best possible. As it cannot be free it is NOT ALL PERFECT.

Problem of Sex and the Deity

How is it that a deity can be thought of as a spiritual being and yet at the same time as having a sexual nature as a male or female (sexual identities known to species on planet Earth) when a sexual nature is a physical nature determined by physical entities such as chromosomes and organs? There are psychological and sociological explanations offered as to why deities are given sexual natures by humans. There is even now a position taken that the nature of the deity at the time of the construction of the tales at the start of the traditions in the West was not singular and the deity was at times refereed to as male and other times female and even that the name given to the deity (YHWH) known as the the Tetragrammaton suggested a fluid sexual identity.

> "The Israelites took the transgender trope from their surrounding cultures and wove it into their own sacred scripture. The four-Hebrew-letter name of God, which scholars refer to as the Tetragrammaton, YHWH, was probably not pronounced “Jehovah” or “Yahweh,” as some have guessed. The Israelite priests would have read the letters in reverse as Hu/Hi — in other words, the hidden name of God was Hebrew for “He/She.” Counter to everything we grew up believing, the God of Israel — the God of the three monotheistic, Abrahamic religions to which fully half the people on the planet today belong — was understood by its earliest worshipers to be a dual-gendered deity." - Mark Sameth--- Is God Transgender? - **The New York Times**

If you believe in a deity or want to think about a single deity by attempting this exercise, quiz or game, you might determine whether or not your conceptions concerning the deity will produce problems such as incompatible properties or contradictions or difficulties with other issues. The reader might want to attempt a short exercise concerning the construction of a concept of a deity with characteristics that would not be problematic. There is an exercise titled **Battleground God** "Can your beliefs about religion make it across our intellectual battleground? In this activity you'll be asked a series of 17 questions about God and religion. In each case, apart from Question 1, you need to answer True or False. The aim of the activity is not to judge whether

these answers are correct or not. Our battleground is that of rational consistency."

For a Philosophical examination of the properties most often assigned to the single deity of the religions of the West READ: Theodore M. Drange, **Incompatible-Properties Arguments: A Survey** in PHILO **Volume 1, Number 2 at**

Abstract: Ten arguments for the nonexistence of God are formulated and discussed briefly. Each of them ascribes to God a pair of properties from the following list of divine attributes: (a) perfect, (b) immutable, (c) transcendent, (d) nonphysical, (e) omniscient, (f) omnipresent, (g) personal, (h) free, (i) all-loving, (j) all-just, (k) all-merciful, and (l) the creator of the universe. Each argument aims to demonstrate an incompatibility between the two properties ascribed. The pairs considered are: 1. (a-l), 2. (b-l), 3. (b-e), 4. (b-i), 5, (c-f), 6. (c-g), 7. (d-g), 8. (f-g), 9. (e-h), and 10. (j-k). Along the way, several other possible pairs are also mentioned and commented upon.

How is it even possible for a deity that is everywhere and at all times to be conscious of anything and to think? Here is an examination of that issue.

READ: Matt McCormick,**Why God Cannot Think: Kant, Omnipresence, and Consciousness** in PHILO, Volume 3, Number 1

Abstract: It has been argued that God is omnipresent, that is, present in all places and in all times. Omnipresence is also implied by God's knowledge, power, and perfection. A Kantian argument shows that in order to be self-aware, apply concepts, and form judgments, in short, to have a mind, there must be objects that are external to a being that it can become aware of and grasp itself in relationship to. There can be no external objects for an omnipresent God, so he cannot have a mind.

Theodore Drange, The Arguments From Evil and Nonbelief

Abstract: When God is conceived of as an all-powerful and all-loving deity, many arguments for his nonexistence can be raised. Two of the main ones are the Argument from Evil (hereafter abbreviated AE) and the Argument from Nonbelief (hereafter abbreviated ANB). In what follows, I shall provide precise formulations of those two arguments, make some comments about them, and then try to refute the main defenses (of God's existence) that might be put forward against ANB, which I consider the stronger of the two. I take ANB to be a sound argument establishing the proposition that God (conceived of in a certain way) does not exist.

There are those thinkers who hold that it is not possible for the human mind to comprehend the nature of a deity, let alone a single Supreme Being. Even within theology there are those who think it presumptuous of humans to believe that the human mind could capture the nature of a divine being. For those of you who are inclined to think in this manner consider the work of Paul Tillich who spoke and wrote of a G-O-D that was “above the line” which was the limit of human intellectual capacity.

More on Tillich:

Furthermore , Tillich thought of the essence of religion as existing in that which was of ULTIMATE CONCERN. This Ultimate Concern could be expressed in a variety of ways, including that of a Supreme Being. These ideas will be revisited as this examination moves deeper into the examination of religious beliefs.

“Faith as Ultimate Concern” by Paul Tillich Summary by Meghan Ramsay (QCC, 2004)

According to Tillich, “faith is the state of being ultimately concerned.” The Ultimate Concern is that which demands complete surrender of the person who faithfully accepts the Ultimate. Additionally, faith in and surrender to the Ultimate promises total completion regardless of what must be sacrificed in the name of faith. Tillich argues that faith is a task for the believer’s complete being—for instance, it is an act of both the conscious and the unconscious. He refers to faith as a “total and centered act of the

personal self, the act of unconditional, infinite and ultimate concern." Tillich then goes on to examine the sources for faith. He asserts that faith arises out of man's awareness that he is a part of the infinite yet he is not the owner of this infinity. Additionally, he points out that God cannot be an object of faith without also being the subject of man's faith. God, asserts Tillich, is present as the subject and object of ultimate faith while at the same time is transcendent beyond both subject and object. Tillich warns that there are finite things that claim infinity, such as the nation or state. However, unlike God, believers can approach such finite things with "ordinary knowledge." Since God is infinite and ultimate and faith in God is the ultimate concern, Tillich asserts that only symbolic language is sufficient to express faith and God. Thus, he outlines the definition of the term "symbol." Like signs, symbols refer to that which is beyond themselves. For instance, a stop sign points to the command to stop the movement of a vehicle. Similarly letters refer to sounds and meanings. However, unlike signs, symbols play a part in that which they represent and cannot be easily replaced. For instance, a country's flag not only represents the nation that it stands for but also is an active participant in portraying the country's "power and dignity." Thus, it cannot simply be replaced unless the character of the nation itself is also changed. Tillich also asserts that symbols allow us to experience other levels of reality that are normally off limits to us. For instance art creates a symbol for a plane that we cannot move toward by science alone. Additionally, symbols open aspects of our souls which allow us to experience awareness of ourselves that we were not conscious of prior to experiencing the symbol (such as the depths that we can reach by listening to the "melodies and rhythms in music"). Another characteristic of a symbol is that it cannot be manufactured. Symbols arise from the unconscious and must be accepted on that level before conscious acceptance. Finally, since symbols cannot be intentionally produced, they come about and cease to exist in due time. In essence, they are borne out of a need and they perish when they no longer generate a reaction within the group that originally used them for expressive purposes.

Tillich then goes on to assert that anything that achieves ultimate concern for man is elevated to the status of god. However, when things like a nation or success become elevated to the level of ultimacy, they are merely false or idolatrous symbols of ultimate concern. Tillich also discusses that myths are an integral part of our ultimate concern. While a myth must be recognized as a myth (much like how a symbol must be recognized as a symbol), Tillich argues that any attempt to remove the mythological from our consciousness will be unsuccessful because myths signify a collection of symbols which stand for our ultimate concern. One might be able to replace one myth with another, but s/he could never completely remove mythology from human consciousness. In fact, Tillich argues that even a "broken myth," one which has been proven to be understood as a myth and has not been removed from or replaced within consciousness, cannot be replaced with a scientific substitute because myths are the symbolic language of faith. However, Tillich also warns that one cannot simply accept myths as literal truths because they then loose their symbolic meaning and rob God of his standing as the ultimate. Tillich, Paul. **Dynamics of Faith**. HarperCollins, 1957.

There are other philosophers and theologians who have attempted to alter the conception of the deity or that which is of our ultimate concern so as to avoid the inconsistencies of the traditional ideas about a deity.

Arguments for God's Existence

Are there any rational reasons to believe?

The question arises as to how humans can be sure that the spiritual being, the Supreme Being actually exists. Throughout recorded history humans have thought of this. There is ample evidence of the belief and a good deal of evidence of humans attempting to provide support for that belief. The arguments or proofs that have been offered will be examined. The arguments each have their critics. None appear to be without weakness.

The arguments have different forms and are based on different foundations.

A. Revelation- scripture- direct instruction from the deity

B. Reason

- Ontological argument
- Cosmological argument
- Teleological argument

C. Experience **Religious experience of the divine** (absolute)

- direct
- mystical- ineffable and noetic, Numinous Experience- mystical consciousness of the "HOLY", infinite dependence , mystery, terror, bliss

D. Psychic Phenomena-Death and Immortality-

Support for the post-mortem survival hypothesis

- apparitions-spirits/ ghosts/ poltergeists
- seances - communication with the dead
- reincarnation memories
- near death experiences-NDE's
- death bed observations
- sacred scripture

Arguments against the post mortem survival hypothesis

- the irrational nature of the explanation of consciousness
- lack of clear, unambiguous physical evidence

E. Pragmatism - faith

There are arguments that attempt to disprove that the god of the Judeo-Christian-Islamic Traditions exists. One of the most famous and powerful is based on the existence of evil.

The Problem of Evil - Rational arguments for disbelief.

How can a god that is all good and all knowing and all-powerful permit evil to occur?

Arguments against the existence of god and its critics will be examined.

Faith vs. Reason - Are there other ways to find a basis for belief?

Faith and Reason

Pascal's Wager- a pragmatic approach to belief

Rational critique of the pragmatic approach

Defense of belief- The Will to Believe- William James

Belief as a genuine option, living, forced, momentous (unique, significant, irreversible)

Passionate nature of humans will decide

Religious Language-Meaning and Truth-Worldviews

- BLIKS
- WORLD VIEWS
- CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS
- LANGUAGE GAMES
- FORMS OF LIFE
- BASIC BELIEFS
- FOUNDATIONAL BELIEFS

A Definition of Religion

Just what is it?

Summary

READ: Dallas Roark: **Introduction to Philosophy** Chapter 5: Knowledge and Method in Science, Philosophy and Religion: and inside the entire book here

Proceed to the sections that will cover the material listed above .

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6.2.2: Proofs for the Existence of God- Overview

This chapter now turns to proofs or arguments and gets us into seeing the dialectical process of thinking which the philosophical method of thought is. This chapter deals with the proofs or arguments for the existence of a deity of some sort and with the arguments dealing with the problem of evil and how an all-powerful, all knowing and all good deity could possibly exist at the same time that evil exists.

PROOFS or ARGUMENTS

A proof in Philosophy is an argument. An argument is a series of claims. Some of the claims are used to support another claim. The claims that are supporting are called the premises of the argument and the claim supported is the conclusion of the argument. The premises are the reasons and evidence to support the conclusion.

LOGIC

There is a branch of Philosophy that looks at the method of critical thinking itself . It is called Logic. Logic looks at arguments and how well premises support conclusions in a general sense. Logic distinguishes types of arguments or proofs.

In this chapter there are no fewer than nine (9) arguments presented for the existence of a deity of some sort. With each of them there are also problems presented or criticisms of those arguments.

The Basic Criteria to Evaluate an Argument looking at the Basic Problems with argument:

1. Premises are false
2. Premises are irrelevant
3. Premises contain the conclusion –Circular Reasoning-pettitio principi
4. Premises are inadequate to support the conclusion
5. Alternative arguments exist with equal or greater support

So with each and every argument Philosophy wants to carefully and critically examine the reasoning and determine if any of these problems are present. If there are any of these problems, then the argument or proof has flaws in it and such an argument would not or should not convince a rational person to accept its conclusion. This is not because someone who does not believe in the conclusion or wants to reject the conclusion because of their belief system will simply refuse to accept based on emotions or past history but they do not accept the conclusion because the argument it is not rationally compelling of acceptance of its conclusion.

There are several Arguments for God's Existence

Are there any rational reasons to believe?

The question arises as to how humans can be sure that the spiritual being, the Supreme Being actually exists. Throughout recorded history humans have thought of this. There is ample evidence of the belief and a good deal of evidence of humans attempting to provide support for that belief. The arguments or proofs that have been offered will be examined. The arguments each have their critics. None appear to be without weakness.

The idea of god is one of the most fascinating ideas ever to be entertained by the mind of a human being. If there is no god then the idea of god remains as perhaps the single most important and powerful idea to have been created by the mind or minds of humans. The idea provides a foundation for an entire perspective or way to view all of reality. The idea provides a basis for the moral foundation and the foundation for social life. The arguments offered to prove that such a being actually does exist are thus very important.

The arguments have different forms and are based on different foundations. One of the most popular distinctions to make about the arguments and thus to divide them into groups is to note that there are different basis for the arguments. There are those based upon reason and those that rest on experience.

The principle arguments based upon **reason** are:

1. **Ontological argument -** using reason alone and examining the very concept of god as a perfect being

2. **Cosmological argument -** considering the existence of the universe.
3. **Teleological argument -** considering the apparent order of the universe.

Those arguments to prove the existence of God based on **experience** are:

4. **Revelation**- humans experience the deity through an act of the deity in which the deity reveals itself. In this case the revelation is accomplished through teachings given to humans and recorded in some form of scripture or gathered into a book, a bible. The contents of such collections are considered to contain direct instruction from the deity.

5. Mystical Experience- an experience of union with the deity which is ineffable and noetic, a numinous experience-mystical consciousness of the "HOLY", infinite dependence , mystery, terror, bliss. The mystical experience is a particular variety of religious experience in which the subject is transformed and reports the loss of individuality, the oneness of all reality, union with the deity, the unity of the subject of the experience with the object of the experience. The commonalities in such experience around the world is termed the consensus mysticum. It has been described by Rudolph Otto as involving an experience characterized as being tremendum et fascinans

6. Direct Religious Experience experience of a god or spirit or of the divine (the absolute). A Religious experience is an encounter of a human being with a supernatural being, be it a deity or an emissary or intermediary for the deity, nevertheless a spiritual entity. Religious experiences are for the most part, individual and esoteric.

7. **Psychic Phenomena**-which relates to a non-physical realm of existence and the existence of spirits or souls, of which the deity is a member, the Supreme Being, Spirit or Soul

The type of psychic phenomena involved here would be those that would support the immortality of the soul and survival after death. They are the phenomena that provide support for the post-mortem survival hypothesis

- apparitions-spirits/ ghosts/ poltergeists
- séances - communication with the dead
- reincarnation memories
- near death experiences-NDE's
- death bed observations
- sacred scripture

8. Miracles- experienced events that could only be caused by a divine all powerful being

9. Pragmatism – faith and reason

These are arguments that lead to belief based on practical considerations and the weighing of odds or the likelihood of certain outcomes.

For an overview of arguments for the existence of a single deity (9 of them) read the material at Wikipedia

There are also arguments that attempt to disprove that the god of the Judeo-Christian-Islamic Traditions exists. One of the most famous and powerful is based on the existence of evil.

The following sections shall be covering all of the approaches listed above.

For arguments for and against the existence of a deity and supernatural entities see this material.

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6.2.3: Argument from Revelation

There is an argument to prove that god exists. It is based upon sacred scripture. It is based on the belief that god has revealed god's existence to humans through the creation or inspiration of the text, which is then thought to be a sacred text. Humans experience the text directly and through that experience many believe that they have contact with the deity.

Argument from Revelation consists of:

Sacred Texts-

- Inspired by the deity/intermediary
- Dictated by the deity/intermediary
- Written by the deity/intermediary

PREMISES:
1. The scriptures say that God exists. (Bible, Koran, Vedas, etc.)
2. The scriptures are true because they were written by God or by inspired individuals.
3. Who inspired these individuals? (God did)

4. God is the source and guarantee of truth

CONCLUSION: God Exists

This argument or proof is not accepted by rational careful thinkers as it has problems or flaws in it. There are leaks in this "raft". There are different sorts of problems with this argument:

(1) LOGICAL PROBLEM:

Fallacy: Classic circular argument

This argument assumes what it is trying to prove and thus is considered to be one of the poorest arguments of all those offered to prove the existence of god. Premise 2 and 4 actually contain the conclusion in it. But the argument is supposed to lead you to the conclusion and not assume the conclusion within the premises. You must accept that the book is from god in order to accept it as being truthful and accurate and then when you accept it as being truthful and accurate you read in it that there is a deity and so conclude that there is a god and that is what you needed to think in order to accept the book as being truthful and accurate in the first place.

This circular reasoning would not convince a rational person who was not already a believer in a deity that three was a deity.

(2) PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEM:

In addition today there are many people who refuse to believe that the texts are accurate descriptions of events that occurred long ago. People are aware of the psychological phenomenon whereby people who repeat tales are inclined to exaggerate or otherwise distort what actually occurred. Events might have been seen in retrospect as having been directed by a deity or as having some meaning in terms of a plan devised by a deity or as symbolic of the deity.

(3) Finally, it is now known that what have been considered to be sacred texts were voted upon by the leaders of the religious movements. Certain texts were excluded and others included by deliberate calculation of the practical results desired by those who had the power to declare the texts to be officially inspired or written by the deity.

The use of texts that are considered by some to be sacred are not likely to prove to the non-believer that they are sacred. The use of the texts to prove to a non-believer that there is a sacred source for the inspiration to the authors of the texts is not likely to be convincing when there are alternative explanations for what was created so long ago. Those alternative explanations having to do with human psychology and sociology are being accepted by steadily increasing number of people, including those who claim to be religious. Most simply can not believe that the reports contained with the scriptures are accurate or true and fewer and fewer can accept the texts as being directed by the deity.

(4) TRUTH PROBLEMS

What sacred text is the most sacred or the most true? What version of the sacred text are we to use? and B) the text reports events that can not be true and that can not be verified and that can be falsified.

A) Variations in Sacred Texts

If the Argument from Revelation or Scripture is thought to be acceptable by some then there is the need to explain why one scripture is preferable to another and how the other scriptures that contradict the preferred scripture are to be disproved or disallowed.:

1. God must exist because the scriptures say so. (Bible, Koran, Vedas, Avestas, etc.)
2. The scriptures are true because they were written by God or by inspired individuals.
3. Who inspired these individuals? (God did)

So which sacred scripture is more sacred or more holy or more true: Bible, New Testament, Koran, Vedas, Avestas ????

B) VARIATIONS in the SACRED TEXTS of the western religions:

What version is the official version of the "holy book"? Why?

What versions of these sacred scriptures are to be taken as the OFFICIAL and the truthful versions? In all three traditions of the West: Judaism, Christianity and Islam, there are records to indicate that there were and are variations on the sacred texts. In all three traditions a time came when the community needed to determine what the official version or the Canon would be.

JUDAISM

The cannon is the Tanakh is also called מקרא, Mikra or Miqra, meaning "that which is read", referring to the Jewish practice of public reading from the Scripture while in synagogue .On the development of the canon for the bible today used by the Judaic tradition.

There are books that are not included in the Hebrew Bible. They are Apocryphal and include: Tobit, III and IV Esdras and another omitted book is that of the Book of Enoch. Read one translation of it here. ARTFL Project: This site offers various online versions of the Bible in different languages. The site is organized to facilitate comparison of the versions.

Dead Sea Scrolls: A selection from the scrolls is available for on-line scrutiny. This site provides information on the historical context of the scrolls and the Qumran community from whence they may have originated. It also relates the story of their discovery 2,000 years later. In addition, the site aims to introduce us to the challenges and complexities connected with scroll research.

Journal of Hebrew Scriptures: This site contains abstracts from articles published in the Journal, as well as some bibliographies concerned with the Hebrew Scriptures.

CHRISTIANITY What books? What testaments? What gospels?

On the development of the Christian Cannon or the New Testament read this material.

New Testament Web Resources: Maintained by Mark Goodacre, this excellent site is an up to date, annotated guide to good academic New Testament web resources. This site will be of interest to both students and teachers.

Society of Biblical Literature: This site provides an interesting list of Electronic Resources for Biblical Studies:

On the New Testament:

Here is a collection of early Christian writings that includes gospels that were not accepted into the official cannon. See more on theThe Gnostic Gospels

ISLAM On the Quran:

The developement of the Koran or Quran :

Origins: --by scholar - Ibn Warraq

According to one tradition, during Abu Bakr's brief caliphate (632-634), 'Umar, who himself was to succeed to the caliphate in 634, became worried at the fact that so many Muslims who had known the Koran by heart were killed during the Battle of Yamama, in Central Arabia. There was a real danger that parts of the Koran would be irretrievably lost unless a collection of the Koran was made before more of those who knew this or that part of the Koran by heart were killed. Abu Bakr eventually gave his consent to such a project, and asked Zayd ibn Thabit, the former secretary of the Prophet, to undertake this daunting task. So Zayd proceeded to collect the Koran "from pieces of papyrus, flat stones, palm leaves, shoulder blades and ribs of animals, pieces of leather and wooden boards, as well as from the hearts of men." Zayd then copied out what he had collected on sheets or leaves (Arabic, suhuf). Once complete, the Koran was handed over to Abu Bakr, and on his death passed to 'Umar, and upon his death passed to 'Umar's daughter, Hafsa.--- Ibn Warraq

There are however different versions of this tradition; in some it is suggested that it was Abu Bakr who first had the idea to make the collection; in other versions the credit is given to Ali, the fourth caliph and the founder of the Shias; other versions still completely exclude Abu Bakr. Then, it is argued that such a difficult task could not have been accomplished in just two years. Again, it is unlikely that those who died in the Battle of Yamama, being new converts, knew any of the Koran by heart. But what is considered the most telling point against this tradition of the first collection of the Koran under Abu Bakr is that once the collection was made it was not treated as an official codex, but almost as the private property of Hafsa. In other words, we find that no authority is attributed to Abu Bakr's Koran. It has been suggested that the entire story was invented to take the credit of having made the first official collection of the Koran away from 'Uthman, the third caliph, who was greatly disliked. Others have suggested that it was invented "to take the collection of the Quran back as near as possible to Muhammad's death."

The Collection Under 'Uthman

According to tradition, the next step was taken under 'Uthman (644-656). One of 'Uthman's generals asked the caliph to make such a collection because serious disputes had broken out among his troops from different provinces in regard to the correct readings of the Koran. 'Uthman chose Zayd ibn Thabit to prepare the official text. Zayd, with the help of three members of noble Meccan families, carefully revised the Koran comparing his version with the "leaves" in the possession of Hafsa, 'Umar's daughter; and as instructed, in case of difficulty as to the reading, Zayd followed the dialect of the Quraysh, the Prophet's tribe. The copies of the new version, which must have been completed between 650 and 'Uthman's death in 656, were sent to Kufa, Basra, Damascus, and perhaps Mecca, and one was, of course, kept in Medina. All other versions were ordered to be destroyed.

This version of events is also open to criticism. The Arabic found in the Koran is not a dialect. In some versions the number of people working on the commission with Zayd varies, and in some are included the names of persons who were enemies of 'Uthman, and the name of someone known to have died before these events! This phase two of the story does not mention Zayd's part in the original collection of the Koran discussed in phase one.

Apart from Wansbrough and his disciples, whose work we shall look at in a moment, most modern scholars seem to accept that the establishment of the text of the Koran took place under 'Uthman between 650 and 656, despite all the criticisms mentioned above. They accept more or less the traditional account of the 'Uthmanic collection, it seems to me, without giving a single coherent reason for accepting this second tradition as opposed to the first tradition of the collection under Abu Bakr. There is a massive gap in their arguments, or rather they offer no arguments at all. For instance, Charles Adams after enumerating the difficulties with the 'Uthmanic story, concludes with breathtaking abruptness and break in logic, "Despite the difficulties with the traditional accounts there can be no question of the importance of the codex prepared under 'Uthman." But nowhere has it yet been established that it was indeed under 'Uthman that the Koran as we know it was prepared. It is simply assumed all along that it was under 'Uthman that the Koran was established in its final form, and all we have to do is to explain away some of the difficulties. Indeed, we can apply the same arguments to dismiss the 'Uthmanic story as were used to dismiss the Abu Bakr story. That is, we can argue that the 'Uthmanic story was invented by the enemies of Abu Bakr and the friends of 'Uthman; political polemics can equally be said to have played their part in the fabrication of this later story. It also leaves unanswered so many awkward questions. What were these "leaves" in the possession of Hafsa? And if the Abu Bakr version is pure forgery where did Hafsa get hold of them? Then what are those versions that seemed to be floating around in the provinces? When were these alternative texts compiled, and by whom? Can we really pick and choose, at our own will, from amongst the variants, from the contradictory traditions? There are no compelling reasons for accepting the 'Uthmanic story and not the Abu Bakr one; after all they are all gleaned from the same sources, which are all exceedingly late, tendentious in the extreme, and all later fabrications, as we shall see later.

see more on this here Origins of the Koran

PROBLEM: there are VARIATIONS in the Koran

TRUTH PROBLEM

B) NO VERIFICATION of stories in the BIBLE or VERIFICATION not Possible

READ: Bible , Truth and Knowledge

Outcome Assessment

This argument or proof does not establish the actual existence of a supernatural deity. It attempts to argue for the existence of such a being by assuming what it sets out to prove and that is not rationally legitimate. While the argument can not be used to convert a non-believer to a believer, the faults in the argument do not prove that there is no god. The Burden of Proof demands that the positive claim that there is a supernatural deity be established by reason and evidence and this argument does not meet that standard. The believer in god can not even use this argument to establish the mere logical possibility that there is a supernatural deity or at least that it is not irrational to believe in the possibility that there is such a being because the argument is so logically flawed. The argument does not establish any degree of probability at all when there are alternative explanations for the contents of the sacred texts. The veracity of the contents of the sacred text and its reports has not been established.

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PROBLEMS WITH THE BIBLE

FLAT EARTH

The shape of the planet would need to be one of a FLAT EARTH if the Bible is literally true. The flatness of the earth's surface is required by verses such as these:

Daniel 4:10-11. the king “saw a tree of great height at the centre of the earth...reaching with its top to the sky and visible to the earth's farthest bounds.”

Isaiah 11:12 "And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth."

Matthew 4:8: "Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world"

Luke 4:5: "And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time."

Revelation 1:7: “Behold, he is coming with the clouds! Every eye shall see him...”

Revelation 7:1 "And after these things I saw four angels standing on four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree."

OTHER PROBLEMS WITH THE BIBLE, NEW TESTAMENT and OLD TESTAMENT

Introduction to the Bible and Biblical Problems

Biblical Absurdities

More on absurdities

Biblical Flaws

Biblical Atrocities

More on Atrocities

Biblical Inconsistencies

Biblical Vulgarities

Biblical Contradictions

More on contradictions

Two Different Creation Stories in one bible

Problems With the Idea of a Deity that is Supreme and All Good

Bible errors

More on errors

StaBible holds for a Stationary and Flat Earth

NOTES ON BIBLE PROBLEMS Compiled by Richard Packham

Problems with the Integrity of the Bible~ James Buckner ~

Some Reasons Why Humanists Reject The Bible by Joseph C. Sommer

The Bible Problem Dr. Charles R. Vogan Jr., Ph.D.

Bible Problems with inconsistencies

OUTCOME:

The Argument:

1. The scriptures say that God exists. (Bible, Koran, Vedas, etc.)
2. The scriptures are true because they were written by God or by inspired individuals.
3. Who inspired these individuals? (God did)
4. God is the source and guarantee of truth

CONCLUSION: God Exists

Problem with argument:

1. _X__Premises are false or questionable
2. ____Premises are irrelevant
3. _X__Premises Contain the Conclusion –Circular Reasoning
4. ____Premises are inadequate to support the conclusion
5. __X__Alternative arguments exist with equal or greater support

This argument or proof based on Revelation has flaws in it and would not convince a rational person to accept its conclusion. This is not because someone who does not believe in a deity will simply refuse to accept based on emotions or past history but because it is not rationally compelling of acceptance of its conclusion.

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6.2.4: Argument from Reason- Ontological Argument

This is the a priori argument : prior to considering the existence of the physical universe. This is reasoning without bringing in any consideration of the existence of the universe or any part of it. This is an argument considering the idea of god alone.

The argument is considered to be one of the most intriguing ever devised. It took over 400 years for Philosophers to realize what its actual flaws were. As an “a priori” argument, the Ontological Argument tries to “prove” the existence of God by establishing the necessity of God’s existence through an explanation of the concept of existence or necessary being .

VIEW: Ontological Argument

Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury first set forth the Ontological Argument in the eleventh century. This argument is the primary locus for such philosophical problems as whether existence is a property and whether or not the notion of necessary existence is intelligible. It is also the only one of the traditional arguments that clearly leads to the necessary properties of God, such as Omnipotence, Omniscience, etc. Anselm’s argument may be conceived as a “reductiio ad absurdum” argument. In such an argument, one begins with a supposition, which is the contrary to what one is attempting to prove. Coupling the supposition with various existing certain or self-evident assumption will yield a contradiction in the end. This contradiction is what is used to demonstrate that the contrary of the original supposition is true.

There will be several presentations of this argument so that the reader will be able to develop an understanding.

Form 1:

Premises:

1.a. Anselm- the supreme being- that being greater than which none can be conceived (gcb)

the gcb must be conceived of as existing in reality and not just in the mind or else the gcb is not that being greater than which none can be conceived.

1. Suppose (S) that the greatest conceivable being (GCB) exists in the mind alone and not in reality(gcb1).
2. Then the greatest conceivable being would not be the greatest conceivable being because one could think of a being like (gcb1) but think of the gcb as existing in reality (gcb2) and not just in the mind.
3. So, gcb1 would not be the GCB but gcb2 would be.

Conclusion:

Thus to think of the GCB is to think of the gcb2, i.e. a being that exists in reality and not just in the mind.

Form 2: God as Necessary Being

Premises:

1. God is either a necessary being or a contingent being.
2. There is nothing contradictory about god being a necessary being
3. So, it is possible that god exists as a necessary being.
4. So if it is possible that God is a necessary being then God exists.
5. Because God is not a contingent being.

Conclusion:

God must exist as the necessary being.

Notes on the Ontological arguments of Anselm and Descartes

Anselm begins by defining the most central term in his argument - God. Without asserting that God exists, Anselm asks what is it that we mean when we refer to the idea of "God." When we speak of a God, Anselm implies, we are speaking of the most supreme being. That is, let "god" = "something than which nothing greater can be thought." Anselm's definition of God might sound confusing upon first hearing it, but he is simply restating our intuitive understanding of what is meant by the concept "God." Thus, for the purpose of this argument let "God" = "a being than which nothing greater can be conceived."

Within your understanding, then, you possess the concept of God. As a non-believer, you might argue that you have a concept of unicorn (after all, it is the shared concept that allows us to discuss such a thing) but the concept is simply an idea of a thing. After all, we understand what a unicorn is but we do not believe that they exist. Anselm would agree.

Two key points have been made thus far:

1. When we speak of God (whether we are asserting God is or God is not), we are contemplating an entity whom can be defined as "a being which nothing greater can be conceived.";
2. When we speak of God (either as believer or non-believer), we have an intra-mental understanding of that concept, i.e. the idea is within our understanding.

Anselm continues by examining the difference between that which exists in the mind and that which exists both in the mind and outside of the mind as well. What is being asked here is: Is it greater to exist in the mind alone or in the mind and in reality (or outside of the mind)? Anselm asks you to consider the painter, e.g. define which is greater: the reality of a painting as it exists in the mind of an artist, or that same painting existing in the mind of that same artist and as a physical piece of art. Anselm contends that the painting, existing both within the mind of the artist and as a real piece of art, is greater than the mere intra-mental conception of the work. Let me offer a real-world example: If someone were to offer you a dollar, but you had to choose between the dollar that exists within their mind or the dollar that exists both in their mind and in reality, which dollar would you choose? Are you sure...

At this point, we have a third key point established:

3.It is greater to exist in the mind and in reality, then to exist in the mind alone.

Have you figured out where Anselm is going with this argument?

A. If God is that than greater which cannot be conceived (established in #1 above);
B. And since it is greater to exist in the mind and in reality than in the mind alone (established in #3 above);
C. Then God must exist both in the mind (established in #2 above) and in reality;
D. In short, God must be. God is not merely an intra-mental concept but an extra-mental reality as well.

But why? Because if God is truly that than greater which cannot be conceived, it follows that God must exist both in the mind and in reality. If God did not exist in reality as well as our understanding, then we could conceive of a greater being i.e. a being that does exist extramentally and intramentally. But, by definition, there can be no greater being. Thus, there must be a corresponding extra-mental reality to our intra-mental conception of God. God's existence outside of our understanding is logically necessary.

Sometimes, Anselm's argument is presented as a Reductio Ad Absurdum (RAA). In an RAA, you reduce to absurdity the antithesis of your view. Since the antithesis is absurd, your view must be correct. Anselm's argument would look something like this:

1. Either [God exists] or [God does not exist].

2. Assume [God does not exist] (the antithesis of Anselm's position)

3. If [God does not exist] (but exists only as an intra-mental concept), then that being which nothing greater which can be conceived, is a being which a greater being can be conceived. This is a logical impossibility (remember criterion #3);

4. Therefore, [God does not exist] is incorrect;

Conclusion:

5. Therefore [God exists].

Clarifications:

The argument is **not** that "If you believe that god exists then god exists". That would be too ridiculous to ask anyone to accept that if you believe that X exists and is real then X exists and is real

The ontological argument does not ask a person to assume that there is a deity or even a GCB.

It asks anyone at all to simply THINK of the deity as the GREATEST CONCEIVABLE BEING and then it indicates that a being that exists in reality (outside of the mind) is greater than one that is just in the mind (imagination). So, the conclusion is that if you think of the GCB you must THINK that the GCB exists not just in your thinking (mind) but in reality (outside of your mind) as well.

It is greater to think of a being existing outside of the mind as well as in the mind so if you think of the GCB you must THINK THAT the GCB exists not just inside of the mind (imagination) but outside of the mind as well (in reality).

Look at it this way: Anselm invites people to think about a certain conception of the deity,i.e., that of the GCB. What Anselm did was to place into the concept itself the idea that the being must exist outside of the mind and in the realm of the real and not just inside the mind in the realm of imagination. So you THINK of the GCB and what are you doing when you do that? You must think that the GCB exists outside of the mind and in the realm of the real and not just inside the mind in the realm of imagination. Why must you think that? Because it you did not think that, then you would not be thinking of the GCB as defined by Anselm.

It is like this: Think of a triangle. If you do you must think of a three sided figure lying on a plane with three angles adding up to 180 degrees. Why? Because if you are not thinking of a three sided figure lying on a plane with three angles adding up to 180 degrees then you are not thinking of a triangle. So IF you are to THINK of a triangle you must THINK of a three sided figure lying on a plane with three angles adding up to 180 degrees.

If you are to THINK of a GCB you must THINK that the being must exist outside of the mind and in the realm of the real and not just inside the mind in the realm of imagination. Why? Because if you are not thinking that the being must exist outside of the mind and in the realm of the real and not just inside the mind in the realm of imagination then you are not thinking of the GCB.

In all of this it is only thinking. Anselm proved what must be thought about the GCB given how the GCB was defined and not whether the GCB actually exists.

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A variation of this argument by Alvin Plantinga exists. It is known as the Modal Version of the Ontological Argument:

1. To say that there is possibly a God is to say that there is a possible world in which God exists.
2. To say that God necessarily exists is to say that God exists in every possible world.
3. God is necessarily perfect (i.e. maximally excellent)
4. Since God is necessarily perfect, he is perfect in every possible world.
5. If God is perfect in every possible world, he must exist in every possible world, therefore God exists.
6. God is also maximally great. To be maximally great is to be perfect in every possible world.
7. Therefore: “it is possible that there is a God,” means that there is a possible which contains God, that God is maximally great, and the God exists in every possible world and is consequently necessary.
8. God’s existence is at least possible.
9. Therefore: as per item seven, God exists.

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Rene Descartes, 1596 - 1650, is also credited with formulating a version of the ontological argument. One possible presentation of the Cartesian argument is as follows:

1. If there is a God it is a perfect being;
2. A perfect being possesses all possible perfections;
3. Existence is a perfection;
4. Therefore, God necessarily possesses the quality of existence. Simply, God exists.

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The actual texts:

Anselm’s Philosophy

Anselm's Argument

Monologium

Proslogium

Guanilo's Response and Anselm's response to Guanilo

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PROBLEMS:

The problem with the ontological argument is NOT

1) that some people refuse to think of the GCB or

2) that some people have a resistance to a belief in a deity

3) that some people just refuse to accept the deity

NO NO NO the problem with the Argument is that it has FLAWS. It has a LOGICAL MISTAKE in it.

What is that error in the argument???

PROBLEM:

Conclusion of the argument is : Thus, to think of the GCB is to think of the gcb2, i.e. a being that exists in reality and not just in the mind

Immanuel Kant noticed that to think of the GCB is to think of the gcb2, i.e. a being that exists in reality and not just in the mind

BUT to think of the gcb2 as a being that exists in reality and not just in the mind, does not prove that the gcb2 does actually exist in reality ONLY that a person MUST THINK that the gcb2 does actually exist in reality

But for Kant and many after him , the notion of "Existence" is not a predicate: You cannot include it within the idea of the thing itself. You cannot think anything into existence by including existence as a property of that thing.

The errors or problem are seen in the

Counter Arguments to Anselm:

I. The Most Perfect Island

Gaunilon, a contemporary of Anselm, had two major criticisms of the ontological argument.

First: If by "God" we do mean "that than greater which can not be conceived," then the concept is meaningless for us. We can not understand, in any meaningful way, what exactly is meant by such words. The reality behind the term is completely transcedent to the human knower;

Second: Even if we grant that the concept of God as "that than greater which can not be conceived" exists in the understanding, there is no reason to believe that the concept necessitates the extra-mental reality of God. After all, I can imagine the most perfect island, glorious in every detail, but there is nothing about my understanding of the island that forces us to admit the island exists.

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II . Existence is not a predicate

Immanuel Kant (1724 - 1804), offered what many believe to be a damning critique of Anselm's ontological argument.

Let us return to our discussion of unicorns and God. Anselm has argued that there exists a difference between the concept of "unicorn" as it exists intra-mentally and extra-mentally. If we claim that the "unicorn" is, we are somehow adding to the concept. We are endowing the concept with an additional predicate, i.e. the quality that it is. The point of Anselm's argument is that the predicate of existence can be demonstrated for the concept of "God."

Kant does not agree with Anselm's treatment of existence as a predicate. The concept of "unicorn" is not changed in any way if we claim that it is. Nor is the concept damaged if we claim that unicorns are not. According to Kant,"...we do not make the least addition to the thing when we further declare that this thing is." If existence is not a predicate, then Anselm's argument has not demonstrated any meaningful information.

Kant thought that, while the concept of a supreme being was useful, it was only an idea, which in and of itself could not help us in our determining the correctness of the concept. While it was a possibility, he felt that the “a priori” stance of the argument it would be necessary to buttress it with experience.

For Kant what Anselm did was to prove that humans MUST THINK THAT a deity exists in reality and not just in the mind as an idea as the GCB but that does not mean that the GCB actually does exist in reality. The idea of the GCB exists and the idea of the GCB as an actual being does exist but the reality or actuality of the GCB is not established based on the thoughts alone.

Think of three situations:

1. You go home and look at the top of your dresser. You could use some money and as you look there you imagine seeing ten ten dollar bills.
2. You go home and look at the top of your dresser. You could use some money and as you look there you see ten MONOPOLY ten dollar bills.
3. You go home and look at the top of your dresser. You could use some money and as you look there you seeing ten real ten dollar bills.

Which of the three is the greatest or best situation? #3 is.

But just thinking about #3 does not actually add any money to your total amount.

This is Kant's point.

Thinking about the GCB logically entails THINKING that the GCB must exist in reality and not just in the imagination. But thinking about the GCB as existing in reality and not just in the imagination does not prove that the GCB actually does exist in reality and not just in the imagination. It is just an idea about what exists.

See also the Ontological Argument

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III. The Greatest Conceivable EVIL Being.

As an “a priori” argument, the Ontological Argument tries to “prove” the existence of God by establishing the necessity of God’s existence through an explanation of the concept of existence or necessary being. As this criticism of the Ontological Argument shows, the same arguments used to prove an all-powerful god, could be used to prove an all-powerful devil. Since there could not exist two all-powerful beings (one’s power must be subordinate to the other), this is an example of one of the weaknesses in this type of theorizing. Furthermore, the concept of necessary existence, by using Anselm’s second argument, allows us to “define” other things into existence.

The argument could prove the existence of that being more EVIL than which no other can be conceived just as easily as it supposedly proves the existence of the being that is the greatest conceivable being.

Think of a being that is the most evil being that can be conceived. That being must be conceived of as existing in reality and not just in the mind or it wouldn’t be the most evil being which can be conceived for a being that does not exist in reality is not evil at all.

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IV. Empiricist Critique

Aquinas, 1225 - 1274, once declared the official philosopher of the Catholic Church, built his objection to the ontological argument on epistemological grounds.

Epistemology is the study of knowledge. It is a branch of philosophy that seeks to answer such questions as: What is knowledge?; What is truth?; How does knowing occur?; et cetera. Aquinas is known as an empiricist. Empiricists claim that knowledge comes from sense experience. Aquinas wrote: "Nothing is in the intellect which was not first in the senses."

Within Thomas' empiricism, we can not reason or infer the existence of God from a studying of the definition of God. We can know God only indirectly, through our experiencing of God as Cause to that which we experience in the natural world. We can not assail the heavens with our reason; we can only know God as the Necessary Cause of all that we observe.

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Alvin Plantiga offers a counter argument to the counter arguments that at least establishes the rational acceptability of theism as it appears to support the idea that it is possible that the greatest conceivable being does exist.

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Other Philosophers and their Critiques:

- René Descartes, from The Philosophy of Descartes in Extracts from His Writings. H. A. P. Torrey. New York, 1892. P. 161 et seq.
- Benedict Spinoza, from The Chief Works of Benedict de Spinoza. Translated by R.H.M.Elwes. London, 1848. VoI. II., P. 51 at seq.
- John Locke, from An Essay Concerning Human Understanding. London: Ward, Lock, Co. P. 529 et seq.
- Gottfried W. Leibniz, from New Essays Concerning Human Understanding. Translated by A.G. Langley. New York, 1896. P. 502 at seq.
- Immanuel Kant, from Critique of Pure Reason. Translated by F. Max Muller. New York, 1896. P-483 et seq.
- Georg W.F. Hegel, from Lectures on the History of Philosophy. Translated by E. S. Haldane and F.H. Simson. London, 1896. Vol. III., p. 62 et seg.
- J. A. Dorner from A System of Christian Doctrine. Translated by A. Cave and J. S. Banks, Edinburgh, 1880. Vol. I., p. 216 et seq
- Lotze, Microcosmus. Translated by E. Hamilton and E. E. C. Jones. Edinburgh, 1887. Vol. II., p. 669 et seq.
- Robert Flint, from Theism. New York, 1893. Seventh edition. P. 278 et seq.

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View also **Debunking the Teleological, Cosmological, and Ontological Arguments for the Existence of God** Read the critiques of the Ontological Argument

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Concluding Summary:

1. What it does prove:

A. Anselm proves that if you think of the GCB you must THINK that it exists.

B. Descartes proves that if you conceive of an ALL PERFECT being you must CONCEIVE (THINK) of that being as existing.

2. Kant points out that even though you must THINK that it exists does not mean that it does exist. Existence is not something we can know from the mere idea itself. It is not known as a predicate of a subject. Independent confirmation through experience is needed.

3. The argument does give some support to those who are already believers. It has variations that establish the possibility of the existence of such a being.

4. The argument will not convert the non-believer into a believer.

Outcome Assessment

This argument or proof does not establish the actual existence of a supernatural deity. It attempts to define a being into existence and that is not rationally legitimate. While the argument can not be used to convert a non-believer to a believer, the faults in the argument do not prove that there is no god. The Burden of Proof demands that the positive claim that there is a supernatural deity be established by reason and evidence and this argument does not meet that standard. The believer in god can use the argument to establish the mere logical possibility that there is a supernatural deity or at least that it is not irrational to believe in the possibility that there is such a being. The argument does not establish any degree of probability at all.

OUTCOME:

The Argument:

Premises

1. Suppose (S) that the greatest conceivable being (GCB) exists in the mind alone and not in reality(gcb1).
2. Then the greatest conceivable being would not be the greatest conceivable being because one could think of a being like (gcb1) but think of the gcb as existing in reality (gcb2) and not just in the mind.
3. So, gcb1 would not be the GCB but gcb2 would be.
4. Thus to think of the GCB is to think of the gcb2, i.e. a being that exists in reality and not just in the mind.

Conclusion: The GCB (Deity) exists

Problem with argument:

1. ___Premises are false
2. ___Premises are irrelevant
3. ___Premises Contain the Conclusion –Circular Reasoning
4. __X__Premises are inadequate to support the conclusion
5. ___Alternative arguments exist with equal or greater support

This argument or proof has flaws in it and would not convince a rational person to accept its conclusion. This is not because someone who does not believe in a deity will simply refuse to accept based on emotions or past history but because it is not rationally compelling of acceptance of its conclusion.

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6.2.5: Argument from Reason- Cosmological Argument

This argument or proof proceeds from a consideration of the existence and order of the universe. This popular argument for the existence of God is most commonly known as the cosmological argument. Aristotle, much like a natural scientist, believed that we could learn about our world and the very essence of things within our world through observation. As a marine biologist might observe and catalog certain marine life in an attempt to gain insight into that specific thing's existence, so too did Aristotle observe the physical world around him in order to gain insight into his world. The very term cosmological is a reflection of Aristotle's relying upon sense data and observation. The word logos suggests a study of something while the noun cosmos means order or the way things are. Thus, a cosmological argument for the existence of God will study the order of things or examine why things are the way they are in order to demonstrate the existence of God.



Figure 6.2.5.1

For Aristotle, the existence of the universe needs an explanation, as it could not have come from nothing. There needs to be a cause for the universe. Nothing comes from nothing so since there is something there must have been some other something that is its cause. Aristotle rules out an infinite progression of causes, so that led to the conclusion that there must be a First Cause. Likewise with Motion, there must have been a First Mover.

This argument was given support by modern science with the idea of the universe originating in a BIG BANG, a single event from a single point.

A site with material on this point You can see also Stephen Hawking and the Mind of God for another view

Thomas Aquinas offered five somewhat similar arguments using ideas of the first mover, first cause, the sustainer, the cause of excellence, the source of harmony

Here is a sample of the pattern:

Premises:

1. there exists a series of events
2. the series of events exists as caused and not as uncaused(necessary)
3. there must exist the necessary being that is the cause of all contingent being

Conclusion:

- there must exist the necessary being that is the cause of the whole series of beings

First Way: The Argument From Motion

Aquinas had Five Proofs for the Existence of God. Let us consider his First argument, the so-called Argument from Motion. Aquinas begins with an observation:

Of the things we observe, all things have been placed in motion. No thing has placed itself in motion.

Working from the assumption that if a thing is in motion then it has been caused to be in motion by another thing, Aquinas also notes that an infinite chain of things-in-motion and things-causing-things-to-be-in-motion can not be correct. If an infinite chain or regression existed among things-in-motion and things-causing-things-to-be-in-motion then we could not account for the motion we observe. If we move backwards from the things we observe in motion to their cause, and then to that cause of motion within those things that caused motion, and so on, then we could continuing moving backwards ad infinitum. It would be like trying to count all of the points in a line segment, moving from point B to point A. We would never get to point A. Yet point A must exist as we know there is a line segment. Similarly, if the cause-and-effect chain did not have a starting point then we could not account for the motion we observe around us. Since there is motion, the cause and effect chain (accounting for motion) must have had a starting point. We now have a second point:

The cause and effect relationship among things-being-moved and things-moving must have a starting point. At one point in time, the relationship was set in motion. Thus, there must be a First Cause which set all other things in motion.

What else can we know about the First Cause? The first cause must have been uncaused. If it were caused by another thing, then we have not resolved the problem of the infinite regression. So, in order to account for the motion that we observe, it is necessary to posit a beginning to the cause and effect relationship underlying the observed motion. It is also necessary to claim that the First Cause has not been caused by some other thing. It is not set in motion by another entity.

The First Cause is also the Unmoved Mover. The Unmoved Mover is that being whom set all other entities in motion and is the cause of all other beings. For Aquinas, the Unmoved Mover is that which we call God.

For Aquinas the term motion meant not just motion as with billiard balls moving from point A to point B or a thing literally moving from one place to another. Another sense of the term motion is one that appreciates the Aristotelian sense of moving from a state of potentiality towards a state of actuality. When understood in this way, motion reflects the becoming inherent in the world around us. God as First Cause becomes that entity which designed and set in motion all things in their quest to become. In the least, it is a more poetic understanding of motion.

St. Thomas Aquinas (1224-1274) was a theologian, Aristotelian scholar, and philosopher. Called the Doctor Angelicus (the Angelic Doctor,) Aquinas is considered one the greatest Christian philosophers to have ever lived.

Much of St. Thomas's thought is an attempt to understand Christian orthodoxy in terms of Aristotelian philosophy. His five proofs for the existence of God take "as givens" some of Aristotle's assertions concerning being and the principles of being (the study of being and its principles is known as metaphysics within philosophy). Before analyzing further the first of Aquinas' Five Ways, let us examine some of the Aristotelian underpinnings at work within St. Thomas' philosophy.

Aristotle and Aquinas also believed in the importance of the senses and sense data within the knowing process. Aquinas once wrote nothing in the mind that was not first in the senses. Those who place priority upon sense data within the knowing process are known as empiricists. Empirical data is that which can be sensed and typically tested. Unlike Anselm, who was a rationalist, Aquinas will not rely on non-empirical evidence (such as the definition of the term "God" or "perfection") to demonstrate God's existence. St. Thomas will observe the physical world around him and, moving from effect to cause, will try try to explain why things are the way they are. He will assert God as the ultimate Cause of all that is. For Aquinas, the assertion of God as *prima causa* (first cause) is not so much a blind religious belief but a philosophical and theoretical necessity. God as first cause is at the very heart of St. Thomas' Five Ways and his philosophy in general.

One last notion that is central to St. Thomas' Five Ways is the concept of potentiality and actuality. Aristotle observed that things/substances strive from an incomplete state to a complete state. Things will grow and tend to become as they exist. The more complete a thing is, the better an instance of that thing it is. We have idioms and expressions within our language that reflect this idea. For example, we might say that so-and-so has a lot of potential. We might say that someone is at the peak of their game or that someone is the best at what they do. We might say It just does not get any better than this if we are are having a very enjoyable time. Aristotle alludes to this commonly held intuition when he speaks of organisms moving from a state of potentiality to actuality. When Aquinas speaks of motion within the First Way (the cosmological argument) he is referencing the Aristotelian concepts of potentiality and actuality.

Suggested Reading: Aquinas **on God's Existence**

Notes on the Five Ways and the associated problems

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Argument from Contingency

English theologian and philosopher Samuel Clarke set forth a second variation of the Cosmological Argument, which is considered to be a superior version. It is called the "Argument from Contingency".

Clarke's "Argument from Contingency":

Premises:

1. Every being that exists is either contingent or necessary.
2. Not every being can be contingent.
3. Therefore, there exists a necessary being on which the contingent beings depend.
4. A necessary being, on which all contingent things depend, is what we mean by "God".

Conclusion:

Therefore, God exists.

However, there are several weaknesses in the Cosmological Argument, which make it unable to "prove" the existence of God by itself. One is that if it is not possible for a person to conceive of an infinite process of causation, without a beginning, how is it possible for the same individual to conceive of a being that is infinite and without beginning? The idea that causation is not an infinite process is being introduced as a given, without any reasons to show why it could not exist.

Clarke (1675-1729) has offered a version of the Cosmological Argument, which many philosophers consider superior. The "Argument from Contingency" examines how every being must be either necessary or contingent. Since not every being can be contingent, it follow that there must be a necessary being upon which all things depend. This being is God. Even though this method of reasoning may be superior to the traditional Cosmological Argument, it is still not without its weaknesses. One of its weaknesses has been called the "Fallacy of Composition". The form of the mistake is this: Every member of a collection of dependent beings is accounted for by some explanation. Therefore, the collection of dependent beings is accounted for by one explanation. This argument will fail in trying to reason that there is only one first cause or one necessary cause, i.e. one God .

There are those who maintain that there is no sufficient reason to believe that there exists a self existent being.

COUNTER ARGUMENTS:

1. If there is a cause for everything then what caused the first cause (god).

2.If the first cause can be thought to be uncaused and a necessary being existing forever, then why not consider that the universe itself has always existed and shall always exist and go through a never ending cycle of expansion and contraction and then expansion (big bang) again and again!!!

If there is to be a deity that is the exception from the requirement that all existing things need a cause then the same exception can be made for the sum of all energy that exists, considering that it manifests in different forms.

What the counter argument does is to indicate that the premises of the cosmological argument do not necessarily lead to the conclusion that there is a being that is responsible for the creation of the universe.

3) Further, even if a person wanted to accept that there was such a being there is nothing at all in the cosmological argument to indicate that the being would have any of the properties of humans that are projected into the concept of the deity of any particular religion. The first mover or first cause is devoid of any other characteristic.

So the cosmological argument is neither a valid argument in requiring the truth of its conclusion nor is it a satisfactory argument to prove the existence of any being that would have awareness of the existence of the universe or any event within it.

When a person asks questions such as :

1 What is the cause of the the energy or the force or the agent behind the expansion and contraction of the energy?
These questions are considered as "loaded questions" because they loaded or contain assumptions about what exists or is true that have not yet been established. Why is it that the idea of a "force " or agent" is even in the question? Why operate with the assumption that there is such or needs to be such?

We do not know that there is a force "behind" the expansion and contraction. Energy might just expand and contract and there is no force at all other than those generated by the energy-gravitational force, electro magnetic, strong and weak forces.

In another form this is the "who made god?" question or the" who made the energy question?" question. Such an approach to the issue of an explanation for the existence of the universe assumes that there must be an agency. When the idea of an eternal and necessary agency is introduced it was done to provide a form for describing a being that some people wanted as the ultimate explanation- a deity. The point of the counter arguments to the cosmological argument is that the idea of an eternal and necessary agency can as logically be expressed as energy rather than as a single being or entity. If the uncaused cause can be thought of a a single entity then the uncaused cause can be thought of a a single process-energy.

Here is another view of this argument and the rebuttal:

PREMISES:

- there exists a series of events
- the series of events exists as caused and not as uncaused (necessary)
- there must exist the necessary being that is the cause of all contingent being

CONCLUSION: There must exist the necessary being that is the cause of the whole series of beings

PREMISES:

1. RULE: Everything that exists must have a cause
2. the Universe (multiverse) exists
3. the universe (multiverse) must have a cause

CONCLUSION:

The cause of the universe (multiverse) is GOD

REBUTTAL:

1.BUT what is the cause of GOD?

2.God has no cause but is a necessary being. GOD is an EXCEPTION to RULE !

REBUTTAL: If GOD can be the exception then why not ENERGY???

Clarke's "Argument from Contingency":

1. Every being that exists is either contingent or necessary.
2. Not every being can be contingent.
3. Therefore, there exists a necessary being on which the contingent beings depend.
4. A necessary being, on which all contingent things depend, is what we mean by "God".

CONCLUSION: Therefore, God exists.

REBUTTAL:

Why not have that a necessary being on which the contingent beings depend is ENERGY itself that changes its form through time? PANTHEISM

Can there be a Creation without God ? Well this work addresses that question.

Notes on Critiques of this Argument: David Hume's Critique of the Cosmological Argument

1. **Variations on the Cosmological Argument:**

The Kalam Cosmological Argument

1. The universe either had a beginning or it did not.

2. The universe had a beginning.

    a) Philosophical arguments for the impossibility of transversing an actual infinite series of events (see above).

    b) The Big Bang Theory of the Universe postulates a beginning.

        (1) This is the most widely recognized theory of the universe.

    c) The second law of thermodynamics (entropy).

        (1) The universe is running out of energy.

        (2) If it had an infinite past, it would have run out by now.

3. The beginning of the universe was either caused or uncaused.

4. The beginning of the universe was caused.

    a) Contra Hume, every event has a cause.

    b) God is not an event.

    c) One might hold that some events, like quantum events, don't need causes.

        (1) If so, then this premise can be replaced with "Everything that begins to exist has a cause."

On Kalam Argument

A Modern Version of the Cosmological Argument William Lane Craig:

The Existence of God and the Beginning of the Universe

Logic and the Cosmological Argument

Counter Arguments to the attempts to use the Cosmological or Kalam Cosmological Argument

1.) VIEW: Debunking the Kalam Cosmological Argument

View also **Irrefutable Refutation of the Kalam Cosmological Argument!**

2.) A refutation of the argument by William Lane Craig is offered by Arnold T. Guminski, The Kalam Cosmological Argument: The Question of the Metaphysical Possibility of an Infinite Set of Real Entities in **PHILO**, Volume 5, Number 2 at

Abstract: This paper examines the Kalam Cosmological Argument, as expounded by William Lane Craig, insofar as it pertains to the premise that it is metaphysically impossible for an infinite set of real entities to exist. Craig contends that this premise is justified because the application of the Cantorian theory to the real world generates counterintuitive absurdities. This paper shows that Craig's contention fails because it is possible to apply Cantorian theory to the real world without thereby generating counterintuitive absurdities, provided one avoids positing that an infinite set of real entities is technically a set within the meaning of such theory. Accordingly, this paper proposes an alternative version of the application of Cantorian theory to the real world thereby replacing the standard version of such application so thoroughly criticized by Craig.

Why is there something rather than nothing ?" and the answer might be because nothing is an unstable state.

3.) **READ: THE SCIENTIFIC CASE AGAINST A GOD WHO CREATED THE UNIVERSE by** Victor J. Stenger also reached in this form

Chapter in *The Improbability of God,* eds. Michael Martin and Ricki Monnier (Amherst NY: Prometheus Books, 2006). Based on a chapter in *God: The Failed Hypothesis. How Science Shows that God Does Not Exist* by Victor J. Stenger, to be published by Prometheus Books in 2007.

So there are those who would argue that the universe has always existed: that the sum of all energy has always existed and that it manifests itself in different forms over time.

READ: : Wes Morriston, **Creation ex Nihilo and the Big Bang** in PHILO . Volume 5, Number 1 at

Abstract: William Lane Craig claims that the doctrine of creation ex nihilo is strongly supported by the Big Bang theory of the origin of the universe. In the present paper, I critically examine Craig's arguments for this claim. I conclude that they are unsuccessful, and that the Big Bang theory provides no support for the doctrine of creation ex nihilo. Even if it is granted that the universe had a "first cause," there is no reason to think that this cause created the universe out of nothing. As far as the Big Bang theory is concerned, the cause of the universe might have been what Adolf Grünbaum has called a "transformative cause"—a cause that shaped something that was "already there."

So there is the naturalist view. For a critique of this view read

Prof. Alvin Plantinga **An Evolutionary Argument Against Naturalism**

NATURALIST ORIGINS for the UNIVERSE

For a defense of a naturalist position on the existence of the universe

Quentin Smith, **The Reason the Universe Exists is that it Caused Itself to Exist in Philosophy**, Volume 74, 1999. pp. 136-146. at http://www.qsmithwmu.com/the_reason_the_universe_exists_is_because_it_caused_itself_to_exist.htm

READ: Quentin Smith, **Why Steven Hawking's Cosmology Precludes a Creator** In PHILO, Volume 1, Number 1 at http://www.philoonline.org/library/smith_1_1.htm

A Scenario for a Natural Origin of Our Universe Using a Mathematical Model Based on Established Physics and Cosmology by *Victor J. Stenger in Skeptical Briefs, June 2006 also here*

Abstract: A mathematical model of the natural origin of our universe is

presented. The model is based only on well-established physics. No claim

is made that this model uniquely represents exactly how the universe came

about. But the viability of a single model serves to refute any assertions

that the universe cannot have come about by natural means.

REBUTTAL to the COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

Nothing can come from nothing is a fairly well accepted principle since Parmenides. In the West it is taken to be used to support the idea that the universe must have had a creator or a maker or source or origin. However, that is due to the prior storied of a creator being that sets the intellectual environment in which thinking takes place. Now in the East and now in the West there are alternative approaches to the explanation of the universe that we experience.
Nothing comes from nothing.
Something does exist.
Therefore, has never been nothing.
It is possible that the something that currently exists has always existed.
The something that exists is always changing.
Change is a feature of something. --Process Philosophy

The East has had such notions for millennium. In the West there are now alternative cosmologies to account for the cosmos--M theory is one of them. A flaw in the cosmological argument is in giving special exclusive status to a deity that would need no creator or origin outside of itself- a necessary being--without acknowledging that such status could be given to the basic stuff, physis, of the universe, its energy, that can take different forms.. What the western thinkers omitted as a possibility was the alternative that there is energy that has always existed and undergoes changes that are time and it can expand and contract and generate multiple dimensions. The Hindus and Buddhists have this sort of idea and so to the Taoists.

If people need to believe that there was an origination for the universe and that the origination involves an eternal entity then you can have several possibilities including these:

1. eternal entity =deity=creator of universe
2. eternal entity=energy=continual existence of energy in various forms undergoing continual change=universe

For a explanation of the universe or multiple universes that holds that they have always existed and go through what may be termed cycles see the following as a start from Wikipedia

A cyclic model is any of several cosmological models in which the universe follows infinite, self-sustaining cycles.

The ekpyrotic universe, or ekpyrotic scenario, is a cosmological model of the origin and shape of the universe. The name comes from a Stoic term ekpyrosis meaning conflagration or in Stoic usage "conversion into fire".[1] The ekpyrotic model of the universe is an alternative to the standard cosmic inflation model for the very early universe; both models accommodate the standard big bang Lambda-CDM model of our universe. The ekpyrotic model is a precursor to, and part of the cyclic model.

What if this universe we know with solar systems and galaxies and dark matter and dark energy is but one of an infinite number of universes with differing amounts of energy and all in a tremendous amount of energy that gives birth to universes constantly over time and each with different amounts of energy and with forces operating differently so that some have formation of matter and others do not?

See more on the Multiverse and on Inflation Cosmology

Many people appear to want to personify that which they would hold in highest esteem. They appear to prefer the options that enable them to think of the eternal entity as a being such as themselves so that they can relate to it and even worship it and petition it.

The critics of the argument point out that if the believers in a deity can make an exception to the rule that everything needs a cause for the deity then an exception can be made for the universe itself. If the deity can be thought of as being uncaused and eternal then so can the energy that makes up the universe be thought of that way-as uncaused and eternal but manifesting in different forms, as dimensions of a universe or in multiple dimensions or branes leading to numerous BIG BANG over time..

Baruch Spinoza was a philosopher who identified all that existed (universe of matter for him but perhaps a multiverse for our time) with a deity. This was a form of Pantheism and can be used by some who want to have a deity in any explanation of the universe. What if this universe we know with solar systems and galaxies and dark matter and dark energy is but one of an infinite number of universes with differing amounts of energy and all in a tremendous amount of energy that gives birth to universes constantly over time and each with different amounts of energy and with forces operating differently so that some have formation of matter

and others do not?

Outcome Assessment

This argument or proof does not establish the actual existence of a supernatural deity. It attempts to argue for the existence of such a being by making exceptions to rules in the argument and that is not rationally legitimate. While the argument can not be used to convert a non-believer to a believer, the faults in the argument do not prove that there is no god. The Burden of Proof demands that the positive claim that there is a supernatural deity be established by reason and evidence and this argument does not meet that standard. The believer in god can use the argument to establish the mere logical possibility that there is a supernatural deity or at least that it is not irrational to believe in the possibility that there is such a being. The argument does not establish any degree of probability at all when there are alternative explanations for the existence of the known universe.

OUTCOME:

The Argument:

PREMISES:

1. RULE: Everything that exists must have a cause
2. the Universe (multiverse) exists
3. the universe (multiverse) must have a cause

CONCLUSION:

The cause of the universe (multiverse) is GOD

REBUTTAL:

1. BUT what is the cause of GOD?
2. God has no cause but is a necessary being. GOD is an EXCEPTION to RULE !

Conclusion: The Deity exists

Problem with argument:

1. ___Premises are false
2. ___Premises are irrelevant
3. ___Premises Contain the Conclusion –Circular Reasoning
4. ___Premises are inadequate to support the conclusion
5. __X__Alternative arguments exist with equal or greater support

This argument or proof has flaws in it and would not convince a rational person to accept its conclusion. This is not because someone who does not believe in a deity will simply refuse to accept this proof based on emotions or past history but because it is not rationally compelling of acceptance of its conclusion.

Abstract: Atheists have tacitly conceded the field to theists in the area of philosophical cosmology, specifically, in the enterprise of explaining why the universe exists. The theistic hypothesis is that the reason the universe exists lies in God's creative choice, but atheists have not proposed any reason why the universe exists. I argue that quantum cosmology proposes such an atheistic reason, namely, that the universe exists because it has an unconditional probability of existing based on a functional law of nature. This law of nature ("the wave function of the universe") is inconsistent with theism and implies that God does not exist. I criticize the claims of Alston, Craig, Deltete and Guy, Oppy and Plantinga that theism is consistent with quantum cosmology.

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6.2.6: Argument from Reason - Teleological Argument

The Teleological Argument or proof for the existence of a deity is sometimes called the Design argument. Even if you have never heard of either argument, you are probably familiar with the central idea of the argument, i.e. there exists so much intricate detail, design , and purpose in the world that we must suppose a creator. All of the sophistication and incredible detail we observe in nature could not have occurred by chance.

When looking at the universe people might see more order or disorder as is their predilection and they might see it in varying proportions. When examining the universe and seeing complexity and order there are a variety of explanations for how it may have come about. Some people want an explanation backed by evidence and without violations of reasoning and some do not want such explanations. Some want the easiest explanations with the least amount of thought. Some merely accept the explanations that they have received when growing up.

VIEW: Teleological Argument

The Teleological Argument is the second traditional “a posteriori” argument for the existence of God. Perhaps the most famous variant of this argument is the William Paley’s “watch” argument. Basically, this argument says that after seeing a watch, with all its intricate parts, which work together in a precise fashion to keep time, one must deduce that this piece of machinery has a creator, since it is far too complex to have simply come into being by some other means, such as evolution. The skeleton of the argument is as follows:

Premises:

1. Human artifacts are products of intelligent design; they have a purpose.
2. The universe resembles these human artifacts.
3. Therefore: It is probable that the universe is a product of intelligent design, and has a purpose.
4. However, the universe is vastly more complex and gigantic than a human artifact is.

Conclusion: Therefore: There is probably a powerful and vastly intelligent designer who created the universe.

Paley's Teleological Argument For The Existence Of God

"For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. Ever since the creation of the world his invisible nature, namely, his eternal power and diety, has been clearly percieved in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse." Romans1:19-20

I.) The Teleological Argument:

"Teleological" = from the end or purpose exhibited by the universe

The term teleological comes from the Greek words *telos* and *logos*. Telos means the *goal* or *end* or *purpose of a thing* while logos means *the study of the very nature of a thin*g. The suffix *ology* or *the study of* is also from the noun logos. To understand the logos of a thing means to understand the very why and how of that thing's nature - it is more than just a simple studying of a thing. The teleological argument is an attempt to prove the existence of God that begins with the observation of the purposiveness of nature. The teleological argument moves to the conclusion that there must exist a designer. The inference from design to designer is why the teleological argument is also known as the design argument.

i.) The basic premise, of all teleological arguments for the existence of God, is that the world exhibits an intelligent purpose based on experience from nature such as its order, unity, coherency, design and complexity. Hence, there must be an intelligent designer to account for the observed intelligent purpose and order that we can observe.

ii.)Paley's teleological argument is based on an analogy: Watchmaker is to watch as God is to universe. Just as a watch, with its intelligent design and complex function must have been created by an intelligent maker: a watchmaker, the universe, with all its complexity and greatness, must have been created by an intelligent and powerful creator. Therefore a watchmaker is to watch as God is to universe.

II.) Paley's Teleological Argument:

Premises:

1.)Human artifacts are products of intelligent design.

2.)The universe resembles human artifacts.

3.)Therefore the universe is a product of intelligent design.

4.)But the universe is complex and gigantic, in comparison to human artifacts.

Conclusion:

Therefore, there probably is a powerful and vastly intelligent designer who created the universe.

Paley's Text

More on the Argument

CRITICISMS or COUNTER ARGUMENTS

How much order is there?

What other universes exist to compare this one to them?

No conclusion to only 1 creator!

No conclusion to a divine creator!

No conclusion as to a very intelligent creator!

Alternative explanations exist involving natural processes!

Possibility :Aliens???

Possibility: Universe making contest amongst multiple deities !!!

Criticisms by David Hume:



Figure 6.2.6.1

By David Hume:

1. The universe does not exhibit that much order as there are many indications of disorder such as the collision of galaxies, black holes, nova and supernova, cosmic radiation, gamma radiation, meteor impacts, volcanoes, earthquakes
2. argument from parts to whole is not valid
3. analogy fails because there are no other universes to compare this one to
4. argument does not prove the existence of only one (1) such god
5. the argument does not prove that the creator is infinite

See this site for counter arguments to creationism

COUNTER TO THE COUNTER ARGUMENTS:

The teleological argument does prove that the existence of God is PROBABLE but not certain.

READ: Richard Swinburne: The Argument from Design

NOTES ON DAVID HUME:

David Hume, 1711 - 1776, argued against the Design Argument through an examination of the nature of analogy.

Analogy compares two things, and, on the basis of their similarities, allows us to draw conclusions about the objects. The more closely each thing resembles the other, the more accurate the conclusion. Have you ever heard the expression *you are comparing apples to oranges*? We use the above-mentioned idiom when we want to express the notion that a comparison is not accurate due to that dissimilarity of things under scrutiny. A good analogy will not compare apples to oranges.

Is the universe similar to a created artifact? Are they similar enough to allow for a meaningful analogy. Hume argues that the two are so dissimilar as to disallow analogy. Further, we know so very little about the universe that we can not compare it to any created thing that is within our knowledge. If we want to employ a valid analogy between, say, the building of a house and the building of the universe we must be able to have an understanding of both terms. Since we can not know about the building of the universe a Design Analogy for the existence of God is nothing more than a guess.

Hume's Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion (1779)

Links to websites on David Hume

Notes on Critiques of this Argument:

David Hume's Critique of the Cosmological Argument by Allan Stairs

See also Logic of the Teleological Argument

The Intelligent Design Theory

"*Intelligent Design theory is simply a repackaging of the Teleological Argument which Hume repudiated centuries ago.*" Mark Halfon (NCC, 2005)

In recent years a number of scientists have attempted to supply a variation on the teleological argument that is also a counter to the evolutionary theory. It is called Intelligent Design Theory. This theory disputes that the process of natural selection, the force Darwin suggested drove evolution, is enough to explain the complexity of and within living organisms. This theory holds that the complexity requires the work of an intelligent designer. The designer could be something like the Supreme Being or the Deity of the Scriptures or it could be that life resulted as a consequence of a meteorite from elsewhere in the cosmos, possibly involving extraterrestrial intelligence, or as in new age philosophy that the universe is suffused with a mysterious but inanimate life force from which life results.

One of its weaknesses is that the argument for intelligent design is subject to a great many definitions: what is intelligent design? Opponents of this argument will point out that rather than looking to see if an object looks as if it were designed, we should look at it and determine if its origin could have been natural.

Here is a website that keeps track of activities in support of intelligent design and creationist claims and offers refutations of them and exposures of the misinformation that is spread by those who are promoting intelligent design/creationist thought.

"Doesn't the fact that the universe is so well designed mean that it must have had a Designer?" ©2002 Ed Buckner, Council for Secular Humanism,

> Well designed compared to what? The universe is terribly complex, vastly interesting, awe-inspiring—but, as far as we can tell, it is the only one. Since we can all imagine a better-designed universe, even though none of us is divine (ask the folks in areas now suffering from floods or from droughts if they couldn't design a better water distribution system about now, or contemplate your own appendix or your poor pet's fleas or West-Nile-virus-bearing mosquitoes), it's a little hard to know if it's "well designed."
>
> And, even if it is, wouldn't a God necessarily be even better designed—so who designed Him, and then who designed that Designer, ad infinitum?
>
> Most people who bring this one up have in mind some variation of a creationist argument in response to Darwin or other evolutionary theorists. The one usually credited with popularizing or developing this version is William Paley, who described it in *Natural Theology* (1802). Daniel C. Dennett (1995) argues convincingly that Hume anticipated Paley, having Cleanthes, one of his (Hume's) three fictional characters in his *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* (1779/ modern reprint, Prometheus Books), lay out the argument.
>
> In any case, the real problem is that design and a "Designer" with a purpose are not necessarily connected. The natural forces at work in the universe do change things, and at least in the case of organic matter, those changes are in a particular direction, or directions. But that does not imply purpose or an intentional destination. Organisms with inheritable characteristics that work better in whatever environment they are in are more likely to survive and reproduce—so "Nature," or evolutionary forces, do design organisms that are increasingly well adapted and thus are often increasingly complex. Given a few million generations over a few billion years, such design forces can create an astonishing variety of interesting products—but that in no way suggests an omnipotent, omniscient, purposeful Creator.

Counter argument to the teleological argument based on Complexity or Improbability

> The more the complexity of the universe or the improbability of its actual orderings then the less likely it is that it had or has an intelligent designer.
>
> The case made by the promoters of the intelligent design argument is actually providing evidence against the conclusion that there must be an intelligent designer. The more the complexity of the universe is advocated or presented by the promoters of the intelligent design argument as a supposed indication of intelligence at work, then the more it works against the conclusion that there must be an intelligent designer. Why? Because if there was an intelligent designer there would be no need for all the complexity and waste observed in the physical universe.
>
> VIDEOS describing a refutation of the Argument for Intelligent Design based on Irreducible Complexity

Who Owns the Argument from Improbability? - Richard Dawkins

Free Inquiry October/November 2004 - Volume 24, No. 6

> .....The design argument is fatally wounded by infinite regress. The more improbable the specified complexity, the more improbable the god capable of designing it. Darwinism comes through the regress unscathed, indeed triumphant. Improbability, the phenomenon we seek to explain, is more or less defines as that which is difficult to explain. It is obviously self-defeating to try to explain it by invoking a creative being of even greater complexity. Darwinism really does explain complexity in terms of something simpler-which in turn is explained in terms of something simpler still, and so on back to the primeval simplicity. It is the gradual escalatory quality of non-random natural selection that arms the Darwinian theory against the menace of infinite regress. ...

> Design is the temporarily correct explanation for some particular manifestation of specified complexity such as a car or a washing machine. It could conceivably turn out that ....evolution was seeded by deliberate design of...alien designers then they require their own explanation: ultimately, they must have evolved by gradual and , therefore, explicable degrees. The argument from probability, properly applied, rules out their spontaneous existence de novo.....
>
> Sooner or later we are going to have to terminate the regress with something more explanatory than design itself. Design can never be an ultimate explanation. And-here is the point of my title-the more statistically improbable the specified complexity, the more inadequate does the design theory become, while the explanatory work done by the crane of gradualistic natural selection becomes correspondingly more indispensable. So, all those calculations with which creationists love to browbeat their naïve audiences-the mega astronomical odds against an entity spontaneously coming into existence by chance-turn out to be exercises in eloquently shooting themselves in the foot.
>
> The argument from improbability firmly belongs to the evolutionists. It is our strongest card, and we should instantly turn it against our political opponents (we have no scientific opponents) whenever they try to play it against us.
>
> **********

For much more on the subject, see:

Dennett, Daniel C. *Darwin's Dangerous Idea: Evolution and the Meanings of Life*, Simon and Schuster, 1995, especially pp. 28-34 and 68-80.

Dawkins, Richard. *The Blind Watchmaker*: *Why the Evidence of Evolution Reveals a Universe Without Design*, W.W. Norton & Company, 1996.

Hume, David. *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, Prometheus Books, modern reprint of 1779 work.

Paley, William. *Natural Theology; or, Evidences of the Existence and Attributes of the Deity*; the 12th Edition (1809),

Pigliucci, Massimo. *Tales of the Rational*, Freethought Press, 2000.

Stein, Gordon, ed. *An Anthology of Atheism and Rationalism*, Prometheus Books, 1980, pp. 55-59 and 88-104.

A Critique of Intelligent Design Theory:

The "Intelligent Design (ID) Movement" is comprised of a diverse group of persons - including philosophers, lawyers, theologians, public policy advocates, and scientific or technical professionals - who believe that contemporary evolutionary theory is inadequate to explain the diversity and complexity of life on Earth. They argue that a full scientific explanation of the structures and processes of life requires reference to an intelligent agent beyond nature. The ID Movement seeks to modify public science education policy at state and local levels to allow inclusion of the Movement's critiques of evolutionary theory and its assertions of an extra-natural origin of biological diversity and complexity. Institutionally, the Movement is supported by the Center for Science and Culture of the Discovery Institute and has also created its own virtual professional society to promote its views. However, all other relevant professional scientific organizations judge the ID Movement to be outside of mainstream science and its theoretical proposals to be unwarranted on the basis of observations from nature and laboratory experiments.---from this site

VIDEO with Critiques of Creationism and Intelligent Design

NOVA

AAAS Board Resolution on Intelligent Design Theory

The contemporary theory of biological evolution is one of the most robust products of scientific inquiry. It is the foundation for research in many areas of biology as well as an essential element of science education. To become informed and responsible citizens in our contemporary technological world, students need to study the theories and empirical evidence central to current

scientific understanding.

Over the past several years proponents of so-called "intelligent design theory," also known as ID, have challenged the accepted scientific theory of biological evolution. As part of this effort they have sought to introduce the teaching of "intelligent design theory" into the science curricula of the public schools. The movement presents "intelligent design theory" to the public as a theoretical innovation, supported by scientific evidence, that offers a more adequate explanation for the origin of the diversity of living organisms than the current scientifically accepted theory of evolution. In response to this effort, individual scientists and philosophers of science have provided substantive critiques of "intelligent design," demonstrating significant conceptual flaws in its formulation, a lack of credible scientific evidence, and misrepresentations of scientific facts.

Recognizing that the "intelligent design theory" represents a challenge to the quality of science education, the Board of Directors of the AAAS unanimously adopts the following resolution:

Whereas, ID proponents claim that contemporary evolutionary theory is incapable of explaining the origin of the diversity of living organisms;

Whereas, to date, the ID movement has failed to offer credible scientific evidence to support their claim that ID undermines the current scientifically accepted theory of evolution;

Whereas, the ID movement has not proposed a scientific means of testing its claims;

Therefore Be It Resolved, that the lack of scientific warrant for so-called "intelligent design theory" makes it improper to include as a part of science education;

Therefore Be Further It Resolved, that AAAS urges citizens across the nation to oppose the establishment of policies that would permit the teaching of "intelligent design theory" as a part of the science curricula of the public schools;

Therefore Be It Further Resolved, that AAAS calls upon its members to assist those engaged in overseeing science education policy to understand the nature of science, the content of contemporary evolutionary theory and the inappropriateness of "intelligent design theory" as subject matter for science education;

Therefore Be Further It Resolved, that AAAS encourages its affiliated societies to endorse this resolution and to communicate their support to appropriate parties at the federal, state and local levels of the government.

Approved by the AAAS Board of Directors on 10/18/02

Intelligent Design:

- Evolution
- all about evolution
- critical examination of ID theory
- sort of a catch-all for these things

Intelligent Design Theory Has No Scientific or Biblical Basis **By Bob Enick**

READ: Design yes, Intelligent no!: A critique of intelligent design "theory." by Massimo Pigliucci

READ: Neither Intelligent nor Designed: Evolution succeeds where "Intelligent Design" fails in describing the natural world. by Bruce and Frances Martin ***Skeptical Inquirer*** magazine : Nov 2003

General

Doubting Darwin, by Jerry Adler, *Newsweek,* February 7, 2005

Science Classes Are for Science, Not Faith, by Alan Leshner, AAAS CEO, *Philadelphia Inquirer,* February 2, 2005

The Crusade Against Evolution, by Evan Ratliff, *Wired*, October 2004

In Defense of Darwin and a Former Icon of Evolution, by Fiona Proffitt, *Science*, June 25, 2004

Political Challenges to the Teaching of Evolution American Geological Institute

The National Center for Science Education provides up-to-date listings of anti-evolution activity around the nation.

Position statements by AGI and its member societies are available at

The booklet *Evolution and the Fossil Record*, produced by AGI and the Paleontological Society, is now available on-line. Written by paleontologists John Pojeta Jr. and Dale Springer, this non-technical introduction to evolution aims to help the general public gain a better understanding of one of the fundamental underlying concepts of modern science.

The October 1999 issue of *Geotimes* features a series of perspectives on the Kansas situation from geoscience community leaders along with columns addressing the ramifications from both public policy and curriculum development standpoints. The December 2000 issues of *Geotimes* is devoted to the evolution debate. Articles include "The Politics of Education in Kansas" by M. Lee Allison, "Studying Evolution and Keeping the Faith" by Patricia H. Kelley, "Evolution Grades for the States" (a review of the Fordham report), and "Hot Spots across the U.S." (an overview of recent flare-ups). Other articles and columns are listed.

The National Academies have produced several publications for teachers and the general public. They are available, along with an extensive array of links to other resources

Voices for Evolution is a compilation of statements by scientific, educational, religious, and civil rights organizations published by the National Center for Science Education. It is available online at:

A position paper by the National Science Teachers Association .

The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) has an evolution issues section on their Web site. It contains a current issues section, information on state science education standards and various state evolution issues.

Evolution

One stop source for information on evolution

What is evolution and how does it work?
Detailed explanations of the mechanisms of evolution and the history of life on Earth

How does evolution impact my life?
The relevance of evolutionary theory to our everyday lives

What is the evidence for evolution?
Multiple lines of scientific evidence relating to evolution

What is the history of evolutionary theory?
This interactive and entertaining website is a companion to the PBS series on evolution. Explore Darwin's life and the theory he proposed, find resources for teachers and students and a library of additional resources.

The Writing of Charles Darwin on the Web
This site claims to be the most extensive collection of Darwin's writings ever published and includes *The Origin of Species* and other books, volumes of letters, and articles published in periodicals. Although the site appears to come from the British Library, it is produced by a historian affiliated with Cambridge University.
Exploring Constitutional Conflicts: The Evolution Controversy
A fascinating look at both sides of the issue from a University of Missouri law professor. Includes links to websites supporting evolutionist theory and creationism.
AboutDarwin.com
More about Darwin himself than about evolution, this entertaining site offers great detail about Darwin's life and science in the late 1800s. It includes a long list of links.
Center for Science and Culture
This website presents the non-Darwinist and non-creationist point of view known as intelligent design, which holds that the universe is the product of intelligent thinking.
Answers in Genesis
A very large young-Earth creationist website. Although most material is in English, it includes pages in ten Asian and European

languages.
The Talk.Origins Archive
This website is built around essays and articles addressing the evolution/creationism controversy from a mainstream science viewpoint. Lots of links to websites on both sides of the issue.
National Center for Science Education
The NCSE is a nonprofit organization dedicated to defending the teaching of evolution in public schools.
Robert Clark
Preview the diverse work of this award-winning photographer at this site, which includes photo galleries, a short biography, and more.
The National Academies
This organization provides a committee of experts in all areas of scientific and technological endeavor and gives independent, objective advice on critical international and national issues.

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Browne, Janet. *Charles Darwin: The Power of Place*. Vol. 2. Alfred A. Knopf, 2002.

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Eldredge, Niles. *The Pattern of Evolution*. W. H. Freeman and Company, 1999.

Larson, Edward J. *Evolution: The Remarkable History of a Scientific Theory*. Modern Library, 2004.

****

Title: *Was Darwin Wrong?* , By: Quammen, David, National Geographic, 00279358, Nov2004, Vol. 206, Issue 5

Was Darwin Wrong? No. The evidence for Evolution is overwhelming.

****

View also **Debunking the Teleological, Cosmological, and Ontological Arguments for the Existence of God** :

Outcome Assessment

This argument or proof does not establish the actual existence of a supernatural deity. It attempts to argue for the existence of such a being by making comparisons that are questionable and using evidence that is also questionable and for which there alternative explanations and that is not rationally legitimate. While the argument can not be used to convert a non-believer to a believer, the faults in the argument do not prove that there is no god. The Burden of Proof demands that the positive claim that there is a supernatural deity be established by reason and evidence and this argument does not meet that standard. The believer in god can use the argument to establish the mere logical possibility that there is a supernatural deity or at least that it is not irrational to believe in the possibility that there is such a being. The argument does not establish any degree of probability at all when there are alternative explanations for the existence of features of the known universe.

OUTCOME:

The Argument:

Premises:

1. Human artifacts are products of intelligent design.
2. The universe resembles human artifacts.
3. Therefore the universe is a product of intelligent design.
4. But the universe is complex and gigantic, in comparison to human artifacts.

Conclusion:

Therefore, there probably is a powerful and vastly intelligent designer who created the universe.

Problem with argument:

1. __X__Premises are false or questionable
2. ____Premises are irrelevant
3. ____Premises Contain the Conclusion –Circular Reasoning
4. __X__Premises are inadequate to support the conclusion
5. _X___Alternative arguments exist with equal or greater support

This argument or proof has flaws in it and would not convince a rational person to accept its conclusion. This is not because someone who does not believe in a deity will simply refuse to accept based on emotions or past history but because it is not rationally compelling of acceptance of its conclusion.

Proceed to the Arguments based upon experience in the next sections

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6.2.7: Argument from Experience- Direct

Introduction

Arguments or proofs based upon experience come in two basic forms

A. Direct Experience

i. Encounter with the supernatural

ii. Mystical experience- union with the deity/ supernatural

B. Indirect Experience

Miracles

The heart of religion is in the religious experience. Just what is it and what can be deduced from it?

For many religious people there is in the center of their religious nature the feeling that there is something more than their individual consciousness could contact. There is a sense of something "more" or bigger than anything in the known universe. This issues into a hypothesis or idea of a supernatural reality or dimension of reality beyond that which normal sensation can encounter.

A Religious experience is an encounter of a human being with a supernatural being, be it a deity or an emissary or intermediary for the deity, nevertheless a spiritual entity.

It is a *numinal* experience. Religious experiences are for the most part, individual and esoteric.

The MYSTICAL experience is a particular variety of religious experience in which the subject is transformed and reports the loss of individuality, the oneness of all reality, union with the deity, the unity of the subject of the experience with the object of the experience.

The commonalities in such experience around the world is termed the consensus *mysticum*.

It has been described by Rudolph Otto as involving an experience characterized as being *tremendum et fascinans*

The Questions

The questions are:

Is the subject of a religious experience justified inferring from the psychological experience to the existential or the ontological reality of the object of that experience: the supernatural being?

Is anyone else justified in reaching the conclusion that a supernatural being exists based upon the report of the individual who has made the claim to have had the religious experience?

Does the accumulation of reports from such witnesses to religious experiences justify the claim that a supernatural or spiritual being, a deity, a transcendent reality , exists?

See below for examples of people who claim that they experienced a deity or devil who gave them commands: GOD MADE ME DO IT.

The Mystical Experience

The MYSTICAL experience is a particular variety of religious experience in which the subject is transformed and reports the loss of individuality, the oneness of all reality, union with the deity, the unity of the subject of the experience with the object of the experience. It is an experience which posits the oneness of all reality and the unity of all. In particular, the Mystical Experience involves the unity of the subject with its object (the deity, the totality).

The commonalities in such experience around the world is termed the consensus *mysticum.*

It has been described by Rudolph Otto as involving an experience characterized as being *tremendum et fascinans*

William James has described such experiences as having the following characteristics:

- Ineffable noetic
- Antinaturalistic transient
- Passive pantheistic
- optimistic

James held that such experiences are powerful and lead the subject of such an experience to a belief in a supernatural entity.

James held:

1. Mystical states are authoritative over the individual who has the experience
2. Mystical states have NO authority over individuals who have not had such an experience
3. Mystical states break down the authority of ordinary consciousness and sense knowledge. Such states offer hypotheses which others may ignore

Such religious experiences have consequences for those who encounter them. They issue into feelings and actions.

Notes on William James, Varieties of Religious Experience

The text of Varieties of Religious Experience

Notes on Rudolph Otto's Experience of the Holy

Notes on Martin Buber's I and Thou

Problems with the Argument from Religious Experiences

PREMISES:

People report encounters with a deity or being sent from the deity

CONCLUSION:

There must exist a deity.

COUNTER ARGUMENT or REBUTTAL:

The reports of such encounters are not verified as they have alternative naturalistic explanations that do not involve the existence of any supernatural agents. So many do ask: Are the reports true? Veridical?

Not all who learn of the reports of such religious experiences accept them as conclusive evidence for the existence of a supernatural reality or spiritual beings. Many have attempted to give alternative accounts of such experiences that do not involve acceptance of the existence of any supernatural entities or reality.

Naturalism is an approach to religious experiences which explains them as being the result of natural forces. It accounts for such phenomena in natural terms without recourse to anything that is beyond the physical realm. In general, all reality and all experiences can be accounted for (fully explained) in terms of physical processes.

There are different explanations for the origin and nature of religious experiences. What they have in common is the rejection of a supernatural source or object and the attempt to offer a full explanation in empirically verifiable terms.

Psychological explanations have been offered by several theoreticians, including Sigmund Freud. Sociological explanations have also been developed by several other scientists, such as Emil Durkheim. What they have in common is the refusal to accept religious experiences as being truthful, accurate, or believable in so far as the existence of any supernatural reality. One of the principle reasons for withholding acceptance of the reports is that the experiences can not be verified and what they report encountering can not be verified empirically.

ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS

When people hear of those who claim to have seen god or an angel or have heard a voice or were instructed by god to kill their child, most people are inclined to think that the claim is not an accurate and truthful report. Most tend not to believe the person making the claim. Most people would be inclined to suspect one or more of the following factors are the more likely explanation of the claim other than that the claim is accurate and true.

Possible Cases	persons reporting the experience believe their claims are	Videos illustrating the point
Persons are mistaken, e.g., optical illusion, misinterpretation, hallucination	TRUE	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kwJsNTZFdcU&feature=relmfu
Persons are under the influence of mind altering substances	TRUE	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kwJsNTZFdcU&feature=relmfu
Persons are suffering from brain malfunctioning, e.g., chemical imbalance in brain	TRUE	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kwJsNTZFdcU&feature=relmfu
Persons are under the influence of group influence-social psychology	TRUE	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n1A9vrsw6Hw
Persons are self deceiving	TRUE	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CkJc6c3nKMw&feature=relmfu
Persons operate with confirmation bias and belief perseverance.	TRUE	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SoCqftOYHX4&feature=relmfu
Persons are preconditioned for Misinformation Effect but self deceived	TRUE	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TJic51MeVaU&feature=relmfu
Persons are manipulated by Compliance Techniques	TRUE	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1x19z5Jb_pg&feature=relmfu
Persons operating with Projection	TRUE	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WCFLHGNc1wo&feature=relmfu
Persons have a need for Closure	TRUE	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2jHO-7aodbw&feature=relmfu
Persons have a need for Agenticity : Anthropomorphism	TRUE	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QwP9QusSxfc&feature=relmfu
		https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B09Lou1kv7M&feature=relmfu
Persons are making a report to get attention	FALSE	

Possible Cases	persons reporting the experience believe their claims are	Videos illustrating the point
6.Persons are making a report to raise money.	FALSE	
7.Persons are making a report to please others and gain acceptance.	FALSE	
8.Persons are making a report to get power.	FALSE	

Why is it that people who make reports of contact with the supernatural tend to be isolated individuals, single, reclusive, eccentric, even sexually repressed?

Question:

Are the reports concerning these religious experiences veridical (truthful and accurate)?

1.What is the scientific analysis of the religious experiences ?

2.What are the genetic and causal conditions of religious experiences ?

-in the human race ?

-in the individual?

3.Is the religious experience veridical? Is it truthful? Is it a report which others can accept as being Correct? Truthful? Accurate?

Humans should accept religious experiences as being veridical UNLESS there exists positive grounds for thinking otherwise, for thinking that the reports are not truthful, accurate or correct.

Some claim that there are positive grounds for rejecting the reports of such experiences, i.e., against their being veridical experiences

1. mystics are abnormal: they tend to be sexually repressed
2. mystical experience is always mixed with other elements such as sexual emotion or imagery

In response to these observations some offer that perhaps the human being must be in an altered state of consciousness in order to have the experience of the greater (supernatural) reality which the ordinary consciousness can not contain or reach. Sexual abstinence may be a necessary but not a sufficient condition for having such an encounter.

C.D. Broad

C.D. Broad notes that reports or descriptions of these religious experiences involve concepts and beliefs that are:

1. inadequate to the facts
2. highly confused
3. mixed with error and nonsense
4. subject to change in time

Broad notes that these features are also true of scientific concepts and beliefs and that they have and do change in time.

Here is a skeptical view of the mystical experiences that offers a series of explanations of what may induce such experiences and presents then as hallucinations of a particular nature.

In How to have your own mystical experience by Massimo Pigliucci

> *"There has been a lot of talk about the neurological basis of religious experiences lately, with both secular and*

mystical interpretations of the available results. It turns out that it is now possible to actually replicate mystical experiences with a variety of methods, even under strict laboratory conditions."

Perhaps religious experiences are not pure delusions or illusions. Perhaps religious experiences are only encountered by those who have an ability to experience them. Perhaps there are people, even many people, who are "deaf" to such experiences.

Wallace Matson:

If the subject of a religious experience is to be believed there are certain requirements to be met. Any perception of an individual should be publicly confirmed. No private experience can establish the existence of God. You would first need to establish the existence of God by other means on order to confirm that what was experienced was both God and True.

No indescribable experience can be publicly confirmed

No mystical experience can be publicly confirmed.

Mystics appear similar to people who are deluded, or mentally ill, not adjusted to reality. Their claims can not be accepted without evidence. But you can not have evidence without a prior belief in God.

To confirm what any subject is experiencing there must be "checkable" statements.

Similar to a blind person confirming what a sighted person sees.

With the religious experiences there are no such "checkable" statements, so there can be no confirmation. Hence, they can not serve as a proof of the existence of supernatural entities because they are not veridical.

Gary Gutting

The claim is made that in order to establish the veridical nature of religious claims there are three criteria to be met:

1. many should have the experience
2. it should exist in different cultures
3. the experience should produce a major transformation involving ,in part, the moral life of the individual

Gary Gutting claims that the three conditions are met by reports of religious experiences and so they do provide a justification for belief in a supernatural being, a deity, God.

Louis P. Pojman:

There is both a strong justification and a weak justification to be offered that Religious experiences do provide evidence of the existence of a supernatural entity, a deity.

Strong: this argument would be so strong as to oblige all people to believe in God.

Weak: this justification provides rational support only for those who have had such an experience (or already accepted the world view that holds such experiences are possible)

Pojman argues against such a strong argument

1. the reports are too amorphous
2. they reports are circular- acceptance of them depends on background belief in God
3. reports are not capable of being confirmed as with perceptual experiences

thus, they are not checkable, not predictable

FINAL QUESTIONS:

Are there reasons to think that the reports of religious experiences are not reliable?

Can the reports be accepted as being true?

Can they be verified?

Do they need to be?

Can reports of religious experiences be used as support for a belief in a deity, the supernatural realm?

Outcome Assessment

This argument or proof does not establish the actual existence of a supernatural deity. It attempts to argue for the existence of such a being by offering evidence that is highly questionable and for which there are alternative and often more plausible explanations. While the argument can not be used to convert a non-believer to a believer, the faults in the argument do not prove that there is no god. The Burden of Proof demands that the positive claim that there is a supernatural deity be established by reason and evidence and this argument does not meet that standard. The believer in god can use this argument to establish the mere logical possibility that there is a supernatural deity or at least that it is not irrational to believe in the possibility that there is such a being but the argument does not establish any degree of probability at all when there are alternative explanations for the reports of experiences offered. The veracity of the reports has not been established.

OUTCOME:

The Argument:

PREMISES:

People report encounters with a deity or being sent from the deity

CONCLUSION:

There must exist a deity.

Problem with argument:

1. __X__Premises are false or questionable
2. ____Premises are irrelevant
3. ____Premises Contain the Conclusion –Circular Reasoning
4. ____Premises are inadequate to support the conclusion
5. __X__Alternative arguments exist with equal or greater support

This argument or proof has flaws in it and would not convince a rational person to accept its conclusion. This is not because someone who does not believe in a deity will simply refuse to accept based on emotions or past history but because it is not rationally compelling of acceptance of its conclusion.

God Made Me Do It...

Stories & Articles compiled by Nicole Nohs (Nassau Community College, 2012), Based on the book God Made Me Do It: True stories of the worst advice the Lord has ever given his followers by Marc Hartzman Sourcebooks Inc. , 2010

Excerpts of the Hartzmann book are at this location

Actual Cases

March 2002 the mayor of a small Florida town bans Satan
http://www.nytimes.com/2002/03/14/us/florida-town-finds-satan-an-offense-unto-it.html

September 1993 San Fernando Valley, CA.... God tells man to rob banks
http://articles.latimes.com/1993-09-30/local/me-40717_1_james-mcgrath

May 2008 in Wisconsin...God told me if i prayed hard enough she would come back to life...
http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,354849,00.html

May 2009 in Minnesota. Bank practicing Christianity
http://www.startribune.com/business/46467847.html?refer=y

August 1993 in Texas, 20 naked people emerge from a car that struck a tree
http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1P2-961214.html

September 2001 in Cinncinati...God told man to steal
http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1G1-77809049.html

San Antoni, TX...God tells man to ram another vehicle at 100mph
http://www.metro.co.uk/weird/428252-god-told-man-to-ram-vehicle-at-100mph

Various dates...God told me to kill and eat people
http://murderpedia.org/male.D/d/dengiz-ozgur.htm

June 2008...God told me to kick her in the face
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yN9Ay4QAtW8

June 2005...God will remove judges from the supreme court
http://mediamatters.org/research/2005/01/04/robertson-god-will-remove-judges-from-the-supre/132518

October 2005...God tells president to end tyranny in Iraq
http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2005/oct/07/iraq.usa

June 2009...God told me to invade Iraq
http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-by-the-president-at-cairo-university-6-04-09
http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1P2-5771498.html

December 2007...God told me to run for president
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NSQNSlUUoOc

April 2000..."I'm leaving it in the Lords hands"
http://www.csindy.com/coloradosprings/duke-fingers-hefleys-in-conspiracy/Content?oid=1108240

February 2009...God has brought an Africa American woman back from the dead
http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2006/04/07/sunday/main1481775.shtml

January 2008, God told me to get Laura Bush to back me in running for president
http://www.voicesfromspirit.com/geraldtolaurabush.htm

May 1937, near Stooping Oak,TN...God told me to fast
http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,757781,00.htm

August 2007 in Los Angelos...God tells reality show contestant thatshe will be in the finals...
http://www.realityblurred.com/realitytv/archives/big_brother_8/2007_Aug_20_suspicion_grows

January 2002, Boca Raton,FL...God writes messages in the sky
http://www.skeptictank.org/gen4/gen02335.htm

January 2008, God told me to resign

http://okpns.wordpress.com/category/oral-roberts/

More cases of God's bad advice found and compiled by Nicole Nohs...

January 2008 in Texas...God made me kill my girlfriend

http://www.news.com.au/top-stories/god-made-me-kill-girlfriend-alleged-murderer/story-e6frfkp9-1111115272980

2011 Midtown Manahnttan Murder ordered by God

http://gaycitynews.com/god-made-me-do-it-defense-in-2011-midtown-murder/

July 2012, It was God's plan to kill Teyvon Martin

http://bazaardaily.com/2012/07/25/george-zimmerman-god-made-me-kill-trayvon-martin/

July 2007 in Houston,TX...God made me kill for the ultimate sin

http://www.bilerico.com/2007/07/murder_says_god_made_me_kill_1.php

November 2009, Nassau County, Long Island, NY...God made me hate gay people...

http://www.newsday.com/long-island/nassau/cops-beating-suspect-said-god-made-me-hate-gay-people-1.1569350

August 2011, God made me cheat...

http://blogs.knoxnews.com/silence/archives/2011/08/pearl_god_made.shtml

April 2012, God told me to quit Fox news

http://www.dailykos.com/story/2012/04/25/1085857/-Glenn-Beck-God-told-me-to-quit-Fox-News-or-lose-my-soul

August 2001, Palm City,FL...God told me to kill my son...

http://articles.sun-sentinel.com/2001-08-17/news/0108170166_1_baby-s-death-baby-s-father-documents

June 2011, Lubbock,TX...God told me to kill my son...

http://www.9news.com/news/article/205850/188/Dad-God-told-me-to-kill-my-son

March 2004, Texas...God told me to kill my 3 sons...

http://articles.cnn.com/2004-03-29/justice/children.slain_1_deanna-laney-insanity-defense-luke-laney?_s=PM:LAW

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http://www.croydonguardian.co.uk/news/9451737.UPDATE__Mum_killer_to_remain_in_hospital_indefinitely/

February 2009, Virginia Beach,VA...God told me to kill..

http://www.upi.com/Top_News/2009/02/12/Dad-God-told-me-to-kill-my-son/UPI-71281234475937/

November 2006...God told me to kill my daughter...

http://trailerpark.blog.ca/2008/01/22/donnelly_god_told_me_to_kill~3613340/

January 2008, God told me to eat my girlfriend...

http://www.tylerpaper.com/article/20080107/NEWS08/986513661

July 2012, God told me to shed some blood...

http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2012-07-16/news/chi-1m-bond-for-man-charged-with-breaking-into-addison-home-20120716_1_god-blood-battery

March 2012, England...God told me to saw off my managers head...

http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2117279/Immigrant-waiter-Jonathan-Limani-jailed-cutting-Golf-Club-manager-Chris-Varians-head.html

June 2012, Effingham,CO...God told me to kill my father...

http://www.disclosurenewsonline.com/2011/01/18/accused-in-patricide-god-told-me-to-do-it/

November 2011, God told me to run for president...

http://www.rawstory.com/rs/2011/11/13/herman-cain-god-told-me-to-run-i-was-like-moses/

Unknown date, England...God told me to smoke pot...

http://tyneandwear.sky.com/news/article/34951

October 2012, Sacremento,CA...God told me to steal...

http://sacramento.cbslocal.com/2012/10/07/burglary-suspect-god-told-me-to-do-it/

July 2012, God told me to cut my genitals...

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xsVHF6mKJZg

June 2012, Spokane,WA...God told me to set my apartment on fire...

http://www.scout.com/2/1195326.html

June 2012, God told me to send her threatening letters...

http://www.rhrealitycheck.org/article/2012/06/05/anti-choice-terrorist-god-told-me-to-threaten-her

October 2009, Lexington, KY...God told me to steal the car...

http://metro.co.uk/2009/10/29/would-be-car-thief-god-told-me-to-do-it-507974/

November 2012, Fort Pierce...God told me to drive 100mph in a 30mph zone...

http://www.wnd.com/2012/11/woman-god-told-me-to-go-100-in-30-mph-zone/

December 2004, God told me to kill my parents

http://www.chattanoogan.com/2004/12/10/59715/Badowski-Says-Killed-Parents-Because.aspx

July 2012, Lexington,KY...God told me to kill dog

http://www.lex18.com/news/police-man-claims-god-told-him-to-kill-dog-friends

November 2011, Enfield,Conn...God told me to molest boy

http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-504083_162-57326225-504083/report-17-year-old-claims-god-told-him-to-molest-boy/

Lastly, a few stories about the horrible deeds the Devil caused people to do...

March 2009, Arlington,VA...Devil made me steal...

http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/29781784/ns/us_news-weird_news/t/woman-accused-church-theft-blames-satan/

October 2008, Devil made me do drugs...

http://discoveringalcoholic.com/amy-winehouse/the-devil-made-me-do-it

more to come if God wishes.....

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6.2.8: Argument from Experience- Miracles

Introduction

Many but not all of the religions of the world have as part of their traditions claims of Miracles **.**

The Miracles have different forms and play different roles within each religion. The religions of the West have many things in common that have a bearing on the way in which they view Miracles **.** They share in being religions of the holy book or sacred text. They place importance on events which have been reported to have occurred in history. They rely on the existence of Miracles The events which are reported to have taken place in the time of Moses are key to the acceptance of the idea of the One God for the peoples of Israel and all who follow after them. The events during the times of Jesus, the Christ, are also the basis for the acceptance of Jesus as being the Son of God by the followers of Jesus. The spread of Islam is also an event regarded as miraculous and a proof of the legitimacy of the claims of Mohammed. So, Miracles are important for the Western religions.

The Miracles have served as the foundation for the historical proof of the existence of the God of the western religions. The leadership of the religions of the West do not want miracle taken lightly and do not want false claims of miracles. These religions will often be the first to investigate claims of miraculous events in order to disprove them! The concern is that if people come to accept the claim of a miracle and it later turns out to be disproved, then those who had come to believe in it might come not only to stop believing in that particular "miracle" that had been disproved but in all other such claims and thus might come to loose their faith altogether. The fear is that people would think something similar to this: "If I could be fooled into thinking this recent event was a miracle, then what about those people long ago who reported experiencing a miracle? Could it be possible that they too were deceived? Or mistaken?"

Current cinema offers several movies that have miracles as their theme. A few have a member of a church sent to investigate the legitimacy of a claim of a miracle. The movies are for entertainment and most of these films result in some sort of confirmation for the audience. In real life it does not work out that way. Claims of apparitions and cures are usually quickly dispelled by investigators.

Argument from MIRACLES

PREMISES:

1. There is an event that has taken place that violates the laws of nature.

2. If the laws of nature are violated it could only be by a power that could violate the laws of nature that could only be the power that would have created those laws-the law maker, the deity.

CONCLUSION:

3. Thus, the power that would have created those laws-the law maker, the deity must exist.

The criticisms of this argument or proof attack the first premise. What evidence is there that there has ever been an event that has taken place that violates the laws of nature. What would be required to establish that such an event has , in fact, taken place?

The Questions

The questions are:

1. What exactly are Miracles **?**
2. Do they prove the existence of a supernatural realm? A deity? God? The supreme Being?
3. What does it take to prove that a miracle has taken place?
4. Could it ever be proven that a miracle had taken place?

PROVING SOME EVENT IS A MIRACLE

So event X is reported to have occurred.

Event X has either a NATURAL CAUSE or SUPERNATURAL CAUSE.

If event X can have either a NATURAL CAUSE or SUPERNATURAL CAUSE it can NOT be a MIRACLE

Why not?

Because a MIRACLE is defined to be an event that can ONLY HAVE a SUPERNATURAL CAUSE.

Why?

Because then it can be used to prove that there is a SUPERNATURAL BEING aka GOD.

Anyone who wants to claim X is a miracle needs to satisfy the two conditions presented above for an event to be accepted as a miracle.

The Burden of Proof is on defending that X is a miracle and not the other way around.

Yes, people choose to believe that events are miracles even though they do not satisfy the conditions and even though there is evidence against the events being miracles and even though if the reports were true it would not necessarily mean that the event was the result of the Supreme Being bringing about the events.

In LOGIC it is shown that you can never prove a general negative claim. Those that assert the affirmative have the burden of proof within the community of reasoning beings. This goes for claims that there are purple elephants with yellow stripes, that there are miracles and that there is a single Supreme Being. MIRACLES are very, very difficult to prove. So difficult that several philosophers have concluded that there have been none thus far.

To be a miracle an event would need to violate the laws of nature. For any report to be accepted the evidence would need to be pretty convincing and all alternative explanations would need to be ruled out (completely eliminated)! That is a very difficult thing to do. The evidence would come from witnesses but the more unbelievable (violating the laws of nature) the event was the more we would doubt the witnesses. Given the lack of reliable witnesses and the inability to completely eliminate all other possible explanations (fraud, delusions, greed, optical illusions, advanced technology, alien activities, etc...) miracles are not accepted by most rational people.

Problems with Miracles

1. **The Problem of Definition**

Exactly what constitutes a miracle is a matter for careful consideration , given the importance of the reports of such events, should they be correct and truthful.

*A **miracle** is an event believed to be caused by interposition of divine intervention by a supernatural being in the universe by which the ordinary operation of Nature is overruled, suspended, or modified. The term is derived from Latin word miraculum meaning "something wonderful".*---From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia READ Miracle

A. Unusual or Extraordinary Event

Some consider any unusual event as a miracle or at least an unusual event with a positive outcome, e.g. winning Lotto. Negative events with less probability (being hit by lightning, three separate times) are not considered as miracles. This is a very weak use of the term "miracle" .

This can not be the basis for a proof for the existence of God because unusual events occur all the time and have explanations using natural factors.

> Surviving an auto accident is NOT a miracle . This event happens often and has an explanation using the laws of nature. Such survivals do NOT violate the laws of nature.
>
> If surviving an auto accident were to be considered a miracle because GOD brought it about then so would DEATH be a miracle because if GOD determines who survives such an accident so too does GOD determine who dies! However, we do not hear people say : He died in the accident! It was a miracle!

NOT JUST HAPPY EVENTS

There are many happy events. Winning Lotto, surviving a crash and surviving a disease. They are not miracles in the sense that we need for an event in order to use it to prove that there is a supernatural being.

There are particular problems with HAPPY EVENTS being called a miracle.

Cases:

- A person survives cancer. The chances were 1 in 50.
- A person survives a car crash. 5 other people were killed in the crash.

The survivals are happy events but if the survivals are miracles and indicate that a deity is behind them and caused them then the deity also caused the deaths of the 49 from disease and the 5 from the crash. Those deaths would be miracles as well. Most would not want to call them miracles.

To accept some event as being a miracle in order to use it to prove the existence of a supernatural being we must satisfy two conditions: 1. the event must violate the laws of nature and 2.there must be clear and indisputable evidence which compels us to accept that the event took place just as reported

Falling Down:

It is highly unusual for someone to die from a fall of less than 4 feet, say off of a chair or step stool. It is highly unusual for someone not to die after falling over 10,00 feet. BOTH events have happened. People fall off of a chair and hit their heads and die and people fall out of planes and live. We call those who live after an unusual fall a miracle but not those who die after an unusual fall. If we call the event a miracle because it is so unusual and not at all what was expected why not call the event of someone's dying after falling off of a chair a miracle?

The following events appear on lists of world records and not as miracles.

Highest Jump or Fall WITHOUT a Parachute

1. "Lieutenant I. M. Chisov of the former Soviet Union was flying his Ilyushin 4 on a bitter cold day in January 1942, when it was attacked by 12 German Messerschmitts. Convinced that he had no chance of surviving if he staged with his badly battered plane, Chisov bailed out at 21,980 feet. With the fighters still buzzing around, Chisov cleverly decided to fall freely out of the arena. It was his plan not to open his chute until he was down to only 1000 ft above the ground. Unfortunately, he lost consciousness en route. As luck would have it, he crashed at the edge of a steep ravine covered with 3 ft of snow. Hitting at about 120 mi/h, he plowed along its slope until he came to rest at the bottom. Chisov awoke 20 min later, bruised and sore, but miraculously he had suffered only a concussion of the spine and a fractured pelvis. Three and one-half months later he was back at work as a flight instructor." Hecht, Eugene. Physics: Calculus. 2nd ed. United States: Brooks/Cole, 2000. p 85

2. Flight Sergeant Nicholas Steven Alkemade was on a bombing mission over Germany on 23 March 1944 when his Lancaster bomber flying at 18,000 feet was blazed apart and in flames when he was forced to jump, **without a parachute** or be burned to death. He dove out of his destroyed aircraft hoping on a quick death. His speed accelerated to over 120 miles per hour and he impacted on a snow covered sloping forest. He was completely uninjured and later captured by the Germans who refused to believe his story. *(www.urbanlegends.com/death)*

3. The longest survivable fall, 26 January 1972, was Vesna Vulovic a stewardess in a DC-9 which blew up at 33,330 feet. She was in the tail section of the aircraft and though injured survived the fall.

There are other such survivals at lesser heights. You might want to call these falls and survivals "miracles" but most people do not do so.

B. No explanation

Some consider events for which there are no explanations as miracles. It isn't clear whether this would mean no explanation at

the present time or no explanation possible. This can not be used as a proof for the existence of God because these events could receive a completely naturalistic explanation in the future after science has advanced.

It is possible that events could be explained by advanced science. It is even possible that events that appear "miraculous" because there is no explanation at present could be the result of aliens with advanced technology causing them to occur here on this planet.

> Medical cases are not good cases for miracles because there are too many alternative explanations and they are almost always NOT violations of the laws of nature. Medical doctors and scientists do not know everything. Common place events today would have been thought to be miracles in the past (over 100 years ago). Therefore, simply because a medical diagnosis or prognosis proved to be inaccurate or incorrect, there is insufficient evidence from that to conclude that the event could only have been caused by the Single Supreme Being-GOD. Take for example heart resuscitation. Reviving a stopped heart is not a miracle. Bringing a person to full life appearance from what was thought to be death is not a miracle. Curing a person of influenza is not a miracle. Restoring a person's sight through surgery is not a miracle. These would have been thought to be miracles over 100 years ago but no longer. So, if someone who is very sick or thought to be dead turns out not to be dead or becomes well, those are no longer miracles.
>
> A miracle can NOT be simply an unexplained or rare event , those happen often and as time goes on we learn more and can explain more and come to know how often people are hit by lightning and win LOTTO. To be a MIRACLE an event must VIOLATE the LAWS of NATURE. People getting well do not violate the laws of nature. The best medical knowledge can only give percentages, as in , a person with ovarian cancer has a 40% survival rate with surgery and radiation treatment. Some survive and some do not. If someone survives it is not thought to be a miracle but that they have had a reversal of the disease process due to surgery or medication or radiation or mental focusing of the bodies regenerative powers or a combination of those factors. Why do some survive and others do not? Well there are different body chemistries, different mental attitudes etc... If you think the person who is cured is cured because it is a miracle brought about by GOD then why not consider those who die as dying as a result of a miracle as well. GOD wanted them dead and so they are. People who win LOTTO may think it is a miracle or God's will. People who lose LOTTO do not think of it as a miracle or God's will. The factors in play with LOTTO are the same for winners as for losers. Likewise with physical ailments.
>
> Some people think that a recovery from a physical ailment would not be evidence of a miracle because there is fate or destiny working. e.g.: "I would not think of that as a miracle because that person I guess that it was not the time for him to die and that's why he got saved, because if it is your time to die no one will be able to save you. "
>
> To think this way requires that you believe in FATE or DESTINY. If so, what determines your FATE or DESTINY? If it is a deity or deities then you are already a believer. But, what evidence is there that there is FATE or DESTINY? What evidence or proof is there that there is a deity?
>
> Can you give an example of a miracle that would be an event for which there are no alternative explanations but that it is the work of the Single Supreme Being (GOD) and that is because it is clearly a violation of the laws of nature that no other power could bring about?

C. The Requirements of a Definition of Miracles

What is needed is a definition that is strong enough so that the events claimed to be **Miracles** would establish the existence of a supernatural and very powerful entity, i.e. , God.

What is needed is an event that could ONLY be caused by God. This event can have no other possible explanation! So, what results is the strong definition of **Miracles** .

Miracles are events which violate the laws of nature itself. This is an event that could only be caused by the author of those laws. It can not be an event which has no present naturalistic explanation, for in the future there might be one. **It could not be caused by advanced technology possessed by advanced alien societies.**

2. **The Problem of Verification**

Not all who learn of the reports of such **Miracles** accept them as conclusive evidence for the existence of a supernatural reality or spiritual beings. Many have attempted to give alternative accounts of such experiences that do not involve acceptance of the existence of any supernatural entities or reality.

Naturalism is an approach to religious experiences and **Miracles** which explains them as being the result of natural forces. It accounts for such phenomena in natural terms without recourse to anything that is beyond the physical realm. In general, all reality and all experiences can be accounted for (fully explained) in terms of physical processes.

There are different explanations for the origin and nature of religious experiences and **Miracles**. What they have in common is the rejection of a supernatural source or object and the attempt to offer a full explanation in empirically verifiable terms.

READ: Examining Miracle Claims by Joe Nickell originally published in the March 1996 issue of **Deolog**. This article covers such phenomena as: magical images, relics, divine experiences (speaking in tongues, serpents, stigmata and apparitions),and faith healing.

3. Examples of Miracles

A. **Creation of the Universe**
B. **Miracles in the time of Moses**

i. Burning Bush
ii. Staff into snake
iii. Plague of locusts
iv. Plague of frogs
v. Nile from blue to red
vi. Death of children of the Egyptians
vii. Parting of the "Red" sea

C. Christ

i. virgin birth
ii. wedding feast-water into wine
iii. walking on water
iv. cures of the blind, deaf, lepers
v. multiplication of the loaves and the fishes
vi. raising the dead-Lazarus
vii. Resurrection

D. More recent phenomena

i. statues that bleed
ii. paintings that cry
iii. stones that drink milk
iv. apparitions on walls, floors, windows, bagels!

ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS:

A. **Creation of the Universe –** universe has always existed-cycling over and over again-in and out- one big bang after another

B. Miracles in the time of Moses

i Burning Bush – hallucination- heat distortion-mirage effect-

ii Staff into snake – trick done as well by other Egyptians

The natural disturbances caused by the explosion of Santorini caused a number of strange and dangerous phenomena across the Mediterranean coast of Africa. Moses took them as signs that his deity wanted the Jews to be let go. Moses used them as warnings to Pharaoh to be used with his petition to let the people of Israel go from the land of Egypt. . They took place before Moses went to Pharaoh but in the retelling it is exaggerated and it is reported that they took place after the warnings.

Exodus related Events- called miracles

> The idea that the events described in the Bible related to the Exodus might have occurred in a manner somewhat similar to the description in the bible and as a result of natural phenomena has been advanced by many natural scientists using the techniques of archeology, history, geology and scriptural studies. Bringing together many artifacts and archeological evidence with several current theories a coherent hypothesis is presented for an explanation of the biblical account that involves events resulting from a volcanic eruption. Most recently The Exodus Decoded(2006), a two-hour documentary by award-winning Israeli-born filmmaker Simcha Jacobovici, suggests that the Exodus of the Jews from Egypt as recounted in the Bible occurred around 1500 BCE, about 230 years before the date most commonly accepted by contemporary historians and identifies the ancient Israelites with the Hyksos, a Semitic people living in Egypt at that time who, according to the program, suddenly fled the country en masse.

"The earlier date of the Exodus proves key to Jacobovici's thesis, as it places it at the time of the cataclysmic eruption of the volcano on the Greek island of Santorini, the linchpin to many of the theories proposed. Citing documented modern parallels such as the 1986 Lake Nyos disaster in Cameroon, he believes that much of what the Book of Exodus describes can be explained by a chain reaction of natural phenomena, triggered by the Santorini eruption and a related earthquake. The 10 plagues that smote the Egyptians, according to the Bible, are explained in the documentary to be the result of a volcanic eruption on a Greek island that occurred 3,500 years ago.

He even has a ready answer for the slaughter of the firstborn by the angel of death: It was a lethal cloud of poisonous carbon monoxide gas released by the geological upheaval.

Of course, the most dramatic event recorded in Exodus is the parting of the Red Sea, a scene immortalized by Cecil B. DeMille. But while revealing ancient carvings and hieroglyphics that he argues support the Old Testament account, Jacobovici again offers a scientific explanation. Suggesting that the biblical reference to the "Red Sea" is actually a mistranslation of an ancient Hebrew word which meant "Reed Sea" – a now-dried body of water – he hypothesizes that the seismic activity caused by the earthquake may have temporarily raised a land bridge for safe passage and the pursuing Egyptians were the unfortunate victims of perfectly-timed tsunamis approaching from the Mediterranean.

Jacobovici also speculates on the true location of Mount Sinai and uncovers a gold trinket overlooked among other ancient artifacts in an Athens museum which he believes depicts the legendary Ark of the Covenant. --"'Exodus Decoded,' l By David DiCerto 8/11/2006 Catholic News Service

iii Plague of locusts –caused by debris from eruption of volcano on Santorini (Atlantis)

iv Plague of frogs caused by debris from eruption of volcano on Santorini (Atlantis)

v Nile from blue to red - caused by debris from eruption of volcano on Santorini (Atlantis)

vi Death of children of the Egyptians - caused by bacteria and viruses that were spread by insects and vermin that moved into the city because of the debris from eruption of the volcano on the island of Santorini (Atlantis?) The Egyptians lived in the "city" while the slaves were kept apart and out near where the work was required. If you can accept that it is POSSIBLE that the stories in the bible are perhaps a bit exaggerated or distorted over time then what happened may be such as this:

> The natural disturbances caused by the explosion of Santorini caused rodents and other pests and insects to move from the river banks of the Nile towards the inhabited areas and with them they brought a disease that caused death amongst the weakest of the Egyptians-small children and the aged. The waters were also poisoned by the falling dust from Santorini carrying poisons to animals and humans. Many families had only one child. So it would be exaggerated that the first born were selected to die. Animals died as well as infected by and as carriers of the disease. They could also be infected from poisons in the waters that were contaminated by the falling dust from Santorini. The Jews were being held in captivity working on structures away from that city and were spared the infections. Moses used this as still another sign that his deity favored the Jews and that it indicated the Egyptians should let the Jews leave.

vii Parting of the "Red" sea –caused by tsunami as a result of the eruption and sinking of the island of Santorini-first the waters are "retracted" by the implosion and seismic activity and then they return as a tsunami wave.

Sources of alternative Explanation of the Plagues and the Parting of the Red Sea miracle:

- http://www.fragmentsoftime.com/moses.htm
- http://www.cs.umd.edu/users/mvz/bible/wildish.pdf
- http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1412815/Biblical-plagues-and-parting-of-Red-Sea-caused-by-volcano.html

C. **Christ**

viii. virgin birth – a lie devised by Mary and her cousin, perhaps with Joseph's approval, to cover up becoming pregnant by boyfriend Joseph. A unmarried woman pregnant would be scorned or worse by the Jewish community at that time.

ix. wedding feast-water into wine –Jesus innocently discovers there are other urns filled with wine during the wedding reception. There is no more wine for the guests on the tables. Jesus indicates there is more wine. Bride's father didn't want to admit that he was keeping his best wine hidden away and then said it was just water only to be found out by Jesus instructing servants to bring the urns for inspection and so the bride's father lied to cover up his cheapness and said it was a miracle. Jesus would not want to embarrass him by claiming it was otherwise.

x. walking on water – mirage or low tide

xi. cures of the blind, deaf, lepers – psychological effect- placebo effect

xii. multiplication of the loaves and the fishes – people had the food hidden in the garments and bags and didn't want to share with the others as was the custom of the day. When they began to offer the few loaves and fishes available people took out their own concealed food and even offered some into the baskets for general distribution.

xiii. raising the dead-Lazarus – mistaken pronouncement of death-Jesus enters the cave and finds Lazarus prone and wrapped but with a pulse and revives him.

xiv. Resurrection--Jesus found in cave by his followers after the crucifixion. He was presumed to be dead. When they arrived they find that he is not. Fearing that the Romans will kill him if they find out they remove him from the cave and he is taken away to another town by followers and given another identity- Story of his resurrection and ascension made up by his followers to gain more supporters and avoid the Christ being hunted and killed. The gospels tell of the fear of the Romans of such a plot and therefore the placing of the stone to prevent the "stealing" of the body. This might have been added into the story as a denial of what actually occurred. The gospels also tell of Jesus meeting with his closest followers and discussing matters of succession and their continuing the mission of reform. The idea that this was after the death of Jesus rather than after the disappearance of Jesus may have been another alteration for the sake of gaining supporters for the new path for life that would now support the promise of a life after death with the tale of Jesus returning to life after @ 48 to 70 hours of being kept away from others after being taken down from a cross.

D. **More recent phenomena**

xv. statues that bleed – have been determined to be faked Weeping Statues

xvi. paintings that cry – have been duplicated by researchers Weeping Paintings

xvii. stones that drink milk –(India)- found to be faked

xviii. apparitions on walls, floors, windows, bagels! – nothing but a coincidence of a suggestive shape-*simulacra,* are identified by the brain with some prior image or pattern *such as:*

- "appearances" of Jesus on walls, windows, bagels, floors although they are NOT the same image or depiction of the same face!!!
- How does anyone today know what Mary or Jesus or any one form long ago looked like?

See further:

- Religious Perceptions
- Simulacrum
- Visual Icons
- Pareidolia

Examples of Recent "Apparitions" and Claims of Miracles or are they?

ix. READ **Stigmata-** are these appearances of wounds similar to what people believe are the wounds of Jesus Christ brought about by natural or supernatural causes?

READ **Examining Miracle Claims** by Joe Nickell

BURDEN OF PROOF

You cannot claim that "miracles exist unless someone proves that they do not exist." The burden of proof is always on the claim that X exists rather than on the claim that X does not exist. It is a fallacy to claim that X exists unless you prove that there is no X. What is improper is for a person to claim that "X exists" and when asked to prove it the person who made the claim uses as a defense of "X exists" the claim next claim that no one has proven that X does not exist.

IMPORTANT!!!!! READ: The Burden of Proof

> What is the best way to proceed when there is a report of some appearance of a religious figure on a wall or pancake, etc... Should the process favor a more natural explanation until proven otherwise?
>
> The best explanation would be the one that has the best fit with facts or the explanation that is best supported by claims that are themselves each well supported by other well supported claims. This is a process of explanation that rests heavily on the use of reason and the insistence on evidence to support claims about physical events or a physical state of affairs. So any appearance of any phenomena that is detectable by the senses should have an explanation concerning how the physical state of affairs has come about to produce that appearance to human senses. The burden of proof concerning physical claims is with those making the positive assertion.
>
> The explanation must also avoid the pattern of thinking that if one cannot prove that X is not the cause then X is the cause. One can not appeal to the absence of evidence or proof as constituting the basis for any conclusions. If one cannot prove what caused phenomenon P then one must withhold accepting the conclusion that any particular cause C is the cause of P.
>
> If there is a claim that phenomenon N (natural event-perceived by the senses) was caused by factor S (supernatural cause) then there needs to be evidence to support the claim.
>
> So the explanation of an event such as the appearance of a figure resembling what someone thinks of as a figure from religious history would need to have evidence to support it. In the absence of physical evidence, then the preponderance of the evidence is support of explanations of phenomena of a similar type might be given "preferred" status until subsequent evidence supports another conclusion.
>
> Using the resort of a supernatural explanation has so many "gaps " in that it is less preferred in the absence of strong evidence in support of a naturalistic explanation or the holding of the expectation of a naturalistic explanation to be forthcoming. The supernatural explanation has no physical evidence (natural) to support it and no explanation of how it is that non-physical entities cause physical events in the natural realm.
>
> There is also the very important question to be answered in this particular case of why it is that anyone alive thinks that they known just what Mary looked like. Why assume that the image is the image of any particular historical or or mythical entity? This is a case of a simulacrum.
>
> The use of the reasoning pattern :
>
> If you can not explain the event or phenomena by use of a natural explanation then it is a supernaturally caused event involving the spiritual or supernatural beings A B, C, etc...
>
> is both illogical and generated by and rests upon faith that is held to sustain hope. This is a habit of mind that is quite strong as it has consequences thought to be beneficial by the holder of the habit.

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1. The Argument from Miracles

> **1. There is an event that has taken place that violates the laws of nature.**
>
> **2. If the laws of nature are violated it could only be by a power that could violate the laws of nature that could only be the power that would have created those laws-the law maker, the deity.**

3. Thus, the power that would have created those laws-the law maker, the deity must exist.

The criticisms of this argument or proof attack the first premise. What evidence is there that there has ever been an event that has taken place that violates the laws of nature. What would be required to establish that such an event has , in fact, taken place?

Philosopher David Hume was skeptical about claims of miracles. In his *An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding,* Section X (1748), Bobbs-Merrill, Library of Liberal Arts edition) he held that :

> *...it forms a strong presumption against all supernatural and miraculous relations that they are observed chiefly to abound among ignorant and barbarous nations; or if a civilized people has ever given admission to any of them, that people will be found to have received them from ignorant and barbarous ancestors, who transmitted them with that inviolable sanction and authority which always attend received opinions (Hume, 126).*

His position is simple and direct:

> *A miracle is a violation of the laws of nature; and as a firm and unalterable experience has established these laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as entire as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined.(Hume, 122):*

and again:

> *There must...be a uniform experience against every miraculous event, otherwise the event would not merit that appellation.(Hume, 122):*

The conclusion would be that :

> *no testimony is sufficient to establish a miracle unless the testimony be of such a kind that its falsehood would be more miraculous than the fact which it endeavors to establish. (Hume, 123)*

Hume maintains that the preponderance of the evidence will always be hat the laws of nature are being followed. Any claim that there has been a violation of those laws would need to be substantiated (supported) by clear and convincing evidence. Since there is so much evidence that the laws are not violated, any claim to the contrary would need to have a good deal of evidence to support it. Hume does not believe that such evidence exists, has ever existed or could ever exist!!!

Evidence in support of **Miracles** would need to satisfy the following criteria:

1. sufficient number of witnesses
2. witnesses of good sense and education
3. witnesses of integrity and good reputation
4. public performance of the miracle event

These conditions have not been satisfied.

Hume argues that **Miracles** do not occur and that there is a logical obstacle to humans ever proving that events are **Miracles** .

VIEW: Hume on miracles by Professor Massimo Pigliucci:

Richard Swinburne:

Swinburne believes that :

1. evidence does exist that **Miracles** can occur
2. evidence does exist that **Miracles** can be the result of a deity, of God

The event must be contrary to the laws of nature and with no evidence that it could be repeated under similar circumstances. The event must be seen as the result of the intervention or action of a god who is not a material being.

Swinburne concludes that there is no logical impossibility in there being an event that satisfies his conditions. He does not offer evidence that any such event has ever occurred. He only argues that **Miracles** could occur.

J.L. Makie:

Makie argues that there are epistemological reasons why there will be no substantiation of a claim that **Miracles** have taken place. That there is no justification to believe in **Miracles** .

For there to be a proof of **Miracles** two conditions need to be satisfied:

1. proof the **Miracle** event has occurred
2. proof that **Miracle** event violated the laws of Nature

Makie's point is this:

That there is so much proof against satisfying condition 2 that if you satisfied condition 1 there would be the claim that the event did not satisfy condition 2. If you had an event that would clearly satisfy condition 2 it would be near impossible to satisfy condition 1.

Let's look at his.

First , if condition 1 is satisfied the event does not satisfy condition 2.

Examples:

A painting has an image that cries or a statue is bleeding or someone is cured of a physical illness or someone is brought back from the dead- now let's stipulate that there was water on the painting and blood on the statue and that the person was ill and now is not and that the apparently dead person is now alive. OK Condition 1 is satisfied there are the actual events. But in none of these cases were the laws of nature violated because they all have alternative explanation involving hoax, fraud, natural remissions and a premature and inaccurate pronouncement of death

Second, if condition 2 is satisfied then condition 1 would not be.

Here is what that means:

Someone describes an event that would violate the laws of nature and claims that it did occur. People think about that event and agree that if it did occur it would be an event that does violate the laws of nature . Now they go to check out whether the event actually did occur. The evidence that they want is not present.

So condition 2 was satisfied in the DESCRIPTION but condition 1 was not satisfied with EVIDENCE.

For example:

Someone reports that a human had an arm sliced off completely at the shoulder and it fell to the ground and lay there with blood dripping out while the human had blood spurting out of the arm socket and then 30 seconds later a new arm grows down from the shoulder socket with a hand and all other component parts . The new arm is completely grown in 60 seconds is as the old one was that is still lying on the ground. The DNA in the cells of the new arm match that of the human. This event would violate the laws of nature. This would be a miracle. But did it actually happen?

Now the people who hear the report go to look for evidence and they do not find the old arm. Or those who witnessed the event cannot produce the old arm There is no videotape of the event either.

Condition 2 is satisfied but not condition 1.

If there was severed arm produced along with the intact human and the severed arm matched the DNA of the intact human then the investigators would want to insure that the human was not one of identical twins or triplets and the arm was not taken from the body of another of the twins or triplets.

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J. L. Mackie's "Miracles and Testimony"

Summary by Meghan Ramsay (QCC, 2004)

In his essay, Mackie follows David Hume's argument that while it may be logically possible for a miracle to occur, it is seemingly impossible to prove that one has in fact occurred. Mackie asserts that miracles are a special instance where one may not simply take another's word for it that the event has occurred. Instead of questioning whether or not the witness of a miracle is credible, Mackie argues that one must, instead, question how fundamentally probable or improbable the event is. Mackie argues that we are quite able to discern the laws of nature—we have a fundamental set of basic laws upon which we develop other laws in order to describe how the world works when left free of supernatural intervention. Additionally, Mackie argues that an occasional violation of the laws of nature is also a law, as through these occasional violations, we discover new laws. Mackie states that not only does a miracle have to be the intervention of a supernatural being upon a closed system (the world) which brings about results that would otherwise be highly inconsistent with the working laws of nature, but this miracle must also have the purpose of directly fulfilling the intention of a supernatural being. He argues that successful prophecy could be seen as a miracle. For instance, if at 12:00, one predicts an event and the event occurs at 12:02, we could, at 12:03 investigate the evidence of the prediction. If the event did not occur as a result of the prophecy or in an accidental manner, then most likely the event was a miracle. Thus, Mackie concedes that the concept of a miracle is a coherent one.

Mackie asserts that when discussing a miracle, the law of nature that is supposed to have been broken must be a solid law for both the believer in miracles and the non-believer. The believer needs the law to be well established in order to claim that the event has, in fact, broken a law. At the same time, the non-believer needs the law to be well-established in order to argue that it is absurd to believe testimony that the event actually took place. Since the believer must accept the fact that the law is well-established, s/he must also accept the fact that the violation of said law is immensely improbable. Therefore, aside from testimony, we have an extremely strong basis for believing that the event did not occur. Thus, the testimony has the insurmountable task of overcoming the "maximal improbability" that the event occurred.

Mackie lays out two lines of defense for those who deny miraculous occurrences:

1. The event occurred, but it was in accord with the laws of nature.
2. The event, had it occurred, would have violated the laws of nature. However, the evidence cannot outweigh the incredibly strong improbability that said event has occurred.

Thus, Mackie argues, it is incredibly unlikely that one could believe that a miracle, as previously defined, has occurred.

Finally, Mackie touches on the idea that perhaps one has witnessed a supposed miracle and does not have to rely on the testimony of others. For such an occurrence, defense number one is still valid. Additionally, due to the fact that one can misremember, misobserve, and deceive ones' self, the actual witnessing of a miracle is still subject to the rigorous burden of proof needed of testimony in defense number 2.

Mackie, J. L. ***The Miracle of Theism.*** London: Oxford University Press, 1982.

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Richard Swinburne:

Swinburne argues that:

1. it is plausible that there is a God- a supreme being
2. it is plausible that God would reveal god's own existence
3. it is plausible that god would confirm the revelation by **Miracles**

There is reason (a priori) to believe and expect that God would reveal god's existence to humans, that God would want humans to know(in some primitive manner) that god does exist. Therefore, there is reason to believe that revelation does occur and that it is confirmed by **Miracles** and that **Miracles** that are predictive are primary examples of the **Miracles** that would confirm the Revelation.

Richard Swinburne on Miracles

Swinburne, Richard. "For the Possibility of Miracles." ***Philosophical Quarterly*****. 18. (1968).**

Summary by Meghan Ramsay, QCC 2004

Swinburne looks for historical evidence as proof for the existence of miracles in 2 steps. First he questions whether there could be evidence of a violation of natural law. Swinburne asserts that something occurring that defies prediction based upon natural laws

does not automatically constitute a miracle. He argues that the event must also be non-repeatable under similar circumstances, for if an event can be repeated we would have to institute a new law of nature or, at least, revise the existing law to include an exception under certain circumstances. Thus, Swinburne concludes that if an event defies the laws of nature as we know them and we are unable to revise the laws or create new ones that will consistently predict similar such events, then the original event is indeed a miracle.

The second aspect of Swinburne's argument relates to proof. Contrary to Hume (who argued that proof would be testimony of witnesses which would be finite), Swinburne argues that historical proof for a miraculous event would consist not only of testimony of witnesses but also a study of the effects of said event. He claims that one would have to experiment to see what other event, if any, could have caused the same effects. Thus, for Swinburne, proof is easily infinite.

However, in order for an event to be a miracle, it must also have been caused by a god. Swinburne argues that if an event that violates the laws of nature in a way so that the event is similar to actions that a human is capable but occurs when no human is making such actions, the event must have been performed by a rational agent without a body (god). Additionally, Swinburne points out that if an event occurs as a direct response to prayer to a god, there is additional proof for the existence of that god. While Swinburne argues that it is logically possible for a miracle to occur, he does not specify that such an event has.

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"Miracles and Revelation" by Richard Swinburne

Summary by Meghan Ramsay (QCC, 2004)

In his essay, "Miracles and Revelation," Richard Swinburne begins with the assumption that the existence of a God is possible and that this God has revealed himself to humanity in order to provide people with the knowledge of how to worship him and gain his favor in the after-life. In fact, since these things are not discernable through the natural world, Swinburne argues that God is, in some way, expected to reveal these truths to mankind. Swinburne argues that in order for a prophet to convey the message of a God, sometimes the message will have to be conveyed through the truth of the time period, in order for it to be on the same level as the recipients of the message. For instance, if God wanted to convey the message that he controls the orbit of the earth to a society which perceives the earth as flat with a dome over it that contains the sun, moon and stars, he might do so in a manner that accepts their belief in the flat world. Otherwise, their whole "scientific" world could be shattered when they find out that not only does God control the planet's orbit but that the earth is also round. Swinburne argues that it is the message that is important, not the history and science surrounding it. Swinburne also argues that although the history and science surrounding the message does not have to be wholly true, the message which the prophet is claiming as a direct communication from God must contain no falsity. Additionally, Swinburne argues that the message must be "deep," so as to provide men with moral instruction in regards to things that are not readily apparent.

For a prophet's message to be true, it must be examined and found to be in line with events or our own moral inclinations, otherwise the prophet must be rejected. Additionally, if one thing that the prophet says is true, there is a further likelihood of the rest of his/her claims as true. However, this is only slight evidence, for one can conceivably teach things that are both deep truths and at other times teach falsities. Although some of what a prophet claims can be easily proven true or false with evidence that is readily available, there are times when a prophet might convey things that are beyond our capacity to obtain independent verification for. One such instance occurs when prophets speak of life after death, which many of them do. Swinburne admits that we must still use evidence in order to determine the truth of such a claim, and he provides what is acceptable evidence through analogy. Swinburne likens the prophet to a messenger who visited the king of a far off land in the days prior to the technology that allows for speedy communication of messages and quick travel. When the messenger returns with a message from the king there are certain evidences that could show that the message did indeed come from the king. For instance, the message could contain a prediction of a future event which the king would have control over but the messenger would be unable to influence. Additionally, the messenger could return with an item that could only have been given to him by the king so as to prove that the messenger met with the king. Analogously, the prophet can prove him/herself by predicting a future event that no human who has not received a message from God could predict, i.e. an event that defies the laws of nature. Additionally, the prediction would have to be of an event that occurred by the hand of God, thus a miracle. Additionally, the prophet could evidence his/her revelation if his/her life were to coincide with miracles that would justify his/her teachings.

Finally, Swinburne gives evidence showing that God would become incarnate through a prophet. He states that the quality of the prophet's life as a human shows a God-like pattern. The prophet must behave in the manner that God would behave in, were he to be limited by the constraints of human-hood. Although one cannot be certain as to in what way God would live as a human, Swinburne argues that this life would certainly have to be one of holiness and sacrifice. However, Swinburne points out that many men lead holy and sacrificial lives. Thus, the prophet's life must also be one in which s/he can work miracles of his/her own

volition, and that the end of the prophet's life must be in some manner that violates natural processes (i.e. the resurrection of Jesus Christ).

Swinburne, Richard. ***Faith and Reason.*** London: Oxford University Press, 1981.

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PROVING SOME EVENT IS A MIRACLE

So event X is reported to have occurred.

Event X has either a NATURAL CAUSE or SUPERNATURAL CAUSE.

If event X can have either a NATURAL CAUSE or SUPERNATURAL CAUSE it can NOT be a MIRACLE

Why not?

Because a MIRACLE is defined to be an event that can ONLY HAVE a SUPERNATURAL CAUSE.

Why?

Because then it can be used to prove that there is a SUPERNATURAL BEING aka GOD.

Anyone who wants to claim X is a miracle needs to satisfy the two conditions presented above for an event to be accepted as a miracle.

The BURDEN of PROOF is on defending that X is a miracle and not the other way around.

Yes, people choose to believe that events are miracles even though they do not satisfy the conditions and even though there is evidence against the events being miracles and even though if the reports were true it would not necessarily mean that the event was the result of the Supreme Being bringing about the events.

In LOGIC it is shown that you can never prove a general negative claim. Those that assert the affirmative have the burden of proof within the community of reasoning beings. This goes for claims that there are purple elephants with yellow stripes, that there are miracles and that there is a single Supreme Being. MIRACLES are very, very difficult to prove. So difficult that several philosophers have concluded that there have been none thus far.

To be a miracle an event would need to violate the laws of nature. For any report to be accepted the evidence would need to be pretty convincing and all alternative explanations would need to be ruled out (completely eliminated)! That is a very difficult thing to do. The evidence would come from witnesses but the more unbelievable (violating the laws of nature) the event was the more we would doubt the witnesses. Given the lack of reliable witnesses and the inability to completely eliminate all other possible explanations (fraud, delusions, greed, optical illusions, advanced technology, alien activities, etc...) miracles are not accepted by most rational people.

SUGGESTED READINGS MIRACLES

A. INTERNET ENCYCLOPEDIA of PHILOSOPHY:

B. WIKIPEDIA:

C. STANFORD ENCYCLOPEDIA of PHILOSOPHY

D. Joe Nickell, Examining Miracle Claims:

E. Spontaneous Remissions in Medicine

OTHER:

Weeping Statues

Weeping Paintings

Perceptions

Simulacrum

Pareidolia

SUGGESTED IMAGES: MIRACLES

Miracle pictures in Islam

Virgin Mary on Wall

Virgin Mary on Toast $28,000

Nun Bun or Mother Theresa Bun stolen

Pareidolia

Miracle Tortilla

SUGGESTED VIDEOS: MIRACLES

Solving Mysteries - Exploring the Science of Miracles

Miracle Detectives - Mysterious Oils: Skeptic Meets a Believer

1. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_iv4guojV6w

2. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_xUyRIJmgpg&feature=endscreen&NR=1

Miracle Detectives - Holy Dirt of Chimayo: Healing Testimony

FINAL QUESTIONS:

Are there reasons to think that the reports of **Miracles** are not reliable?

Can the reports of **Miracles** be accepted as being true?

Can **Miracles** ever be verified?

Do claims of **Miracles** need to be authenticated?

Can reports of **Miracles** be used as support for a belief in a deity, the supernatural realm?

Outcome Assessment

This argument or proof does not establish the actual existence of a supernatural deity. It attempts to argue for the existence of such a being by offering evidence that is highly questionable and for which there are alternative and often more plausible explanations. While the argument can not be used to convert a non-believer to a believer, the faults in the argument do not prove that there is no god. The Burden of Proof demands that the positive claim that there is a supernatural deity be established by reason and evidence and this argument does not meet that standard. The believer in god can use this argument to establish the mere logical possibility that there is a supernatural deity or at least that it is not irrational to believe in the possibility that there is such a being but the argument does not establish any degree of probability at all when there are alternative explanations for the reports of experiences offered. The veracity of the reports has not been established.

OUTCOME:

The Argument:

PREMISES:

1. There is an event that has taken place that violates the laws of nature.

2. If the laws of nature are violated it could only be by a power that could violate the laws of nature that could only be the power that would have created those laws-the law maker, the deity.

CONCLUSION:

3. Thus, the power that would have created those laws-the law maker, the deity must exist.

Problem with argument:

1. __X__Premises are false or questionable
2. ____Premises are irrelevant
3. ____Premises Contain the Conclusion –Circular Reasoning
4. ____Premises are inadequate to support the conclusion
5. ____Alternative arguments exist with equal or greater support

This argument or proof has flaws in it and would not convince a rational person to accept its conclusion. This is not because someone who does not believe in a deity will simply refuse to accept based on emotions or past history but because it is not rationally compelling of acceptance of its conclusion.

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6.2.9: Argument from Experience- Psychic Phenomena

Psychic Phenomena

If reports of certain types of psychic phenomena were accurate and truthful and believable they would establish the existence of a spiritual realm that would support claims of another dimension and spiritual beings and powers. God as a spirit would then be more believable. Are the reports of such phenomena veridical?

A. Psychic Phenomena-Death and Immortality

-Support for the post-mortem survival hypothesis

- apparitions-spirits/ **GHOSTS**/ poltergeists
- seances-communication with the dead -**Medium**
- reincarnation memories
- near death experiences-NDE's
- death bed observations
- sacred scripture

Arguments against the post mortem survival hypothesis

- the irrational nature of the explanation of consciousness
- lack of clear, unambiguous physical evidence

B. Existence of deities and spirits that enter into humans, possess them or channel through them

ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS

1. Persons think that they are telling the truth but they are mistaken, e.g., optical illusion, misinterpretation..
2. Persons think that they are telling the truth but they are under the influence of mind altering substances
3. Persons think that they are telling the truth but they are suffering from brain malfunctioning, e.g., chemical imbalance
4. Persons think that they are telling the truth but they are under the influence of group influence-social psychology
5. Persons are making a false report to get attention from believers
6. Persons are making a false report to raise money from donations to their cause or movement.
7. Persons are making a false report to please others and gain acceptance from believers.
8. Persons are making a false report to get power, perhaps as a leader of a religious cult or sect.

The Questions

The questions are:

Is the subject of a religious experience justified inferring from the psychological experience to the existential or the ontological reality of the object of that experience: the supernatural being?

Is anyone else justified in reaching the conclusion that a supernatural being exists based upon the report of the individual who has made the claim to have had the religious experience?

Does the accumulation of reports from such witnesses to religious experiences justify the claim that a supernatural or spiritual being, a deity, a transcendent reality , exists?

Problems with Religious Experiences

Not all who learn of the reports of such religious experiences accept them as conclusive evidence for the existence of a supernatural reality or spiritual beings. Many have attempted to give alternative accounts of such experiences that do not involve acceptance of the existence of any supernatural entities or reality.

Naturalism is an approach to religious experiences which explains them as being the result of natural forces. It accounts for

such phenomena in natural terms without recourse to anything that is beyond the physical realm. In general, all reality and all experiences can be accounted for (fully explained) in terms of physical processes.

There are different explanations for the origin and nature of religious experiences. What they have in common is the rejection of a supernatural source or object and the attempt to offer a full explanation in empirically verifiable terms.

Psychological explanations have been offered by several theoreticians, including Sigmund Freud. Sociological explanations have also been developed by several other scientists, such as Emil Durkheim. What they have in common is the refusal to accept religious experiences as being truthful, accurate, or believable in so far as the existence of any supernatural reality. One of the principle reasons for withholding acceptance of the reports is that the experiences can not be verified and what they report encountering can not be verified empirically.

ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS

1. Persons think that they are telling the truth but they are mistaken, e.g., optical illusion, misinterpretation..
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Questions

A. Truthfulness

Are the religious experiences veridical?

1. What is the scientific analysis of the religious experiences ?

2. What are the genetic and causal conditions of religious experiences ?

-in the human race ?

-in the individual?

3. Is the religious experience veridical? Is it truthful? Is it a report which others can accept as being Correct? Truthful? Accurate?

Humans should accept religious experiences as being veridical UNLESS there exists positive grounds for thinking otherwise, for thinking that the reports are not truthful, accurate or correct.

Some claim that there are positive grounds for rejecting the reports of such experiences, i.e., against their being veridical experiences

1. mystics are abnormal: they tend to be sexually repressed
2. mystical experience is always mixed with other elements such as sexual emotion or imagery

In response to these observations some offer that perhaps the human being must be in an altered state of consciousness in order to have the experience of the greater (supernatural) reality which the ordinary consciousness can not contain or reach. Sexual abstinence may be a necessary but not a sufficient condition for having such an encounter.

C.D. Broad notes that reports or descriptions of these religious experiences involve concepts and beliefs that are:

1. inadequate to the facts
2. highly confused
3. mixed with error and nonsense
4. subject to change in time

Broad notes that these features are also true of scientific concepts and beliefs and that they have and do change in time.

Perhaps religious experiences are not pure delusions or illusions. Perhaps religious experiences are only encountered by those who have an ability to experience them. Perhaps there are people, even many people, who are "deaf" to such experiences.

Wallace Matson:

If the subject of a religious experience is to be believed there are certain requirements to be met. Any perception of an individual should be publicly confirmed. No private experience can establish the existence of God. You would first need to establish the existence of God by other means on order to confirm that what was experienced was both God and True.

No indescribable experience can be publicly confirmed

No mystical experience can be publicly confirmed.

Mystics appear similar to people who are deluded, or mentally ill, not adjusted to reality. Their claims can not be accepted without evidence. But you can not have evidence without a prior belief in God.

To confirm what any subject is experiencing there must be "checkable" statements.

Similar to a blind person confirming what a sighted person sees.

With the religious experiences there are no such "checkable" statements, so there can be no confirmation. Hence, they can not serve as a proof of the existence of supernatural entities because they are not veridical.

Gary Gutting

The claim is made that in order to establish the veridical nature of religious claims there are three criteria to be met:

1. many should have the experience
2. it should exist in different cultures
3. the experience should produce a major transformation involving ,in part, the moral life of the individual

Gary Gutting claims that the three conditions are met by reports of religious experiences and so they do provide a justification for belief in a supernatural being, a deity, God.

Louis P. Pojman:

There is both a strong justification and a weak justification to be offered that Religious experiences do provide evidence of the existence of a supernatural entity, a deity.

Strong: this argument would be so strong as to oblige all people to believe in God.

Weak: this justification provides rational support only for those who have had such an experience (or already accepted the world view that holds such experiences are possible)

Pojman argues against such a strong argument

1. the reports are too amorphous
2. they reports are circular- acceptance of them depends on background belief in God
3. reports are not capable of being confirmed as with perceptual experiences

thus, they are not checkable, not predictable

MEDIUMS

NBC television began broadcasting a hit show titled "Medium" in 2005. Is it a true story?

READ: **Medium**

Many people want strongly to believe in a spirit world and deities. They ask questions such as: What about mediums? Don't people like John Edward communicate with the dead? If they do that is evidence of the spirit world and of souls and of a deity as well.

So do they do this?

Well, John Edward and other mediums have been examined closely and have failed to produce evidence that is indisputable proof of the existence of non-physical entities and a spirit world. John Edward is described as being a "cold reader" as are so many other "psychics" and "mediums". There is much material on this and it can be reached through the use of a search engine and entering : "John Edward" + skeptical or "John Edward" + hoax or "John Edward" + fraud or "John Edward" + cold reading.

Read about how it might be that he does what he appears to do.

Investigative Files: John Edward: Hustling the Bereaved by Joe Nickell
Skeptical Inquirer magazine : November/December 2001

Here is a critique of a particular "experiment" attempting to support conversations with the dead and a book about it.

How *Not* to Test Mediums[1] : Critiquing the Afterlife Experiments *Skeptical Inquirer* magazine : January/February 2003 Ray Hyman

If one has no had a religious experience how can one reach a conclusion as to whether or not such an experience exists as reported? is truthful? Is accurate? Is sufficient grounds to conclude that there is a supernatural realm? that there is a deity? That there is a supreme being?

How can non- believers accept the reports of people who claim to have had such experiences when there are so many alternative explanations for those reports which would provide strong reasons to reject the claim that the reports are truthful and accurate?

On GHOSTS

Outcome Assessment

This argument or proof does not establish the actual existence of a supernatural deity. It attempts to argue for the existence of such a being by offering evidence that is highly questionable and for which there are alternative and often more plausible explanations. While the argument can not be used to convert a non-believer to a believer, the faults in the argument do not prove that there is no god. The Burden of Proof demands that the positive claim that there is a supernatural deity be established by reason and evidence and this argument does not meet that standard. The believer in god can use this argument to establish the mere logical possibility that there is a supernatural deity or at least that it is not irrational to believe in the possibility that there is such a being but the argument does not establish any degree of probability at all when there are alternative explanations for the reports of experiences offered. The veracity of the reports has not been established.

OUTCOME:

The Argument:

Premises

1. Persons claim to experience contact or communication with the dead.

Conclusion: There is a realm of the dead or spiritual realm in which there are souls, spirits, and the deity

Problem with argument:

1. _X__Premises are false or questionable
2. ___Premises are irrelevant
3. ___Premises Contain the Conclusion –Circular Reasoning
4. ___Premises are inadequate to support the conclusion
5. __X__Alternative arguments exist with equal or greater support

This argument or proof has flaws in it and would not convince a rational person to accept its conclusion. This is not because someone who does not believe in a deity will simply refuse to accept based on emotions or past history but because it is not rationally compelling of acceptance of its conclusion.

V. FINAL QUESTIONS:

Are there reasons to think that the reports of religious experiences are not reliable?

Can the reports be accepted as being true?

Can they be verified?

Do they need to be?

Can reports of religious experiences be used as support for a belief in a deity, the supernatural realm?

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6.2.10: Argument- Pragmatism

Blaise Pascal, 1623 - 1662, was both a mathematician and a philosopher. He had studied many of the traditional arguments for the existence of God but did not find the arguments persuasive. Living in a time when gambling was *en vogue*, Pascal attempted to formulate an argument, based on chance, that would impel the reader to believe in God. After reading Pascal's Wager, Pascal wants you to believe that the "smart money" is on belief in God.

VIEW: Pragmatic Argument

WHAT ARE THE ODDS?

According to Pascal, we can conceive or our choice whether or not to believe in the existence of God as a wager. As in all bets, if we wager properly, then we stand to gain. If we wager improperly (or lose the bet), then we stand to suffer a loss.

The bet at hand concerns the existence of God. We can either bet on the existence of God or we can bet on the non-existence of God. But what would a gambler want to know before placing their money on the table? A gambler would probably want to know how much is at stake. Most bets are monetary. In this case, the gambler can think of her investment in terms of lifestyle choices. That is, those who do believe in God will act accordingly, e.g. no more late night parties, no more seeking of the good life, etc. Belief requires certain practices and orthopraxy - like when you want to watch football on Sunday morning but you have to attend Church. The next thing a gambler would want to know is the payoff/penalty. That is, how much will the gambler win potentially and how much will the gambler lose potentially. The Wager is often presented as follows:

1. If you believe in God and God does exist then your payoff is immeasurable. You will enter heaven and know eternal happiness
2. If you believe in God and God does not exist then you have lost some pleasure but you have led a decent life. You have forfeited a high amount of pleasure but your existence was not miserable.
3. If you do not believe in God and God does exist then your penalty is immeasurable. You will suffer eternal displeasure.
4. **If you do not believe in God and God does not exist then you will have a high measurable amount of pleasure. Your pleasure will end once your life ends.**

Although "4" does pay well, it does not have as high a potential return as "1". Considering the consequences of "3" and the potential return of "1" Pascal concludes that the most reasonable wager is to place your money on the existence of God. Even if you are wrong, the potential loss is minimal (see "2").

Sometimes the return or payoff is represented as follows:

	GOD EXISTS	**GOD DOES NOT EXIST**
BELIEVE IN GOD	IMMEASURABLE PAYOFF	INCONSEQUENTIAL LOSS
DO NOT BELIEVE IN GOD	IMMEASURABLE LOSS	MEASUREABLE PAYOFF

On Pascal's argument:

Suggested Reading : Reason and Faith: Pascal **Pensees**

A Word about Non-Epistemic Arguments.

Many arguments for the existence of God are deductive or inductive arguments. Some of these same arguments are based on valid laws of inference and specific claims of knowledge. While these arguments might try to infer God with very different arguments that are built upon very different assumptions and methodologies, these arguments do have one thing in common, i.e. they argue for the existence of God based on specific propositions or ideas. This has been the case with the ontological, cosmological and teleological arguments. Such arguments are known as epistemic arguments. Epistemic is from the Greek, *episteme*, or knowledge. Such arguments are well organized and appear to lead to their conclusions and so they are called valid

indicating that if their premises were true their conclusions would be true as well. However valid they may appear their soundness and cogency are not at all well established as their premises have been severely criticized over the centuries. It has fairly well been demonstrated or proven that their premises are not obviously true nor can they be verified as true through empirical methods. So these arguments have been rejected by many as having unwarranted conclusions or as not being cogent or convincing.

Non-Epistemic proofs are arguments for the existence of God that are not knowledge-based arguments. If understood properly, the non-epistemic proof should invoke a personal response. The power of Pascal's Wager is not found in valid rules of inference but in probability and possible outcomes. The Wager appeals to the feelings in us- to our emotions, our fear of loss or punishment and our hopes for rewards. Should human beings accept such arguments? Should rational human beings act on less than rational arguments? Some say it is immoral to so act. Others disagree..

Problem with Pascal's Wager: Clifford vs James

W.K. Clifford argues against such a wager and the Ethics of Belief. He claims that we should never hold a belief without sufficient justification. The moral foundation for promoting the use of reason in drawing conclusions is argued in In The Ethics of Belief (1877) (Originally published in Contemporary Review, 1877) http://www.infidels.org/library/historical/w_k_clifford/ethics_of_belief.html wherein William K. Clifford concludes that :

> *We may believe what goes beyond our experience, only when it is inferred from that experience by the assumption that what we do not know is like what we know.*
>
> *We may believe the statement of another person, when there is reasonable ground for supposing that he knows the matter of which he speaks, and that he is speaking the truth so far as he knows it.*
>
> *It is wrong in all cases to believe on insufficient evidence; and where it is presumption to doubt and to investigate, there it is worse than presumption to believe.*

READ: Clifford, W. K. "The Ethics of Belief." *Lectures and Essays*. London: Macmillan, 1879.

Summary by Meghan Ramsay, QCC 2004

In his essay, W.K. Clifford opposes the pragmatic justifications, like Pascal's wager, for belief in the existence of a deity. Clifford maintains that beliefs based upon insufficient evidence are always wrong. In essence, believing in something just because it may prove to be beneficial in the long run is not genuine belief. To illustrate his point, Clifford gives an example of a ship owner who sees that his ship is old and in need of repairs. However, the ship owner manages to convince himself that his ship has made many voyages from which it has always returned safely, and he begins to sincerely believe that this trip will be no different than all of the previous ones. Although the evidence before him suggests danger for the passengers, the owner has faith and lets the ship sail. Clifford points out that if the ship sinks, the owner will be directly responsible for the deaths that occur as a result of his negligence. Clifford also points out that even if the ship managed to make the voyage, the owner would still be guilty, he just wouldn't be found out, as the question has to do with the foundation for his belief rather than the outcome. In this case, the ship owner had no right to believe that the ship would be safe because of the evidence before him. Clifford points out that it is not so much the belief that must be judged but the actions following the belief. Even though the ship owner believed in the seaworthiness of his ship, he could have taken the precaution of having it examined before putting the lives of others on the line. Yet Clifford points out that when acting in a way that is opposite of one's belief, it seems to condemn the belief. For example, if the ship owner truly believed that his ship was sound, he would have no reason to have it examined. The examination would suggest that the owner did indeed have some doubts. Clifford maintains that it is one's duty to investigate both sides of an issue, and when one holds a belief that is not based upon evidence he looses his objectivity and is unable to perform that duty. Additionally, Clifford points out that beliefs are all incredibly significant, as they lay the foundation for accepting or rejecting all other beliefs and provide the framework for future action. Additionally, one's beliefs are not private. Beliefs are passed on within society and to future generations. Beliefs which are based upon evidence and have been thoroughly investigated allow humanity to have mastery over more of the world, but when those beliefs are unfounded and contrary to evidence, the mastery resulting is counterfeit. Clifford argues that beliefs that are unfounded are deceptive, as they make humans feel stronger and more knowledgeable when they really aren't.

Clifford suggests that holding beliefs based upon insufficient evidence can lead to the downfall of society. Even if these beliefs turn out to be true, society will suffer, as people will stop examining the issues with an open mind. Humans will no longer inquire as to the validity of their beliefs. They will become gullible and susceptible to fraud, hastening the downfall of civilization. Thus, holding these unfounded beliefs and suppressing doubts is a sin against humanity.

William James argues that there is sufficient justification. There is a practical justification when one considers that we must make a decision and that believing can place one in a much better position.

READ: James, William. *The Will to Believe*. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1897.

second location for Will to Believe

Summary by Meghan Ramsay, QCC 2004`

In his response to W.K. Clifford, William James points out that there are two ways of viewing humanity's duty in terms of opinion and belief. He points out that we are commanded to know the truth and avoid error. However, knowing the truth and avoiding errors are not one commandment stated in two ways. Instead, they are separable, and stressing one over the other will provide vastly different results. James maintains that those who place the avoidance of error above knowing the truth (such as W.K. Clifford), are keeping their minds in a constant state of suspense out of fear of being duped. James likens this to a general telling his soldiers to avoid battle so that they do not suffer any injuries. Victories over neither foes nor nature are won by not taking action. Thus, James says, he is willing to face the occasional falsehood or dupe in order to eventually arrive at a true belief. James does take into account that there are times when we can postpone making a decision until more sufficient evidence is provided. However, we can only postpone making up our minds if the option is not a crucial one with earth-shattering consequences. James points out that often the need to act is not so critical and urgent that we must risk acting upon a false belief than on no belief at all.

James then moves into religious beliefs. He states that religion essentially states two things:

1. The best things are those which are eternal.
2. Belief in the first affirmation betters us now and forever.

James says that although the skeptic says he is awaiting more evidence before making his decision, he has, in all actuality already decided. The skeptic, according to James has decided that it is better and wiser to dismiss the belief in these two affirmations for fear of being duped than it is to believe and hope that they are true. In essence, by choosing to wait, the skeptic joins the side of the non-believer. Since no one is absolutely certain as to the existence of God, one must make the choice whether or not to believe or wait for more proof. However, choosing to wait is not considered being inactive—it' is just as much an act as that of believing. Ultimately, James concludes that whether to believe or not is up to the individual. He maintains that one "enters at his/her own risk" (or does not enter at all at his/her own risk), and he concludes that no one should be intolerant of another's choice whether to believe or not.

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Notes on W.K. Clifford and William James

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READ: Philip L. Quinn, Gale on a Pragmatic Argument for Religious Belief PHILO, Volume 6, Number 1.

Abstract: This paper is a study of a pragmatic argument for belief in the existence of God constructed and criticized by Richard Gale. The argument's conclusion is that religious belief is morally permissible under certain circumstances. Gale contends that this moral permission is defeated in the circumstances in question both because it violates the principle of universalizability and because belief produces an evil that outweighs the good it promotes. My counterargument tries to show that neither of the reasons invoked by Gale suffices to defeat the moral permission established by the original argument.

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Other Problems with Pascal's Wager:

Based on this work:

Richard T. Hull ***Pascal's Wager: Not a Good Bet***, Free Inquiry , Vol 25, No. 1. , Dec. 2004/Jan.2005

1. Many Gods Problem:

If a skeptic were to accept Pascal's invitation to believe in what deity would that person place their psychological commitment

to believe? There are different conception of the deity in different religions of the West and the East. If the deity does exist and it is the one and only and it does pay attention to what humans do and it will reward and punish then the would-be believer needs more than Pascal's argument to arrive at the proper conclusion as to exactly which conception of a deity to place trust and hope in in order to avoid the possibly vindictive deity who would punish both non-believers and those who believed in a "false" or inaccurate conception of the deity.

While " Pascal clearly intended his argument to persuade the reader to adopt belief in Christianity... the same argument can be given , with suitable substitution for the word *God* and its associated concept, for any other religion."

2. The assumption that believing in God has no different result than not believing in god , if there is no god. This is not always the case however. If a person chooses to believe in a deity and that belief leads a person to certain actions such as using prayer in the place of medication for illnesses for which there are known cures then there is a decided difference. A believer in the deity of the Christians or Islamic people might lead a person to a negative regard for others or even into physical acts of violence towards infidels.

3. "a similar argument could be given for believing in any supernatural conception of the world: forces that determine earthquakes, tornadoes, or floods or the supposed power of other humans to make magic, do psychic surgery or read minds."

It would appear that Pascal's approach would have appeal for those who do not want to use the intellect to its fullest extent and investigate all claims about what exists or does not exist. It would appeal to those who want to have some being to appeal to for favor or exemption from harms and ills or favor for support against those they would oppose.

Another way to look at this Argument or Proof:

It is not a “Proof” at all.

It is not an argument that provides support in thinking that a deity actually does exist.

It is an argument that in spite of a lack of proof people should want to believe anyway. Just to be safe.

OUTCOME:

The Argument:

Premises:

1. The possible reward for believing in a deity are greater than not believing in a deity
2. The possible punishment or penalties for not believing in a deity is greater than the possible penalties for believing.
3. It is less risky to believe in a deity than not believe.

Conclusion 1:

Believe in a deity existing.

Conclusion 2:

There is a deity

Problem with argument:

1. ___Premises are false or questionable
2. __X__Premises are irrelevant
3. ___Premises Contain the Conclusion –Circular Reasoning
4. _X__Premises are inadequate to support the conclusion
5. ___Alternative arguments exist with equal or greater support

This argument or proof has flaws in it and would not convince a rational person to accept its conclusion. This is not because someone who does not believe in a deity will simply refuse to accept based on emotions or past history but because it is not rationally compelling of acceptance of its conclusion.

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6.2.11: Problem of Evil

There is an argument that is advanced in order to prove that either there is no god at all or that the god of the western religions can not exist.

THE PROBLEM

The Problem of Evil poses a philosophical threat to the design argument because it implies that the design of the cosmos and the designer of the cosmos are flawed. We can know they are flawed due to the preponderance of evil within the cosmos.

What is the Problem of Evil?

The problem of evil is **not** that there is evil in the world. The problem of evil is **not** there there is so much evil in the world. The problem of evil is **not** that there is not a balance between good and evil in the world. Well then, what is the problem of evil ?

Simply put it is this: how can there be a deity that is all good and all knowing and all powerful at the same time that evil exists? How can there be a caring and benevolent God when there exists evil in the world ? The Problem of Evil relates to what would appear to be a contradiction in the idea of the deity. The deity is a being that is all good and all powerful and yet creates or allows or permits evil to exist. It is something of a problem, something that needs to be explained or rectified. **It is a problem with the CONCEPT of the deity in the Western religions** after Christianity overlays the Greek notions of the ideal onto the Hebrew deity: God. One answer to this question is to say that human moral agents, not the deity or God, are the cause of the evil. The deity is not responsible for the moral evil and in some sense created a world in which it is better that there be moral evil than not to have moral evil or even the possibility of moral evil. This answer is insufficient to solve the problem because every manner of defending it has failed over time to explain how a deity that is all perfect and in particular All Knowing and All Powerful and All Good would permit or allow or cause evil to exist. How would a deity that knows the future be all good if the deity creates agents that cause evil and the deity created them knowing that they would create evil?

Some prefer to think of the problem as the Problem of Suffering rather than the Problem of Evil. How can you reconcile the existence of so much suffering with the existence of an omnibenevolent, omniscient, and omnipotent God; as deity that is reported to be all loving and all merciful?

Maybe God knows about the suffering and would stop it but can not stop it - that would imply God is not omnipotent. Maybe God is able to stop the suffering and would want to but does not know about it - that would imply God is not omniscient. Maybe God knows about the suffering and is able to stop it but does not wish to assuage the pain - that would imply God is not omnibenevolent. These options are explored by those in a tradition of thought known as Process Theology (see below). In the very least, David Hume argues, the existence of evil does not justify a belief in a caring Creator.

VIEW: Problem of Evil

Here is a good Overview of this Problem of Evil.

READ: **Notes on the Problem of EVIL**

OK Let's look at the problem this way:

The problem of evil is the result of the combination of a set of ideas. It is a problem with CONCEPTS and IDEAS

A. the deity is ALL GOOD

B. The deity is ALL KNOWING

C. The deity is ALL POWERFUL

D. Evil exists

D(1). Natural evil exists

D(2).Moral Evil exists

A+B+C+D(1) OR D(2) = PROBLEM OF EVIL

Possible RESPONSES:

1. 1. Get rid of A or B or C or D
2. 2. Get rid of the idea of the deity altogether
3. 3. Somehow try to explain that there is a way to have A+B+C+D without a contradiction or inconsistency.

If (3) succeeded there would be no PROBLEM OF EVIL. There have been many people over two thousand years who think that there is no way that attempting (3) can succeed.

so, there are four basic approaches to the problem and each will be examined in the following sections.

- **THEODICY** explain how the traditional idea of the deity could be consistent with the existence of evil (3)
- **TRANSFORMATION of EVIL** transform the idea of evil so that it is not evil-(1)change D
- **PROCESS THEOLOGY** change the idea of the deity-(1)Change A or B or C
- **ATHEISM** there is no deity at all and thus no problem with evil and its relationship to the deity (2)

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The problem results from the apparent inconsistency or contradiction in a number of traits associated with the Supreme Being: God.

To put this Argument into a Logical Form:

Consider this **valid argument pattern**

Premise 1: P> Q

Premise 2: -Q

Conclusion: Then –P

(Pattern called Denying the Consequent or Modus Tollens)

Example:

If fire, then Oxygen

No Oxygen

Then, no fire

Now applied to the Problem of Evil

Premise 1: D(K,P,G) >N

Premise 2: -N

Conclusion: -D(K,P,G)

What does -D(K,P,G) mean?

- D(K,P,G)= - D(K,P,G) or D(K,P)= or D(K,G)= D(P,G)

1)If there is a Deity (all Knowing ,Powerful, Good) >then NO EVIL

2) There is Evil =not no evil= -N

CONCLUSION: There is no Deity(that is all Knowing ,All Powerful,All Good) = -D(K,P,G)

What does -D(K,P,G) mean?

- D(K,P,G)= - D(K,P,G) or D(K,P)= or D(K,G)= D(P,G)

What does -D(K,P,G) mean?

-D(K,P,G)= - D(K,P,G) or D(K,P)= or D(K,G)= D(P,G)

It does NOT mean that there is no GOD. That is but one possibility.

It does mean that there is either no GOD at all or no GOD that at the same time is ALL GOOD and ALL POWERFUL and ALL KNOWING.

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THE ARGUMENT AGAINST THERE BEING A DEITY

Consider this:

1. God is all powerful
2. If omnipotent God exists, there can be no evil
3. God is all good
4. If omnibenificent God exists , there can be no evil
5. Evil exists
6. If Evil exists, there can be no God
7. Therefore, it logically follows that

Either

I. God does not exist at all
II. God is not all powerful- lacking in some power
II. God is not all knowing
IV. God is not all good -creator of evil or lacking in something that is good

The four approaches will be presented and criticized. Before doing so some general background points are in order.

BELIEF SYSTEMS and CRITICAL THINKING

As people grow and mature and learn they acquire beliefs and entire belief systems. They do so through receiving and accepting as true stories about how things are in this world and in a realm beyond this one and through the beliefs implicit in ordinary language and its usages. Thus are acquired assumptions and presuppositions for the thought processes entered into through life. In the beginning those acquiring such beliefs want to be accepted and even valued by the various groups of which they are members or for which they desire to be members, so there is an emphasis on acceptance of the beliefs shared by members of those groups and not on review or criticism of them. There is little, if any, reflective thought or critical thinking taking place. Little is needed if the majority of group members are operating with the beliefs without questioning of them.

Once acquired the belief systems function as a basis for the acquisition of additional beliefs. As another idea is presented it is placed within the context of the previously acquired beliefs and if the new candidate for inclusion is consistent with or coherent with the prior beliefs and ideas it is accepted as also being true. This is the coherentist theory of truth. The problem with that approach to truth is that there needs to be some other method for the establishment of the fundamental beliefs or else the entire structure of beliefs while internally coherent might not be supported by any evidence external to the beliefs themselves.

As belief systems expand they can reach a point where beliefs and ideas have been accepted too hastily and when a culture or individual reach a point where reflective thought can be afforded inconsistencies and perhaps even outright contradictions

may appear upon reflection. Upon the first realization of problems, the belief systems will not be abandoned altogether and will not even be thrown into serious doubt. Rather there will be attempts to preserve the belief system through the introduction of qualifiers and alternate interpretations designed to account for what are to be termed “apparent” discrepancies. This process will continue until the introduction of the qualifiers and alternative interpretations reaches a point where they generate the need for even further such qualifiers and the process then becomes so burdensome that the fundamental beliefs and ideas may then come under the most careful scrutiny and there is an acceptance of a need for an alternate set of beliefs that are more internally coherent and satisfying to demands of reason and the desire for external grounding.

This occurred in the time of Socrates when the many stories about the gods and goddesses were seen through the eyes of critical reasoning to be inconsistent and incoherent. For Socrates a basis for the grounding of morality and the social order was needed other than that provided by the stories of the Greek deities. In addition to sharing this realization with Socrates, Plato saw that the ideas and theories of the pre-Socratics were inconsistent and there was needed an alternate view of what made anything real and how one could know anything.

Now for Socrates, Plato and Aristotle the idea of the Greek deities came to make little sense in the light of reason and so the idea of a more abstract entity emerges with them as more satisfying as an explanation of origins and order. Their ideas satisfy the dictates of reason for which they abandoned the blind adherence to the stories of their ancestors. These are developments that mark the origins of philosophical thought in the West.

With other western religious belief systems there were also prompts to the development of a critical thought tradition. The early Hebrew deity is one that has apparent weaknesses and is not at all perfect in every way. It is jealous and vindictive and unjust. For the Christians the idea of the Hebrew deity was not going to be acceptable to those who had come under the influence of the Greek manner of thought. The Christians take the idea of the all perfect being , the source of all that is true , good and beautiful, from the Greeks and layer it over the idea of the single deity of the Hebrews. The ideas about the qualities of the early Hebrew god when combined ideas about the Greek ideal deity have made for many problems. The Western traditions treat the scriptures as being in some sense divinely inspired or authored and thus, for many in those traditions who are conservative and literalists, they carry the ideas of the early Hebrew deity along with them leading to complications as there arises the need to explain how an all good deity and an all merciful deity can be so cruel and vindictive as in some of the stories in the early books or chapters of the scriptures. The PROBLEM of EVIL does not exist for the old testament deity. That deity is not ALL GOOD and not ALL KNOWING and not ALL POWERFUL. The stories in the bible are filled with passages indicating that the deity of the Hebrews was not an "All Perfect Being".

The problem of evil comes about when the concept of the deity is changed into one in which the being has all good properties at the same time so that it is thought to be ALL GOOD and ALL KNOWING and ALL POWERFUL.

There are several ways to deal with the problem. Process Theology changes the concept of the deity that is ALL GOOD and ALL KNOWING and ALL POWERFUL into a deity that is lacking in one or more of those properties. They do it when they reduce the deity to some finite creature-usually thinking of the deity as being similar to a human being- the concept of the deity that causes the PROBLEM of EVIL is a concept that is not one of a human being or any finite being.

The PROBLEM of EVIL has to do with the concept of the deity including that the deity is ALL GOOD and ALL KNOWING and ALL POWERFUL. It is not a problem caused by the Bible stories. In the bible stories in the first books of the bible. The deity of the old testament is not ALL GOOD. The deity of the old testament-the Hebrews- commits, orders and directs atrocities-many very evil acts. The deity of the old testament is not ALL KNOWING because it creates a being-Lucifer-not knowing that it will do evil. The deity of the old testament creates creates humans-not knowing that they will do evil-disobey. The deity comes upon Adam and Eve to discover what they had done. The deity of the old testament is not ALL POWERFUL because it does not stop or end the existence of Lucifer. The deity of the old testament is not responsible for evil because in the story book the cause of evil is placed with an evil agent-Lucifer-the devil-the dark prince, etc...

Using the bible is not helpful to resolve this problem as there are too many inconsistent passages in the sacred scriptures in the West. To illustrate just take a basic question: " Is evil from God? "

- No the deity is not the cause of evil (Deut 32:4, Ps 19:7-8, 145:9, Mic 7:2, James 1:13).
- Yes the deity is the cause of evil (Isa 45:7, Jer 18:11, Lam 3:38, Ezek 20:25, Amos 3:6).

No the deity is not the cause of evil

- Deuteronomy 32:4, 4 He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he.

- Psalms 19:7-8, 7 The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple. 8 The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes.
- Psalm 145:9 9 The LORD is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made.
- Micah 7:2, 2 The godly have been swept from the land; not one upright man remains. All men lie in wait to shed blood; each hunts his brother with a net.
- James 1:13 13When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone;

YES the deity is cause of all things GOOD and EVIL

- Isaiah 45:7, 7 **I form the light and create darkness, I bring prosperity and create disaster; I, the LORD, do all these things.**
- Jeremiah 18:11, 11 "Now therefore say to the people of Judah and those living in Jerusalem, 'This is what the LORD says: Look! I am preparing a disaster for you and devising a plan against you. So turn from your evil ways, each one of you, and reform your ways and your actions.'
- Lamentations 3:38 38 Is it not from the mouth of the Most High that **both calamities and good things come?**
- Ezekiel 20:25 25 I also gave them over to statutes that were not good and laws they could not live by;
- Amos 3:6 6 When a trumpet sounds in a city, do not the people tremble? When disaster comes to a city, has not the LORD caused it?

So when anyone thinks of the deity as the being of the old bible stories the problem of evil is "solved" by abandoning the concept that creates the problem in the first place. If one thinks of the deity as a parent not knowing what its children will do or not responsible for what its children do or as some being testing humans or not able to prevent evil then the problem is "solved" by abandoning the concept that creates the problem in the first place when the deity is changed from a being with infinitely good properties and powers into a mere human.

The Problem of Evil arises as an attempt to give an account that makes sense as to how an all perfect being could exist at the same time that there exists moral evil. Troubles with a simple belief prompt critical reflection and the desire to use reason to support the belief system. Consideration of the troublesome issues led to Augustine and Aquinas moving beyond the traditions of faith and into philosophical thought and a reliance on reason to interpret and defend key beliefs in the Christian tradition.

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THE NATURE OF EVIL

"Evil" has a wider range of definitions than that for which human or supernatural agents are responsible.

There are two main types of evil:

1. **Moral evil** - This covers the willful acts of human beings (such as murder, rape, etc.)
2. **Natural evil** - This refers to natural disasters (such as famines, floods, etc.)

Of these two types, we may further divide both of them into the following two classes:

1. **Physical evil** - This means bodily pain or mental anguish (fear, illness, grief, war, etc.)
2. **Metaphysical evil** - This refers to such things as imperfection and chance (criminals going unpunished, deformities, etc.)

The problem itself arises because of certain qualities which religious believers grant to God, and the consequences of these given certain observations about the world.

To illustrate these consider three qualities that most religious believers would not want to deny to the deity, the single deity and Supreme Being, the God: absolute goodness (omnibenevolence), absolute power (omnipotence) and absolute knowledge (omniscience). Now, add to this the observation that there is evil in the world. Setting aside for the moment the question of how a good God could create a world with evil in it, ask yourself why such a deity does not do something to help combat such evil. Many theologians and philosophers over the centuries have asked this question and we will now look at some of the answers they have given.

According to the history of this issue and contemporary concerns it is **moral evil** that is the crux of the problem more than **natural evil**. Natural evil may be conceived of as simply part of nature and not evil at all. However, there are those who think

that it may be possible to accept that God accepts moral evil and such evil may have a purpose or explanation consist with the existence of a supreme being but that there could be no good reason for God to have natural evil in the Universe.

There is therefore the argument against the existence of God based on Natural Evil.

Argument:

1) If God exists, then there exists a being who is omniscient, omnipotent, and perfectly good.
2) If there existed a being who were omniscient, omnipotent, and perfectly good, then there would be no natural evil.
3) But there is natural evil.

Conclusion) God does not exist.
READ: the Argument against The Existence of God based on Natural Evil

http://hem.passagen.se/nicb/evil.htm

http://www.vexen.co.uk/religion/theodicy_naturalevil.html

KEY QUESTIONS

Now we focus on the key questions;

1. Is it possible for there to be an All Powerful, All Knowing and All Good deity and for moral evil to exist at the same time?
2. Can the apparent inconsistency be resolved in any manner that preserves all the characteristics of an All Perfect or Supreme Being?
3. Is it necessary to change the idea of the Supreme Being to account for the simultaneous existence of moral evil and a supreme being?
4. Is it necessary to change the idea of the nature of evil to account for the simultaneous existence of moral evil and a supreme being?
5. Does the existence of moral evil lead to the conclusion that there is no deity at all? Does it lead to the conclusion that there is no All Perfect Being?

Signs of a problem

GREEK PHILOSOPHY

In the opening of the dialogue by Plato, PHAEDO , Plato has Socrates recognize that things come in opposing pairs. If there was no pain we would not appreciate being well and pleasure. When applied to the problem of Evil it would mean that if there is to be GOOD there must be EVIL and so whatever is called GOOD must come from the source of all creation and that in turn means that from that source comes EVIL as the necessary counterpart to GOOD. This then means that the Single Supreme Being is not only the creator of GOOD but also of EVIL. How then is the Supreme Being the deity, the creator of all to be considered as all good if the deity created evil as well as the good that there is?

JUDEO-CHRISTIAN TRADITION

If evil is not directly the creation of the deity but comes about through the actions of a fallen angel, LUCIFER, and the weakness of human beings who succumb to temptation to do moral evil then how is it not the result of what the deity has done? If all comes from the deity then would not evil as well as the good come from the deity? Now if EVIL comes from the deity or GOD then how BAD could it be? If EVIL comes from GOD, then how could GOD punish those who do it? If EVIL comes from LUCIFER and from human failings and from temptations, then how could the ALL LOVING and MERCIFUL GOD punish those whom the GOD knew in advance were created by that GOD with those weaknesses and knowing in ADVANCE that they would fail? How could the ALL PERFECT BEING not stop Lucifer, take away the failings, and prevent the temptations? If the causes of evil doing are not stopped and if instead are quite to the contrary actually created by GOD, why would an ALL LOVING God punish those made imperfect by the deity and who GOD knew before they were created would give in to the EVIL that GOD creates, permits and knew in advance would overcome the creatures that GOD made as imperfect?

BIBLE STORIES

Bible stories do not solve the Problem of Evil they make it worse as they are stories from the Hebrews who did not think of the deity as being All Perfect and All Good. The idea of the deity in the early bible stories is not the idea or concept of the deity that

produces the Problem of Evil. The deity of the Hebrews appears not able to place a check on Lucifer. The deity of the Hebrews might not have been thought of as being All Powerful. Thus, the use of the bible to address the Problem of Evil merely introduces troublesome historical elements into the entire matter. If there is a fallen angel responsible for the evil and then the deity is the creator of that angel then why is the deity not respinsible for the evil done by the fallen angel if the deity knew before creating the angel everything that the abgel would do? The Hebrew deity had not the All Knowing characteristic of later thought. So for the Hebrews and their stories there is no problem of evil because they did not have the Concept of the Deity that produces the Problem of Evil. One approach to dealing with the problem and solving it in some sense is to chaneg the idea of the deity (Process Theology) to something closer to the earlier ideas. Take away the All Powerful or the All Knwoing or the All Good character of the deity and there is no problem of evil as there was none until after the Christian era began.

I. THEODICY

Any attempt to make the existence of an All-knowing, All-powerful and All-good or omnibenevolent God consistent with the existence of evil is known as a *Theodicy*. It is an attempt to justify the ways of god to humans. It is as attempt to explain the coexistence of God and Evil.

Now what operates in these attempts to rescue the idea of the existence of a deity from the charge that there can not be a deity if there is moral evil is the very subtle altering of the idea of the deity from that of a supreme and all perfect being to something other than that. All criticisms of these apologists or defenders involve exposing the subtle attempt to convert the idea of the supreme being from one that so perfect as to generate the Problem of Evil in the first place to the idea of the deity as not quite being all perfect or all knowing or all powerful or all good. The Problem of Evil is the result of :

Logical Analysis

The inconsistency in the ideas of an all knowing, all powerful and all good being that is the creator of the universe with the existence of moral evil.

Historical Explanation:

The early Hebrew deity is one that has apparent weaknesses and is not at all perfect in every way. It is jealous and vindictive and unjust. For the Christians the idea of the Hebrew deity was not going to be acceptable to those whom they hoped to convert: those who had come under the influence of the Greek manner of thought, those other than the Hebrews. The Christians take the idea of the all perfect being , the source of all that is true, good and beautiful, from the Greeks and layer it over the idea of the single deity of the Hebrews and the history of that idea as presented in the Hebrew scriptures. The ideas about the qualities of the early Hebrew god when combined ideas about the Greek ideal deity have made for many problems.

Theodicists:

***Augustine*: Humans are free and Humans have fallen because they are as children**

St. Augustine proposed a solution to the problem by blaming it on the Fall of Humanity after the disobedience in the Garden of Eden. From this view, humankind is responsible for evil by being led astray by Satan. This not only absolves the deity, the God, of creating evil but also allows the deity to show the world its love by bringing a form or version of itself into physical form in the presence of the Christ into the world. The Supreme Being, God, is seen as involved in soul making. Humans are growing from bios to zoe: from undeveloped life to divine love and spiritual life. However, the existence of Evil leads to the questioning of the existence of an all loving and all good and powerful deity. The large amount of EVIL is particularly difficult to explain.

Irenaeus **Developmental and Teleological view** God is involved with soul making.

Irenaeus (130-202 AD) thought that the existence of evil actually serves a purpose. From his point of view, evil provides the necessary problems through which we take part in what he calls "soul-making". From this point of view, evil is a means to an end in as much as if it did not exist, there would be no means of spiritual development. However , with this view god is the author of evil and although it has a purpose it challenges the nature of god as being all good.

Irenaeus' view has been put forward in modern times by such philosophers as John Hick (Evil and the God of Love, 1966) and Richard Swinburne. According to this view the pains and sufferings of the world are meant by God to act as a means of producing a truly good person.

However the Russian novelist Fyodor Dostoevsky in The Brothers Karamazov has severely criticized this view . Using human suffering as a means to good is criticized and condemned on the grounds that the suffering of one child can never be justified in

terms of what good results. Again this defense of the deity brings into question the all -good aspect of the deity.

John Hick: **Developmental and Teleological view** God is involved with soul making.

> *Hick's answer involves interpreting the creation story in Genesis in a non-literal fashion. Rather than regarding the story as an account of what has already happened, he suggests that we consider it an account of what is currently taking place. The idea here is that we are an integral part of God's creation. In essence, we have not yet reached the final 'day' of creation. God is still, in a way, creating humanity (using us as tools and as that which is shaped).* ***This earth is seen as a factory for making souls.*** *This creation requires the possibility that we suffer in order to provide incentive for improvement.* ---Michael J. Connelly, Longview Community College

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Hick, John. "Evil and Soul-Making." ***Evil and the God of Love*****. Harper & Rowe, Publishers, Inc., 1966. pp. 253-261.**

Summary by Meghan Ramsay, QCC 2004

In his essay "Evil and Soul-Making," John Hick attempts to justify the problem of evil. It is a theodicy cased on the free will defense. The majority of theodicies that have dominated Western Christendom are Augustinian in nature. According to St. Augustine, God created man without sin and placed him in a paradise free of sin. The decline of man occurred as a result of his weakness in the face of temptation and his misuse of free will. This theory holds that the grace of God will save some of humanity, but at the same time, some of humanity will suffer eternal damnation. Hick refers to this Augustinian Theodicy as the "majority report." However, Hick believes that the Irenean tradition is more plausible.

The Irenean tradition, or the "minority report," as designated by Hick, comes from Irenaeus and the early Greek founders of the Church. It is two centuries older than the Augustinian tradition, and it holds that man was not created as a complete being without sin that proceeded to rebel and fall from grace. Instead, Hick argues, man is in a constant state of creational evolvement. According to the Irenean tradition, man is created in two steps, *Bios* and *Zoe*. The first step, *Bios* is the creation of the physical universe and organic life. This phase continues with the creation of man, an organic being with a personal life who is capable of having a relationship with God. This phase is the creation of man in the *image* of God. The second phase of this creation is man achieving goodness and personal worth. This is the quality of *Zoe* or the attainment of the *likeness* of God. This is what Hick refers to as the "soul-making" process.

Hick's basic argument is that the relationship between God and humankind is a parent/child relationship on a grand scale. For a parent to produce a well-rounded, moral child, there is a two-fold process. First there is the actual conception and birth of the child, which can be compared to the physical creation of man. The second step for a parent is to teach the child the difference between wrong and right and between good and bad. The parent must teach the child how to avoid temptation and live the good life. On a larger scale, man must learn how to live the good life as God sees fit. Since humankind is endowed with free will, this must be a cooperative effort.

Some would argue that God could have just created man in this final, perfected state from the outset. However, Hick argues that doing so would be akin to God creating man as a pet in a cage. Additionally, he argues that such initial perfection would not be nearly as valuable as perfection achieved through trial and error. According to Hick, goodness achieved over a period of time through the trial and tribulation of resisting temptation and sin involves strength and "moral effort." Hick deduces that God would certainly hold this goodness achieved through strength and "moral effort" in higher regard than goodness achieved by doing nothing more than simply being created in a perfect form.

In response to the criticism that a loving God would not create a world full of evil and temptation, Hick once again refers to the parent/child analogy. Even the most loving parent does not indulge his/her child's every whim. The most loving parents do enjoy providing their children pleasures, but at the same time, a loving parent realizes that there are times when a child must be denied immediate pleasure in order to gain greater values, such as "moral integrity, unselfishness, compassion, courage, humour, reverence for the truth, and perhaps above all the capacity for love." Thus, according to Hick, the presence of evil is transcended by its necessity for "soul-making."

Hick claims that it would be impossible for the deity to have created human with free will and yet not with the ability to choose evil. Hick claims that either humans are made free and that leads to moral evil or else they are made without freedom as with robots and that would make it possible to avoid there being any acts of moral evil. It is better that there be free will and so the deity made the universe with free will in it and that leads to the existence of moral evil.

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Madden and Hare: Counter to John Hick

These two philosophers argue against the position of Hick. They claim that Hick commits three fallacies:

1. All or Nothing fallacy- but, there could be an intermediary position between being free and being robots (puppets)
2. It could be worse – but, it could be better
3. Slippery slope(if the world were perfect, humans would need to be robots) – but, the existence of limits is possible (freedom within limits)

They claim that it is possible that there could be a universe created by a deity that could have creatures of free will who do not choose evil. God could have chosen not to permit those humans to be conceived that god knew in advance of their conception would use their free will to choose and to do evil. The deity, God, might permit only those fetuses to develop that creator deity, God, knew in advance would lead to the birth and life of basically good person who would avoid choosing to do evil.

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Madden, Edward H. and Peter H. Hare. "A Critique of Hick's Theodicy." ***Evil and the Concept of God.*** **Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas, 1968. pp. 83-90, 102-103.**

Summary by Meghan Ramsay, QCC 2004

Edward Madden and Peter H. Hare begin by stating three fallacies that are often employed in attempts to solve the Problem of Evil. These fallacies are: "all or nothing," "it could be worse," and "slippery slope." According to Madden and Hare, John Hick uses all three erroneous beliefs adroitly in his free will defense.

In his theodicy, Hick argues that without free will, all people would be nothing more than a "pet animal" in a cage. Hick asserts that God had to create people with the ability to do evil, for otherwise, people would not be able to participate in "soul-making" which is what serves to bring men closer to God. However, Madden and Hare point out that there can't have only been two options available to God. Thus, this is an "all or nothing" argument. Madden and Hare give an analogy of God as a headmaster at a liberal school. At God's school, the freedom of the students is paramount. God does not want to have students who learn only because they fear punishment. Instead, he wants students who take an active role in learning for the love of knowledge. Thus, God declares that there are no rules and no organized classes at his school, and each student will be responsible for his own education. However, simply because strict rules would result in negative consequences does not mean that having no regulation is ideal. It is a false dichotomy to suggest that, just as it is a false dichotomy to assert that God had no other options in creating humans.

Hick also employs this all or nothing fallacy when discussing the "initial epistemic distance" between man and God. According to Hick, God does not reveal much information about "himself" to humans because he does not want to harm the development of people's attitudes towards Him. However, Madden and Hare disagree. They take their headmaster analogy further by stating that this is parallel to God the headmaster never addressing the students, so as to avoid "spoon-feeding" them. Once again Hick utilizes a false dichotomy in asserting that God either must tell all about himself or remain aloof.

Hick then shifts to what Madden and Hare refer to as the "it could be worse" fallacy. Hick argues that some evil is necessary in order for mankind to achieve goodness, and that goodness achieved through trial and error is better than goodness given to man from the outset. Madden and Hare argue, however, that simply because goodness might come from evil, this argument only shows that evil would be even worse if good did not result from it. In essence, the argument really does not show a need for evil. It only shows that it could be worse, there could be no resulting good. However, Madden and Hare point out that this argument ignores the fact that just as easily as it could be worse, it could also be better.

Hick also claims that if God were to begin removing evil, there would be no point at which to stop, unless He removed all evil. Hick argues that if God were to remove all evil, He would be creating a hedonistic paradise, and soul-making would be impossible in such a world. However, this is a slippery slope argument. In effect, Hick asserts that God would have no method to gauge the effect of removing each type of evil. Madden and Hare point out that God could remove evil to the point where there was just enough to justify it as a means to an end of soul making.

Finally, Hick appeals to mystery in his argument. He says that the mystery of why God does what He does also helps to foster soul making. Again, he employs the all or nothing strategy by saying that without the occasional unjust, unwarranted or needless

evil, there would be no sympathy. Madden and Hare note that there are three ways of criticizing this idea. First off, it is possible to have sympathy for those who are suffering as a means to a desired end, such as a husband sympathizing with his wife who is suffering from labor pains. The suffering brings about both sympathy and a desired end. Secondly, even if it is necessary for there to be undue suffering to increase compassion, there needn't be nearly as much unjust suffering as there presently is. A miniscule amount of suffering would do just as well. Finally, unjust suffering may cause compassion, but it also breeds resentment. Madden and Hare argue that it is likely that the negative aspects of resentment would outweigh the positive ones of compassion.

J.L. Mackie: suggested reading: J.L. Mackie and the Problem of Evil

He argues that there is a logical inconsistency with God's existence and Evil at the same time

1. God is omnipotent and omnibeneficent (all good)
2. EVIL exists
3. A good being always eliminates EVIL as far as it can.
4. Therefore, theists are inconsistent

Alvin Plantinga : against ***Mackie***

A modern advocate of Augustine's view can be found in Alvin Plantinga (*God, Freedom and Evil*, 1974) who claimed that for God to have created a being who could only have performed good actions would have been logically impossible. Here are his basic points:

- God may have good reasons for permitting EVIL
- Free Will demands the possibility for EVIL
- God could not make Humans free and guarantee no EVIL (no sin)

TRANS WORLD DEPRAVITY:

- This is the idea that humans sin in all possible worlds or else
- God is not all good or not all powerful
- God can not create a world with moral Good and without moral EVIL

Therefore, every world that God creates must have not only the possibility of evil in it but actual evil as well.

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"The Free Will Defense" by Alvin Plantinga

Summary by Meghan Ramsay (QCC, 2004)

In examining the Problem of Evil, Alvin Plantinga holds that the Free Will Defense is an acceptable method for overcoming the claim that the Problem of Evil negates the existence of God. Plantinga outlines the Free Will Defense as stating, "A world containing creatures who are significantly free (and freely perform more good than evil actions) is more valuable than a world containing no free creatures." Plantinga also states that in order to create creatures that are freely capable of committing morally good acts, He must also create creatures that are simultaneously just as capable of committing morally evil acts. Additionally, God cannot simultaneously give these creatures the freedom to commit evil and yet prevent them from doing so. One objection to the Free Will Defense is that it is possible for beings that are capable of committing evil to never do so. Based upon God's omnipotence, it is possible that a world full of such creatures could exist. Those who object to the Free Will Defense use this line of argument to assert that either God is not wholly good or that God is not omnipotent. Plantinga also offers the argument of Leibniz who stated that since before creation, God had the choice of creating any one of a multitude of worlds, and since the omnipotent and all good God chose to create this world, it must be the best possible world. Plantinga asserts, however, that neither argument is correct, and that even though God is omnipotent, He could not just call into existence "any possible world He pleased." Due to the fact that humans are free to make choices based upon experiences, whether or not humans perform good or evil is ultimately up to the human, not God. Although there are many possible worlds that contain moral good without moral evil, this world does not have to be the best of all possible worlds. Additionally, due to the freedom of action ascribed to humans, God could not create any one of a multitude of worlds, however, He does retain omnipotence.

In response to the claim that god could have created a world containing moral good but no moral evil, Plantinga argues that in creating a world in which God actively causes people to do good, they are no longer free. Plantinga brings about the idea of transworld depravity, and argues that if a person suffers from transworld depravity, God cannot actualize a world in which

that person maintains his/her freedom and yet does no wrong. In order to create a world containing only moral good yet also containing people suffering from transworld depravity, God would have to create people who were significantly free but at the same time would, by virtue of their transworld depravity, at some point commit evil in regards to at least one action in any possible world. Thus, the consequence of creating a world in which these sufferers of transworld depravity commit moral good is creating a world in which these persons commit at least one morally evil act.

Plantinga, Alvin. *God, Freedom, and Evil*. Harper and Row, 1974.

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This view was later criticized by Anthony Flew and J.L.Mackie, who both argue that God *could* have chosen to create good people who still possessed free-will and chose only the good.

Using evil to produce good

Those who argue that the deity is using evil to bring about good and so somehow good produces good have to contend with the following counter argument that establishes that there must be some evil that does not produce the good in any way: that there is a high probability that there exists purely gratuitous moral evil.:

The Evidential Problem of Evil : The inductive argument against the existence of the all perfect deity

William Rowe:

It is possible that there are and have been acts of evil that have not led to any good result whatsoever. Thus, the argument to defend god based on the claim that the deity is using evil for some good purpose is defeated. Based on the **mere possibility of an act of evil, human suffering, that is completely gratuitous.** It would be an act in which a human does an evil act and another human suffers as a result but he act is not witnessed by anyone and both the evil doer and the victim of the evil deed die without communicating it to anyone directly or indirectly. It is possible for such an act to occur and is so then there would be no possibility for it to teach any lesson to anyone. There would be no possibility for it to lead to a greater good.

This is an inductive argument because it is based upon possibility. It defeats the defense of the existence of an all perfect deity that is all good and all powerful and all knowing at the same time.

Rowe's argument states the following "There is, in all probability, at least one instance of suffering that is completely pointless. If there were a God, He would not have allowed any completely pointless instances of suffering. So, it is quite probable that God does not exist. This simple, concise proof makes the existence of God very unlikely granted the fact of pointless suffering in the world. Obviously this argument is valid, but the terms must be clarified to understand the full power of this demonstration. The God that Rowe is referring to is the traditional God of Christian Theism, a being that is omnipotent, omniscient, and wholly benevolent. An instance of pointless suffering would be one that God "could have prevented without thereby losing some greater good" (Rowe 87). Thus, God would be permitting pointless suffering if, by not intervening, an obvious opportunity for some greater good was lost, or an even more horrific evil was to result. He mentions the example of a suffering young fawn: "suppose in some distant forest lightning strikes a dead tree, resulting in a forest fire. In the fire, the fawn is trapped, horribly burned, and lies in terrible agony for several days before death relieves its suffering" (Rowe 88). Now it seems quite evident that "no greater good . . . would have been lost had the fawn's suffering been prevented" (Rowe 88). Therefore, you may conclude that such suffering was, in all probability, pointless. Probability is dependent on the amount of background information and, therefore, one would require omniscience to know the full extent of the above example. To this objection, the atheist may respond in the form of a question: is it reasonable to hold that throughout the entire course of human history, there was not at least one case of pointless suffering? Think of Hitler's butchering of six million Jews during the Second World War. Was not a single one of those deaths pointless, given the others? Think about the Crusades and the slaughtering of innocent women and children by "Christians" who claimed to have permission from God Himself. Is it not eminently reasonable to hold that at least one of these instances of innocent suffering was pointless? To establish the second premise, all that is needed is one such case. -Francesca Sinatra (QCC, 2003)

"Evolution and the Problem of Evil" by Paul Draper

Summary by Meghan Ramsay (QCC, 2004)

Draper, although hopeful that theism is true, points out that there are two problems that may prevent theism from being true. Those two problems are evolution and evil. Draper uses evidential arguments (arguments that are based upon certain known facts) to show that naturalism (denial of any supernatural involvement in creation) is more likely than theism (the idea that a

supernatural being “God” created the world). Draper attempts to show that evolution is more likely to be true on evolution than on theism. He points out that for naturalists, there is a lack of plausible alternatives to evolution, while for the theist, who starts out with such grandiose things as omniscience and omnipotence, anything is possible. Some theists argue that the complex and well ordered evolution of some beings is not possible without divine intervention. Draper gives the example of the human eye. Some theists argue that evolution cannot completely explain exactly how the eye became so incredibly complex. However, Draper points out that no one has yet to offer solid reasons why evolution could not have achieved the complexity seen in the human eye. While Draper admits that there are some gaps in the knowledge that we have regarding evolution, he counters the arguments based upon these gaps by saying that there is no good reason to believe that naturalist solutions to the problems or questions relating to evolution will eventually be found, as many have already been discovered.

Draper then goes on to discuss the pattern of pleasure and pain in conjunction with evolution as an evidential argument for naturalism over theism. Draper points out that there are countless connections between pain, pleasure and reproductive success. He notes that humans certainly find “a warm fire on a cold night” preferable to “lying naked in a snowbank,” and then he connects these instances to reproduction. In order for humans to be successful in reproduction, they must maintain a constant body temperature. Additionally, Draper notes that children enjoy playing with one another, which, he argues is the development of a social skill that heightens one’s chances of future procreation. By pointing out that the blind process of natural selection is what drives evolution and that often a strong trait (such as walking upright) that gives a species reproductive advantages would be furthered even though it may also come with weaker traits (such as back and foot problems), Draper argues that natural selection is much more probable on evolutionary naturalism than on theism. Additionally, if natural selection drives evolution, it is most likely that the evolution of pain and pleasure also arose from natural selection, thus inherently linking pain and pleasure to reproductive success. Draper says that this idea is furthered by our knowledge that many parts of organic systems are methodically conjoined to reproductive success. Draper states that, “the biological goal of reproductive success does not provide an omnipotent omniscient creator with a morally sufficient reason for permitting humans and animals to suffer in the ways they do or for limiting their pleasure to the sorts and amounts we find.” Therefore, Draper concludes, pain and pleasure and their connection to reproduction must be more probable on evolutionary naturalism than on theism. The moral randomness of pleasure and pain (i.e. good persons suffering intense pain and bad persons experiencing great pleasure) is much more likely if the cause of pleasure and pain is related to evolutionary naturalism than to a supernatural God. Although neither naturalism nor theism has been proven to be true or false, Draper argues that the ratio of the probability of naturalism is much greater than the ratio of the probability of theism. Since theism and naturalism are opposite hypotheses, they cannot both be true simultaneously. Therefore, all things considered, evolution and natural selection provides a powerful argument against theism.

Draper, Paul. “Evolution and the Problem of Evil.” *Philosophy of Religion, An Anthology*.

Louis P. Pojman, ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1998.

1. An Atheistic Perspective by Thomas Rauchenstein. CH-3-Documents\ch3- Evident prob of evil.pdf
2. Why Does God Allow "Pointless Suffering"? For a Greater Good? by Luke Wadel http://www.geocities.com/Athens/7273/problemofevil1.html
3. The Problem of Evil and Suffering: Gaining Perspective Dr. Peter E. Payne
4. **God, Evil and Probabilistic Arguments by Paul Pardi**
5. The Evidential Argument from Evil (1998) Nicholas Tattersall http://www.infidels.org/library/modern/nicholas_tattersall/evil.html
6. Reply to Rowe by Michael Bergmann & Daniel Howard-Snyder

An extensive and polemical essay on Theodicy

http://www.sofiatopia.org/equiaeon/theodicy.htm

Evil and the Power of God by C.S. Lewis

C.S. Lewis : The impossibility of God’s doing away with evil is explored by C.S. Lewis

READ: C. S. Lewis and David Hume on the Problem of Evil

Theodicy, the Free Will Defense and the Nature of God in the Presence of Moral Evil

Perhaps the most common theodicy is the so-called free-will argument - very similar to Augustine's argument. God creates humans with free will because that is better (more perfect) than to create them without free will. God who is all perfect must do what is the best. To create humans who would only do good would be to deny them free will. It is free will that is the source of evil

and not the God that created the evil doers.

The argument:

1. Evil is the result of human error
2. Human error results from free-will (the ability to do wrong)
3. If we didn't have free-will we would be robots
4. God prefers a world of free agents to a world of robots
5. Evil is therefore an unfortunate - although not unavoidable outcome - of free-will
6. For God to intervene would be to go take away our free-will
7. Therefore, God is neither responsible for evil nor guilty of neglect for not intervening

Argument against the free will defense:

Consider these cases meant to illustrate that the deity is not removed from responsibility for evil even if humans have free will.

Free Will Defense 1: The deity is not responsible for the evil but people are responsible all by themselves and without the involvement of the deity because they have and use free will to choose evil.

If people do exactly what their deity created them to do then why would they be punished for doing what the creator created them to do? If the creator knows that the fetus will become a child and grow into a mass murderer and the deity proceeds to allow the conception and the birth and the growth of that human being and then allows that being to get the means together and commit the murders then why would the human being be punished for what the creator-deity made that human being to do? If it is the choice of the human to kill was it not the choice of the creator to make the being that will choose to do the evil?

Counter Example Situation 1

Let's say I run a sports and gun shop in a small town. Someone I know, Joe, comes running into the store and wants to but an automatic weapon. Joe is very agitated and angry and he tells me hat he hates all those women across the street in the bakery shop and he is going to teach them a lesson. I tell him that he should not hurt anyone. He says sell me the gun and I do. He tells me he is going to kill those women. I tell him it is wrong to do that and he should not do that. He asks me to sell him the ammunition for the weapon he just bought and I sell it to him. He says he will kill every last one of those women and I say he must not do it. I tell him it is very bad. He asks me to show him how to shoot the weapon and I teach him. I warn him again not to use it to kill people. He goes out of the store and crosses the street and kills everyone of the women.

When the police question me, I tell them the whole story and I point out that it was not my fault because Joe had free will and I warned him and told him not to do it!

Well, most humans would hold me responsible just based on what it was reasonable to think that Joe would do given what Joe said before leaving my store. If I am responsible in part for the killings then what about God who gave Joe life and knew for sure what Joe would do with that life? I only know pretty darn well what he would do with the weapon. God knows for sure and can stop anything. Or else, God does not know or God does not have all power.

Free Will Defense 2: The deity is not responsible for the evil but people are responsible all by themselves and without the involvement of the deity because they have and use free will to choose evil.

Counter Example Situation 2

I ask some human being, say Susan, to baby sit for a group of eight children aged 3 to 7. I ask Susan to watch them for 5 hours. They are playing in the very large ballroom of a mansion. In the ballroom are a large number of toys, electronic games and small rides for children. Some workers had been removing paint from the iron windows and left cans of paint at the far end of the ballroom where the windows are. There is also paint remover, thinners, flammable liquids and a blowtorch they have been using to get the old paint off of the window frames. I instruct Susan to keep the children at the end of the ballroom far away from the painters' materials. I return five hours later to find the mansion on fire, Susan out in front with three of the children. The other children were trapped inside and burned to death. I ask her what happened and she said she stepped out of the ballroom for a break and when she returned it was on fire. I ask her how she could do such a thing and she replies that she only stepped out for five minutes and he warned the children before she did so not to touch the materials at the end of the ballroom near the windows. She told them that it was very dangerous. They touched those things anyway. She claims it was not her fault that she

warned them, that she didn't know what would happen. Now if some human made those claims there are few rational adults who would not think that the person who was left to watch the children was responsible for the harm that came to them. That Susan should have known.

If this is what we would think about Susan, then what should we think about GOD, who is supposed to know everything about the past, present and future and is all powerful as well? Is God responsible for EVIL? If we would hold Susan responsible in part for the harm to the children then even more so we must hold the deity responsible for evil since the deity that is all knowing and all powerful could have and should have stopped it as Susan should have stayed with the children to prevent harm.

Counter Example Situation 3

Now think. If the deity made the humans to do the evil knowing they would choose the evil then is the deity also responsible for that evil? THINK

Suppose a deity with ALL KNOWLEDGE knows the future. The deity says to you and I if we go through door #3 we will produce a child that will murder more than 550 people. We hear what the deity tells us and believe that the deity knows the future and then we go through door #3. The child grows up and kills 550 people.

Would you and I be responsible for those deaths in any way? We might have gone through door#1 or door #2 or door #4 etc... but we chose #3 after knowing what would come if we did so.

Well, if we would be in part responsible so would the deity who knows in advance and then chooses to create or allow to be conceived the killer of 550 people.

Free Will Defense 3: The deity is supposed to be all perfect and all good , all knowing and all powerful at the same time.

- **1) The deity permits evil as a a consequence of creating creatures with free will.**
- **2)There is no way to have creatures with free will and not permit the possibility for a creature actually choosing evil.**
- **3) The deity knows in advance of a creature coming into existence all that the creature will choose and do.**
- **4) This is not a denial of the creature's freedom but only foreknowledge of what the creature will do.**
- **5) If the deity were not to allow for evil and the evil acts it would make puppets/robots of humans.**

Counter Example Situation 3

A manufacturer of automobiles make two different models. The testing of one model prior to sale indicates that it has defects in the brake system likely to cause brake failure, accidents, injuries and deaths. The other model is tested and the results indicate no problems at all. The manufacturer decides to proceed with the production and sale of both models. The model with known faults does have numerous brake failures resulting in many injuries and deaths. The manufacturer is held liable for those injuries and deaths due to prior knowledge of the defect and the likelihood of brake failure resulting in injuries and deaths.

Now if instead of the manufacturer of automobiles the deity is the creator of humans. The deity knows in advance how each human will use free will the deity has given the human. The deity knows in advance which humans will use free will to choose evil. The deity knows in advance which humans will use free will to choose evil. The deity chooses which humans will actually be born and survive and live to do those things he deity knows in advance that they will choose to do of their own free will.

There would be no denial of free will and no making of puppets out of humans if the deity choose that the humans who choose evil instead of good are not born in the first place. Such humans would be conceived but not born, experiencing a spontaneous abortion or miscarriage or were to die soon after birth and before the start of the evil doing. But evidence is that if there is a deity then the deity chooses not to act in this way and so the deity chooses the evil to occur through the actions of the humans that were created by the deity knowing in advance of their actual physical existence that they would choose evil. Thus, the deity is responsible for the evil acts and their consequences. Therefore the deity cannot be all good and all knowing and all powerful at the same time.

The Free Will Defense does not really solve the Problem of Evil for the deity is seen as not being all good because the being is in part responsible for evil.

Free Will Defense 4: The deity is testing humans by giving them free will in order to determine if they will use that free will to do good or to do evil. Those who use free will to choose the good will be rewarded and those who choose evil

will be punished.

If god is giving a test what kind of a being would that make god? If god is all-knowing would god know the results of all such tests before the tests were even administered? If god made humans and made them with free will and knows before they are born how they will use that free will and then goes ahead and makes them be born,

1. where is the freedom of choice?
2. how is god not responsible for what his creatures do?
3. what is the point of any test when the results are known before the test is given?

Counter Example Situation 4 If I knew in advance everything my dog was going to do and then let my dog loose and it bit someone I would be responsible for that harm! Why isn't the deity responsible for what the deity knows its creations will do before they are even created? After all according to the belief system in the Supreme Being that is all-perfect, the deity chooses who to create!!!!!

When you consider that the problem of evil arises for a deity that is all good and all-knowing and all powerful at the same time then this idea of testing/punishing humans presents problems of inconsistency because one or more of the aspects of the deity appear to be incompatible with another. With the testing/punishing explanation and defense the deity is the author of the evil or not an all good or all merciful and all loving being. The testing/punishing explanation and defense would have the deity punishing creatures for failing a test when the outcome was known before the test took place.

Counter Example Situation 5 If an instructor gave an examination to a class and the instructor knew that the materials on the exam had not been covered in the course and that few , if any, students would be able to pass the examination, well what sort of an instructor would that be? Why is not the deity that is all knowing not in the same position as that instructor in terms of fairness and justice? This argument by analogy is offered to defeat the defense of the deity as being all good based on the idea that the deity is using evil to test humans (creatures with free will).

This defense (Evil is part of a Test) does not really solve the Problem of Evil for it challenges the characteristic of an all perfect being being all good and all just.

SUMMATION:

What each of the defenses of the supreme being does is to subtly alter the idea of the Supreme Being by weakening or ignoring one or more of the characteristics of that being that led to or created the inconsistency or contradiction that is termed the "Problem of Evil". In each of these defenses the deity permits or creates evil or is unable or unwilling to reduce or remove evil.

Theodicy Defense or Gambit or Ploy	Weakens or ignores
Humans have Fallen and need to develop	the all powerful nature or the all good nature of the supreme being
Soul Building-	the all powerful nature or the all good nature of the supreme being
Avoiding Robots	the all powerful nature or the all good nature of the supreme being
Testing Humans	the all knowing nature or the all good nature of the supreme being
Using evil for some good purpose	the all good nature of the supreme being

The defenses do not succeed against the criticisms and do not solve the Problem of Evil so that the traditional nature of the Supreme Being is preserved and seen as consistent with the existence of moral evil because they in one form or another rely upon the altering of the idea of the supreme being by either reducing or denying one of its characteristics that is responsible for the problem in the first place.

- Further readings:
- "God, Evil, and Suffering", preprint of a paper by Daniel Howard-Snyder (Western Washington University), in *Reason for the Hope Within*, ed. Michael Murray, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999, 76-115
- Essays, and Reviews of Books, on the Problem of Evil, selected by Jeffrey Lowder (Past President, Internet Infidels, Inc.)

- "The Evidential Argument from Evil", a paper by Nicholas Tattersall, 1998
- "Review of Andrea Weisberger, *Suffering Belief: Evil and the Anglo-American Defence of Theism* (1999)", by Graham Oppy

- "An Atheological Argument from Evil Natural Laws", a preprint of a paper by Quentin Smith (Western Michigan University), in *International Journal for the Philosophy of Religion*, 29 (1991): 159-174.

If the Problem of Evil as it has been approached by the theodicists has not been solved or dealt with in a manner that satisfies critics what other approaches may be taken? The other three options will now be examined.

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II. Transforming the idea of evil

Evil is only a part of the overall good and does not exist in itself

If the deity is all perfect then any universe created by that deity could not be anything less than perfect. This universe that does exist must therefore be the best possible. If this is so and there is what appears to be evil in this universe then that evil is not really evil at all but some necessary part or feature of the best of all possible worlds. Humans do not have the viewpoint of the deity. Humans cannot see the universe as seen by the deity. Humans focus on some aspect of the whole and give it a name "evil" and then think that evil has some existence or fore on its own. When the entire creation is seen by the deity it appears to be beautiful and what humans call evil is seen by the deity as necessary feature of the overall beautiful creation.

Humans cannot get past the human perspective that is finite. Humans are viewing the canvas of a beautiful oil painting. They view the work of art by standing very close and focusing on the dark smudges (dabs of gray and brown and black paint) which they call evil. However, if the viewer would step back the viewer of the painting see the beauty of the work and the dabs of paint previously thought to be ugly or evil would be seen as all part of the beautiful work of art. The problem is that humans cannot step back and view the painting for the view of the deity. So, for humans here is the appearance of the feature that they call evil. From the viewpoint of the deity that which humans call evil is not evil at all but a part of the overall creation.

Gottfried Wilhelm Leibnitz

For this philosopher God allows temporary evil for the greater good and is actually part of the good. This world (universe) created by the all perfect deity would need to be the very best possible world because an all perfect being could not produce anything less than the very best.

World=**Best of All Possible Worlds**

The **evil that appears to humans as part of the best of all possible worlds** is not so evil from the divine view-God's eye view. Evil is not evil from God's view, the infinite view .

1) If God were all-powerful, all-knowing, and all-good, then this world would be the best possible world.

2) But surely this world is not the best possible world.

3) Thus, God is not all-powerful, all-knowing, and all-good.

Leibniz believed that the evidence that the conclusion of this argument was false was simply overwhelming. So, Leibniz needed to look carefully at the two premises in this argument in an attempt to falsify at least one of them. He was by his faith committed to accepting the first premise as true and so he wanted to reject the second. Leibniz held that the second premise was false and that this world is the best of all possible worlds.

Leibniz held that humans can not possibly know how changing certain events in this world would make it any better than it is and has been. Thus, humans can not support the claim that this world is not as good as it can be and in fact the best possible of all worlds. Humans have not an infinite perspective and amount of knowledge-God's view- that would enable them to conclude that this world is not the best possible. If they could have such knowledge they would see how all that is and has been makes for the best possible world that could exists and thus whatever evil does exist is in some sense necessary for the production of the most wonderful, most beautiful world possible.

see further: **Leibniz on the Problem of Evil** in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy

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Selections from *The Theodicy*

G. W. LEIBNITZ

From Gottfried W. Leibnitz, The Philosophical Works of Leibnitz, trans. George M. Duncan, pp. 194-197, 202-204. Published, 1890, by Tuttle, Morehouse & Taylor. In the public domain.

Abridgment of the Argument Reduced to Syllogistic Form

Some intelligent persons have desired that this supplement should be made [to the Theodicy], and I have the more readily yielded to their wishes as in this way I have an opportunity to again remove certain difficulties and to make some observations which were not sufficiently emphasized in the work itself.

I. Objection. Whoever does not choose the best is lacking in power, or in knowledge, or in goodness.

God did not choose the best in creating this world.

Therefore God has been lacking in power, or in knowledge, or in goodness.

Answer. I deny the minor, that is, the second premise of this syllogism: and our opponent proves it by this.

Prosyllogism. Whoever makes things in which there is evil, which could have been made without any evil, or the making of which could have been omitted, does not choose the best.

God has made a world in which there is evil; a world, I say, which could have been made without any evil, or the making of which could have been omitted altogether.

Therefore God has not chosen the best.

Answer. I grant the minor of this prosyllogism; for it must be confessed that there is evil in the world which God has made, and that it was possible to make a world without evil, or even not to create a world at all, for its creation depended on the free will of God; but I deny the major, that is, the first of the two premises of the prosyllogism, and I might content myself with simply demanding its proof; but in order to make the matter clearer, I have wished to justify this denial by showing that the best plan is not always that which seeks to avoid evil, since it may happen *that the evil be accompanied by a greater good*. For example, a general of the army will prefer a great victory with a slight wound to a condition without wound and without victory. We have proved this more fully in the large work by making it clear, by instances taken from mathematics and elsewhere, that an imperfection in the part may be required for a greater perfection in the whole. In this I have followed the opinion of St. Augustine, who has said a hundred times, that God permitted evil in order to bring about good, that is, a greater good; and that of Thomas Aquinas' (in libr. II sent. dist. 32, qu. I, art. 1), that the permitting of evil tends to the good of the universe. I have shown that the ancients called Adam's fall *felix culpa*, a happy sin, because it had been retrieved with immense advantage by the incarnation of the Son of God, who has given to the universe something nobler than anything that ever would have been among creatures except for this. And in order to a clear understanding, I have added, following many good authors, that it was in accordance with order and the general good that God gave to certain creatures the opportunity of exercising their liberty, even when he foresaw that they would turn to evil, but which he could so well rectify; because it was not right that, in order to hinder sin, God should always act in an extraordinary manner.

To overthrow this objection, therefore, it is sufficient to show that a world with evil might be better than a world without evil; but I have gone even farther in the work, and have even proved that this universe must be in reality better than every other possible universe.

II. Objection. If there is more evil than good in intelligent creatures, then there is more evil than good in the whole work of God.

Now, there is more evil than good in intelligent creatures.

Therefore there is more evil than good in the whole work of God.

Answer. I deny the major and the minor of this conditional syllogism. As to the major, I do not admit it at all, because this pretended deduction from a part to the whole, from intelligent creatures to all creatures, supposes tacitly and without proof that creatures destitute of reason cannot enter into comparison nor into account with those which possess it. But why may it not be that the surplus of good in the non-intelligent creatures which fill the world, compensates for, and even incomparably surpasses, the surplus of evil in the rational creatures? It is true that the value of the latter is greater; but, in compensation, the other are beyond comparison the more numerous, and it may be that the proportion of number and of quantity surpasses that of value and of quality.

As to the minor, that is no more to be admitted; that is, it is not at all to be admitted that there is more evil than good in the intelligent creatures. There is no need even of granting that there is more evil than good in the human race, because it is possible, and in fact very probable, that the glory and the perfection of the blessed are incomparably greater than the misery and the imperfection of the damned, and that here the excellence of the total good in the smaller number exceeds the total evil in the greater number. The blessed approach the Divinity, by means of the Divine Mediator, as near as may suit these creatures, and make such progress in good as is impossible for the damned to make in evil, approach as nearly as they may to the nature of demons. God is infinite, and the devil is limited; good may and does advance *ad infinitum*, while evil has its bounds. It is therefore possible, and is credible, that in the comparison of the blessed and the damned, the contrary of that which I have said might happen in the comparison of intelligent and non-intelligent creatures, takes place; namely, it is possible that in the comparison of the happy and the unhappy, the proportion of degree exceeds that of number, and that in the comparison of intelligent and non-intelligent creatures, the proportion of number is greater than that of value. I have the right to suppose that a thing is possible so long as its impossibility is not proved; and indeed that which I have here advanced is more than a supposition.

But in the second place, if I should admit that there is more evil than good in the human race, I have still good grounds for not admitting that there is more evil than good in all intelligent creatures. For there is an inconceivable number of genii, and perhaps of other rational creatures. And an opponent could not prove that in all the City of God, composed as well of genii as of rational animals without number and of an infinity of kinds, evil exceeds good. And although in order to answer an objection, there is no need of proving that a thing is, when its mere possibility suffices; yet, in this work, I have not omitted to show that it is a consequence of the supreme perfection of the Sovereign of the universe, that the kingdom of God be the most perfect of all possible states or governments, and that consequently the little evil there is, is required for the consummation of the immense good which is there found. . . .

VIII. Objection. He who cannot fail to choose the best, is not free. God cannot fail to choose the best.

Hence, God is not free.

Answer. I deny the major of this argument; it is rather true liberty and the most perfect, to be able to use one's free will for the best, and to always exercise this power without ever being turned from it either by external force or by internal passions, the first of which causes slavery of the body, the second, slavery of the soul. There is nothing less servile than to be always led toward the good, and always by one's own inclination, without any constraint and without any displeasure. And to object therefore that God had need of external things, is only a sophism. He created them freely; but having proposed to himself an end, which is to exercise his goodness, wisdom determined him to choose those means best fitted to attain this end. To call this a *need* is to take that term in an unusual sense which frees it from all imperfection, just as when we speak of the wrath of God.

Seneca has somewhere said that God commanded but once but that he obeys always, because he obeys the laws which he willed to prescribe to himself; *semel jussit semper paret*. But he had better have said that God always commands and that he is always obeyed; for in willing, he always follows the inclination of his own nature, and all other things always follow his will. And as this will is always the same, it cannot be said that he obeys only that will which he formerly had. Nevertheless, although his will is always infallible and always tends toward the best, the evil, or the lesser good, which he rejects, does not cease to be possible in itself; otherwise the necessity of the good would be geometrical (so to speak), or metaphysical and altogether absolute; the contingency of things would be destroyed, and there would be no choice. But this sort of necessity, which does not destroy the possibility of the contrary, has this name only by analogy; it becomes effective, not by the pure essence of things, but by that which is outside of them, above them,--namely, by the will of God. This necessity is called moral, because, to the sage, *necessity and what ought to be* are equivalent things; and when it always has its effect, as it really has in the perfect sage, that is, in God, it may be said that it is a happy necessity. The nearer creatures approach to it, the nearer they approach to perfect happiness. Also this kind of necessity is not that which we try to avoid and' which destroys morality, rewards and praise. For that which it brings, does not happen whatever we may do or will, but because we will it well. And a will to which it is natural to choose well, merits praise so much the more; also it carries its reward with it, which is sovereign happiness. And as this constitution of the divine nature gives entire satisfaction to him who possesses it, it is also the best and the most desirable for the creatures who are all dependent on God. If the will of God did not have for a rule the principle of the best, it would either tend toward evil, which would be the worst; or it would be in some way indifferent to good and to evil, and would be guided by chance: but a will which would allow itself always

to act by chance, would not be worth more for the government of the universe than the fortuitous concourse of atoms, without there being any divinity therein. And even if God should abandon himself to chance only in some cases and in a certain way (as he would do, if he did not always work towards the best and if he were capable of preferring a lesser good to a greater, that is, an evil to a good, since that which prevents a greater good is an evil), he would be imperfect, as well as the object of his choice; he would not merit entire confidence; he would act without reason in such a case, and the government of the universe would be like certain games, equally divided between reason and chance. All this proves that this objection which is made against the choice of the best, perverts the notions of the free and of the necessary, and represents to us even the best as evil; to do which is either malicious or ridiculous.

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So, with Leibniz, the moral evil that humans do in some way is part of the good or is necessary for the good and so is not quite evil in an absolute sense but only evil in a relative sense as humans cannot understand how it would be good as it is necessitated by the "good" and contributes to the "good". Somehow from the perspective of the all good and perfect deity the moral evil is part of the beautiful and good creation that is the "best of all possible worlds".

Well there are many who prefer to think of evil as an independent being or separate existence or force. The stories in the myths of many of the world religions present it as such and it is difficult for those from the cultures having those religions to think of evil as something other than an agent or thing in itself. Nevertheless the approach taken by Leibniz and others to the Problem of Evil handles it by dissolving the evil and reconfigures the problem as a human creation -not the actions that would be commonly called "evil" but the idea of "evil " itself. In this view, the ideas of both "good " and "evil" are human creations and they appear generate a conflict in the idea of the all perfect and all good deity with the existence of moral evil. When the nature of the deity and its creation are properly understood that conflict dissolves.

After Leibniz some other philosophers and religious commentators have gone further. For some of them it is an indisputable fact that humans create the idea of the deity after their own characteristics and then further project into the idea of the deity all of the qualities considered as being positive or good and make them into perfections. One of many results is the problem of the inconsistency of the properties of the deity (all good and all powerful and all knowing) with the existence of moral evil. Now in order to resolve or dissolve the conflict one would need to realize that the creation of the concepts of "good" and "evil" by humans does not necessitate the actual existence of paired entity or forces as the stories would have it. Instead when considering the resultant inconsistencies in the projections and stories the resolution of some of them would be to simply hold that there could be such an all perfect deity at the same time as there is moral evil because the moral evil is not really the opposition to the good as a force or entity but is instead a direction away from the "good", however the "good" would be configured or conceived.

In the story book way of explanation it would be that humans cannot understand how the moral evil as part of the grand totality is really part of the "good" and contributes to it. Such inclusions into the "good" and contributions to the "good" are held to be beyond human comprehension and understood only by the deity that has the infinite and complete perspective, viewpoints and capacity to understand. So some hold that moral evil is not evil when understood from the perspective of the deity which is a perspective that is not possible for humans. This position places the issue into the realm of mystery and beyond the realm of reason . This is not acceptable to philosophical inquiry. People, including philosophers, want to understand.

Where to turn next ?

There are those who do not accept that evil is not a thing itself. They cannot accept that evil is not to be thought of a evil but as another form of the good. If the deity cannot be all perfect and moral evil exist at the same time and if the idea of evil is not to be removed by transforming it into a form of the good then what else is to be done to solve this Problem of Evil? There are an increasing number of people who are looking once again at the very idea of the deity and think that perhaps the idea is the source of the problem. They would make adjustments in that idea. In the next section Process Theology and Process Philosophy will be examined.

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III. PROCESS THEOLOGY

There is an approach to the problem of evil which changes the concept of the deity. This approach has found more people willing to consider it and some to accept it in a post modern world. The concept of the deity is not in conformity to the dogmas of the established religions of the West. There are theologians in the religious traditions of the West who are willing to consider and

some even accept that the traditional notion of the deity as a Supreme Being and an All Perfect being may not be the conception that is most consistent with the demands of reasoning.

Although the idea can be traced back to the Greek philosopher Heraclitus (lived around 500 BC), the idea again became popular in the nineteenth century with the advent of the theory of evolution. The idea influence both philosophers and theologians. One group of such theologians is in a tradition of thought known as Process Philosophy. Associated with this approach are philosophers such as Alfred North Whitehead and Charles Hartshorne. Process philosophy and Open Theism--From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.

- Process theology is a school of thought influenced by the metaphysical process philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead (1861–1947).
- Open theism, a theological movement that began in the 1990s, is similar, but not identical, to Process theology.

In both views, God is not omnipotent in the classical sense of a coercive being. Reality is not made up of material substances that endure through time, but serially-ordered events, which are experiential in nature. The universe is characterized by process and change carried out by the agents of free will. Self-determination characterizes everything in the universe, not just human beings. God and creatures co-create. God cannot force anything to happen, but rather only influence the exercise of this universal free will by offering possibilities. See the entries on Process theology, Panentheism, and Open theism.

Process theology--From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.

Process theology (also known as Neoclassical theology) is a school of thought influenced by the metaphysical process philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead (1861 - 1947).

The concepts of process theology include:

God is not omnipotent in the sense of being coercive. The divine has a power of persuasion rather than force. Process theologians have often seen the classical doctrine of omnipotence as involving coercion (arguably mistakenly), and themselves claim something more restricted than the classical doctrine.

Reality is not made up of material substances that endure through time, but serially-ordered events, which are experiential in nature.

The universe is characterized by process and change carried out by the agents of free will. Self-determination characterizes everything in the universe, not just human beings. God cannot force anything to happen, but rather only influence the exercise of this universal free will by offering possibilities.

God contains the universe but is not identical with it (panentheism)

Because God contains a changing universe, God is changeable (that is to say, God is affected by the actions that take place in the universe) over the course of time. However, the abstract elements of God (goodness, wisdom, etc.) remain eternally solid.

People do not experience a subjective (or personal) immortality, but they do have an objective immortality in that their experiences live on forever in God, who contains all that was.

Dipolar theism, or the idea that our idea of a perfect God cannot be limited to a particular set of characteristics, because perfection can be embodied in opposite characteristics; For instance, for God to be perfect, he cannot have absolute control over all beings, because then he would not be as good as a being who moved by persuasion, rather than brute force. Thus, for God to be perfect, he must be both powerful and leave other beings some power to resist his persuasion.

The original ideas of process theology were developed by Charles Hartshorne (1897-2000), and were later expounded upon by John B. Cobb and David Ray Griffin.

Process theology soon influenced a number of Jewish theologians including British philosopher Samuel Alexander (1859-1938), and Rabbis Max Kaddushin, Milton Steinberg and Levi A. Olan, Harry Slominsky and to a lesser degree, Abraham Joshua Heschel. Today some rabbis who advocate some form of process theology include Donald B. Rossoff, William E. Kaufman, Harold Kushner, Anton Laytner, Gilbert S. Rosenthal, Lawrence Troster and Nahum Ward.

Alan Anderson and Deb Whitehouse have attempted to integrate process theology with the New Thought variant of Christianity.

Thomas Jay Oord integrates process theology with evangelical, openness, and Wesleyan theologies.

In their view the deity or "god' is seen less as an entity than as a process. The reality of the deity has not been fixed and the being is still developing. The deity and its creations have a bipolar nature. All existent entities have a mental pole or nature and a physical pole or nature as well.

For these philosophers traditional theism does not work, particularly when considering the discoveries of modern physics, so they conclude that a new concept of God, is needed along with the view of the world we experience .

As they see it there are a number of problems with traditional theism

- God's determination of the future (or knowledge of it) conflicts with human freedom
- Infinite goodness is incompatible with evil
- Problems with a spiritual being as the cause of anything material
- Science and the Theory of Evolution has proven the account in Genesis wrong
- Creation of the entire universe from nothingness (*ex nihilo)* is incoherent because it is thought to be metaphysically
- impossible to get something from nothing
- "beginning of time" is a self-contradictory notion
- God's consciousness cannot change if it is of all infinity at once - but consciousness must change
- Why would a deity want its creations to do anything if doing so does not bring about any change in an eternal deity?

The principle problem is that as the traditional concept of God is considered as incoherent or beset with problems, the traditional conception of deity has led to atheism: first the dualistic nature of the concept of god led to a materialistic science and secondly, there was no longer room for God or divine causation.

Dualism is the view that humans are composed of matter or physical substance (body) and spiritual substance (soul) . But where is the soul to be located in the dualist view? Is the soul in the body, or is the body in the soul? How do two such dissimilar substances relate to one another or interact? Materialism is the view that only matter exists - no non-physical substances exist. Thus, if the non-physical or spiritual mind cannot influence the body (as there is no mind located in the physical body), then neither could a spiritual entity or deity (god) influence the material world. There is also no way to explain how the physical universe or world could be in a spiritual being or entity such as a deity or god.

With materialism our knowledge is limited to what is empirically verifiable, what we can detect with our senses, perhaps aided by physical devices and mathematical analyses. The non-physical or spiritual realm is not available to physical detection and so all claims about spiritual beings are beyond verification because they cannot be empirically detected or proven. We cannot sense the deity (god) and so for materialism there is no such being.

So the metaphysical traditions of dualism and monism-materialism each present significant problems for the traditional conception of a deity.

With Process Metaphysics there is a different view of what is real. There are no "substances" or static independent realities. Instead, there are "actual entities" seen as a dynamic collection of events. With this view because all is in causal motion, there is also creativity. There are in addition to the actual entities "eternal objects" –patterns of events which permeate all reality. Some philosophers called these the "universals". Within the Process view nature itself is comprised of creative, experiential events.

So how is the deity viewed by Process Theology? The deity is thought of as the everlasting eternal entity. The "god" is a dynamic collection of events, the pattern of which permeates all of reality.

How does such a deity enable the Process Theologians to respond to the Problem of Evil? Well to begin with the eternal process can only "create" a world with multiple finite freedom and any world with multiple finite freedom must contain the possibility of evil. While no particular evil is necessary, the possibility of there being some evil is necessary. The deity can influence all events, but only as persuasion. Unfortunately in this view humans suffer more, because there are more possibilities open to them.

The traditional concept of the deity is further altered in that when considering the idea of a god's Omniscience in the Process view the deity (god) does not know the future. Since all events exercise some self-determination, the future is not knowable (in principle). However, once something is, then God can know it. How does this change our concept of God? The Process idea of the deity is not one of an all perfect being that is all knowing and all powerful and detached from the physical universe existing in an eternal spiritual realm. Instead the deity is seen as existing both within and beyond the physical universe. This is Panentheism. The deity of process philosophy is viewed a partly in the creation and partly beyond or outside of its creation. There is a relation

of the creator to the creation. It is one of cooperation. The deity attempts to entice the creations to work with the deity but the creations (humans) cannot be forced to do so. The deity acts on the creations through the attraction of its values. The deity can influence the conscious creations but does not directly act upon them and does not force cooperation or compliance.

Process Philosophy is now most commonly associated with the English philosopher, Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947), and his book *Process and Reality: an Essay in Cosmology* (1929) is considered one of the most important expositions of process philosophy.

The main application of Whitehead's position was put forward by his pupil, the American philosopher Charles Hartshorne (1897-1999), whose main works include *The Divine Relativity* (1948) and *The Logic of Perfection* (1962).

http://www.meta-library.net/ghc-hist/proce1-frame.html

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Two particularly good works on Process Theology are these:

Process Theology by John B. Cobb, Jr. (ENTIRE BOOK) An outline of Process Theology, written by one of its creators.

What Is Process Theology? by Robert B. Mellert (ENTIRE BOOK) Dr. Meller writes about Whiteheadian thought, without the jargon and technical intricacies, so that the lay person might have better understanding of the thinking of the founder of process philosophy.

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Consider this manifestation of the reworking of the idea of the deity away from the traditional and toward the post modern by the Roman Catholic priest who is head of the Vatican Observatory is a trained scientist. Dr George Coyne has spoken and written about the relation of Religion to Science. He has expressed his view that there need not be a conflict of religious belief with scientific findings. In the controversy concerning Intelligent Design and Evolution Dr. Coyne has expressed these views concerning the nature of the deity.

" Religious believers who respect the results of modern science must move away from the notion of a God who made the universe as a watch that ticks along regularly. God should be seen more as a parent or one who speaks encouraging and sustaining words. Scripture is very rich in these thoughts. It presents a God who gets angry , who disciplines, a God who nurtures the universe. The universe has a certain vitality like a child does. It has the ability to respond to words of endearment and encouragement...Words that give life arte richer than mere commands of information. In such ways does God deal with the universe. I claim that Intelligent Design diminishes God , makes her/him a designer rather than a lover. " From "The Pope's Astronomer" in New York Daily News, December 26, 2005, p. 33.

This sort of a deity can coexist with evil and work in subtle ways to counter it through the actions of those who would do such deeds as would be called evil.

IV. ATHEISM

There is no Problem of Evil if there is no deity, let alone an all perfect deity. For those who hold that every attempt at proving that there is a deity of any kind have failed because they are not psychologically convincing or logically compelling there is no Problem of Evil. For such thinkers the only conclusion that can be reached in light of the absence of evidence and logical compulsion would be atheism- to believe that there are no deities of any kind. For some thinkers , such as Michael Scriven, even agnosticism is not a legitimate position.

1. Antony Flew, *The Presumption of Atheism* (London: Pemberton, 1976).
2. Antony Flew, "The Presumption of Atheism" in *God, Freedom, and Immortality* (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus, 1984);
3. Norwood Russell Hanson, "What I Don't Believe" in *What I Do Not Believe and Other Essays* (ed. Stephen Toulmin and Harry W. Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel, 1971)
4. Michael Martin, *The Gap in Theistic Arguments* (1997)
5. Michael Scriven, *Primary Philosophy* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966).

Other arguments against the existence of an all perfect deity or any deity:

http://freethought.freeservers.com/library/atheism.html

http://www.vexen.co.uk/religion/rm.html

ARGUMENT AGAINST ATHEISM

The argument against atheism are the arguments in support of there being a deity and even a supreme being: a greatest conceivable being. (See the previous sections for those arguments.)

See also on the Problem of Evil ==========

Proceed to the next section for a summary view of all the arguments for and against the existence of GOD.

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6.2.12: Summary of Arguments

In the end what can be made of all the proofs and arguments for and against the existence of god. It appears that each and every one of them has strong points and weak points as well. It appears as if no one argument is definitive. No one argument is powerful enough to convince everyone to accept it.

Bertrand Russell's Critique of all the Arguments based upon reason

JJC Smart's critique of all the arguments:

What should be the position of a rational person in the absence of convincing argumentation? Finally, just what good are the proofs?

What should be the position of a rational person in the absence of convincing argumentation? Michael Scriven offer his answer.

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"The Presumption of Atheism" by Michael Scriven

Summary by Meghan Ramsay (QCC, 2004)

> Scriven asserts that normally, the word faith is interchangeable with the word confidence, and that confidence and reason must go hand in hand. For instance, we have faith in a person because we have reason to be confident. Normally, if we have faith (confidence) in something without reason to, the results can lead to calamity. However, he points out that when it comes to religious beliefs, faith is looked upon as a substitute for reason rather than something that should have its foundation in reason. Scriven argues that faith alone is not an adequate way to prove the truth of beliefs. Doing so, he asserts, is like saying that you won a game just by playing and by referring to playing as "winning." Simply because you call it winning doesn't mean that you won. He goes on to say that in order to prove something that one has faith in, s/he must provide evidence that justifies the belief. In doing so, one would no longer need to believe based upon faith, as s/he would have solid proof. Scriven also argues that the mere possibility that a person with faith in religious beliefs might turn out to be correct does not mean that the beliefs are automatically true. He also points out that mere agreement is not enough to prove that a belief is true, as the agreement of either religious persons or atheists could very well be a shared mistake. Unlike scientific beliefs which are constantly verified by our daily experiences, religious beliefs are not repeatedly verified by constant, common religious experiences. In fact, he argues, many fundamental religious beliefs vary widely between various denominations and are open to much criticism by others. Scriven points out that the criteria for religious truth must be connected with our everyday truths, or else these religious criteria for truths do not have any connection with our lives. Therefore, they would prove completely useless as a method for explanation of our world or guidance for our lives.
>
> Scriven argues that if there are no arguments that point to even a slight chance of the existence of God, the only alternative is atheism. Scriven uses the analogy of the belief in Santa Clause to illustrate his point. When we are children, we find it plausible to believe in Santa Clause. However, as we grow older we realize that there is not the least bit of evidence in favor of the possibility of his existence. We do not, however, attempt to prove the inexistence of Santa. Instead we simply come to realize that there is not the slightest reason to believe in his existence. In fact, belief in his supernatural powers goes directly against the evidence. Thus, the proper alternative to belief in Santa is disbelief rather than deferment of belief.
>
> Scriven maintains that beliefs are either well founded ("there is evidence which is best explained by this claim), provable ("the evidence is indubitable and the claim is very clearly required), wholly unfounded or unsupported ("there is no evidence for it and no general considerations in its favor"), or disprovable ("it implies that something would be the case that definitely is not the case"). He asserts that it is ridiculous to believe in either a disproved belief or a wholly unfounded one. Additionally, he argues that it is irrational to treat such a wholly unfounded belief as one that merits serious consideration. Although a claim for which there is some support cannot be dismissed, but without undoubted evidence such a claim cannot be wholly believed either. In order for one to maintain agnosticism, the belief must not be provable or disprovable. However, since there is not even a slight bit of evidence to prove the existence of a supernatural being, one cannot accept agnosticism. Scriven argues that regardless of how many supposed proofs for

the existence of a God exists, if they are all defective, they are worthless. Additionally, Scriven points out that although the various proofs for the existence of God attempt to support each other, one must take a closer look. He argues that in reality, these varied proofs are often referring to many different entities who seemingly share the same name. In order for these supposedly connected proofs to work, there must also be proof that they each refer to the same entity, which monotheism does not provide.

Scriven, Michael. ***Primary Philosophy***. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966.

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If one accepts that the burden of proof is on the person making the positive claim that X does exist then that burden has not been met by any of the arguments developed over the centuries to provide a compelling and convincing case that there is a supernatural being with supernatural powers, etc...

If there is an appeal to science then can science be used to find a deity?

Has Science Found God? By Victor J. Stenger The following article is from Free Inquiry magazine, Volume 19, Number 1.

Can science be used to disprove that there is a deity?

Can Science Prove that God Does Not Exist? by Theodore Schick, Jr. The following article is from Free Inquiry magazine, Volume 21, Number 1

For those who arrive at beliefs based on reason and evidence many would argue that such humans can not conclude and hold the position that there is a supernatural being or deity.

So then and finally , just what good are the proofs? Well, concerning these proofs it has been said that:

- Believers do not need them
- Unbelievers will not heed them

The following Philosophers have offered these views.

Stephen Cahn has noted of the arguments or proofs for the existence of a deity:

- they are irrelevant to believers and non-believers
- morality can exist without a belief in or a proof of God's existence
- they are of use to philosophers

S.T. Davis has made these points about the arguments:

1. the proofs do not succeed
2. Proofs are unpersuasive to skeptics
3. Proofs are irrelevant to believers
4. The "God" of the proofs is not the "God" of the faithful: it is a philosophical abstraction
5. Proofs deny divine transcendence

Paul Tillich has observed that the "god" of the proofs is a being similar to other beings and conceived of within the experience of humans. The "god" of the proofs is not the "Ground of Being"

So then in the end just what good are the proofs? What is their value?

These arguments or proofs are philosophically and religiously valuable. They have several benefits (purposes):

Theists can make use of them and develop their rational faculties
Belief in a deity is shown to be rational in as much as such a being is logically possible
They help to confirm faith in a deity for those who already had a belief in a deity.

So in the end the proofs remain optional for theists!!! Most believe or disbelieve not due to any rational exercise but due to experiences!! It is not the rational or logical arguments that persuade people to believe. Most do so because of experiences they have had that they believe support them in their faith or have led them to their faith in a deity or because of experiences when growing through which they learned of a certain way of viewing the world and their existence and place within the world. They know of no other and do not want to seriously examine alternative views. They have been brought up in a belief system that affords them an identity and a sense of belonging to a group and a sense of comfort in the face of uncertainty and adversity. They believe because they believe and they believe because it provides them with a hope.

It is significant to note that most believers do not believe in any orthodox notions of a deity within their religious tradition but they depart form the tradition in both the conception of the supernatural and in many other ways while claiming to remain within the tradition. Many will claim to believe in a deity but will have quite different views of what that deity has as characteristics. Some will even claim that all conceptions of a single deity are true no matter how inconsistent or contradictory they may be and at the same time claim to be monotheists. The average religious believer appears less concerned with reason and logic than with a religious faith needed for hope. Average believers in a deity are not theologians nor educated in theology nor even in the richness of their own religious traditions.

If belief is to be based on logic and reasoning and evidence then there is little to compel people to accept the conclusion that there is a supernatural being of any type at all. Using the Burden of Proof principle the only acceptable position with regard to a supernatural deity would be atheism. If the concept of deity were to be altered to identify it with the existence and processes of the universe itself then that would be pantheism and as such not the conclusion being argued in all cases of the traditional arguments covered in this text. Such a concept is in keeping with the use of the word "god" by naturalists such as Einstein. It is not a deity of the western religions nor a personal deity nor a deity that is aware of humans or that cares about any events.

What then is the basis for belief in supernatural beings and will such beliefs continue? See further Final Thoughts on Religion.

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6.2.13: Religious Language and Worldviews

Introduction

The relationship of religious faith to reason is a very complex issue. It is also one of the most important issues in Philosophy of Religion and an issue that focuses on the core of the religious phenomena. There are several possible views. In the course of examining religious phenomena, specifically religious faith, with critical analysis there arise several different possible explanations for what religious language is and what it is meant to convey. The relation of reason to faith is a matter of the relation of religious language through which the religious faith is described and the faculties of reasoning and critical analysis. To explore this issue is to examine or search for the very core of religion itself!

The Questions

• Are religious people to be expected to believe in things that make no sense?
• Are religious people expected to believe in things being true which are impossible?
• Are religious people to be expected to believe in contradictory reports all being true at the same time?
• What exactly is the relation of Religious Faith to Reasoning?
• Are Faith and Reason compatible or not?
• What is going on when religious people express their belief in unbelievable events or claims?

World Views and Conceptual Frameworks

In order to examine these issues and to enter into a serious dialogue with others who have considered these questions it is important to understand the meaning of certain important concepts that become involved in the ongoing discussion.

Since the issues involve the basic ways in which people experience and think about their world the very concept of a basic and global perspective on life and experience must be examined. What is it? Where does it come from? How does it function? What is its importance?

What is the relation of Reason to Faith? Can or must a set of religious beliefs be rationally examined and understood? Must they be consistent and coherent, make sense and be verifiable?

Since the issues involved with examining sets of religious beliefs and they often contain or constitute the basic ways in which people experience and think about their world, the very concept of a basic and global perspective on life and experience must be examined. What is it? Where does it come from? How does it function? What is its importance?

As each person interacts with others in a given environment they learn not only about things, (their names and features) but they learn from others the basic framework in which it is believed that those things are set. People learn a number of basic ideas through the very language that they learn to speak. These ideas are imbedded in the language itself. As long as all the users of the

language use it in a similar fashion there is little reason for any one of them to begin to think about the underlying assumptions or basic ideas that are imbedded in that language.

The use of ordinary language to express religious ideas about what is most important or most basic often leads others to begin the examination of the imbedded assumptions of ordinary language itself.

For example, when people grow up hearing and speaking about such things as: having a "mind", "losing my mind", "what's on your mind?", "are you out of your mind?"

The result is that people in that culture that uses language this way have a belief that humans have something called a "mind" and that it is important and may be occupying a space in their body but is not part of it. These ideas about the existence and nature of the mind are imbedded in the language. There is not a sufficient amount of evidence to actually support these ideas and the evidence can be interpreted differently depending on whether or not one begins the examination of the evidence already with the belief in the existence of the mind.

In order to examine these issues and to enter into a serious dialogue with others who have considered these questions it is important to understand the meaning of certain important concepts that become involved in the ongoing discussion.

Worldview
Conceptual Framework
Blik
Linguistic Framework
Form of Life or Language Games
Basic Beliefs- Foundational Beliefs
Evidentialist Position on Basic Belief Systems
Coherentist Position on Basic Belief Systems

Worldview

People hold different views of various matters. The difference in those views is of different orders. Two or more people can view the same event from different physical perspectives or with different attitudes towards what they have viewed. Over and above those differences, people can view matters with very different ideas about what things mean what is valued, and what it takes to prove something, even what constitutes reality. When people share a common set of basic beliefs about what is real, true, known, valued and how one comes to know things then they share in what is known as a worldview.

Conceptual Framework

This is a set of ideas which establish a manner of viewing either all of reality or some well-defined portion of it. For example, physicists may view events using the framework of quantum mechanics or that of relativity theory. Their findings and explanations will differ accordingly.

Blik

A set of profoundly unfalsifiable assumptions that govern all of a person's other beliefs.

Each person has such bliks and no one can escape having them. Some claim that these bliks can not be subjected to rational scrutiny. Others claim that they can and should be appraised rationally; that a gradual accumulation of evidence and reasoning can count against a blik and lead to its abandonment. For example, someone who believes in alien visitations to earth and government conspiracies to cover them up will experience official government reports and independent investigations of such phenomena and claims much differently from someone who does not hold those beliefs concerning extraterrestrials and government officials. Bliks are a " belief which is strongly held, in spite of evidence to the contrary." Bliks are "views that avoid debates." ***R.M Hare***

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Bliks by Kelly Dorsey (NCC, 2006)

Bliks are beliefs that are strongly held, in spite of evidence to the contrary. These bliks(beliefs) become the basis for other beliefs. It was thought that that if a skeptic were to present data to a believer in opposition of that person's blik, the believer would give up that blik. However, due to the fact that bliks are so foundational, the believer will come up with a "rationalization" for the discrepancy rather than to give up on their conviction. "A blik is not an assertion, not a concept, not a system of thought. It is what underlies the possibility of any kind of assertion about facts and their meanings. Hare writes: "Differences between bliks about the world cannot be settled by observation of what happens to the world. . . . It is by our bliks that we decide what is and what is not an explanation." Furthermore, because bliks are a basis for self-involving language, we care very deeply about our religious assertions. It becomes very important to have the right blik.(R. M. Hare in Antony Flew and Alasdair MacIntyre, eds., New Essays in Philosophical Theology, pp. 100-101.)"

Hare also points out that people may agree about the facts and differ intensely about the interpretation: "The facts that religious discourse deals with are perfectly ordinary empirical facts like what happens when you pray; but we are tempted to call them supernatural facts because our way of living is organized round them; they have for us value, relevance, importance, which they would not have if we were atheists" (Basil Mitchell, ed., Faith and Logic [London: George Allen & Unwin, 1957], pp. 189-90.)

READ: **The Language Gap and God: Religious Language and Christian Education by Randolph Crump Miller** Published by Pilgrim Press, Philadelphia and Boston, 1970. This material was prepared for Religion Online by Ted and Winnie Brock.

Another way of viewing bliks is to imagine them as mental filters. Information will pass through filtration allowing fragments of reality be accepted, while other portions of reality which conflict with their blik will be sifted out.

"Hare says religious people have a religious blik. Once you accept the religious blik, you have a brand-new way of looking at the world. Your frame of reference is radically altered, and with it, your evidentiary standards. Suddenly all sorts of things that previously did not count as evidence for God begin to count. Your evidentiary filter becomes much more porous. The existence of God becomes so obvious that nothing can falsify it."

READ: The Problem of Religious Language by Sandra LaFave of West Valley College

An example of a common religious blik shared by people of the Western religions is the belief in Creationism. No matter what evidence is provided in support of the Theory of Evolution, including human remains that predate the supposed creation of Earth, their blik remains unscathed. The reason for this is because if they discredit their blik, then other aspects of the religion might also become discredited. Creating reasons for the inconsistencies are a defense mechanism in order to preserve their way of life and possibly their mental health. If in fact the evidence against their blik was excepted by them and they did disregard that belief, a domino effect could take place. In the end the believers are left confused. If something they held as a basic truth was disproved, then the foundation for all their truths could be shaken. Bliks effect they way a person perceives the world and therefore are subconsciously protected by the believer.

Bilks also are a catalyst for bringing people together. Those who own the same bliks seek each other out in order to support their belief. The more people who believe something, the more credible the belief becomes to others. This insures that certain religious bliks will be passed down to future generations.

Linguistic Framework

Wittgenstein has observed that the limits of my language are the limits of my world. If a person does not have the words with

which to think of something then it may be impossible for that person to think that the object of that thought even exists. On the other hand a person may live in a culture that has many words with which to think of things and so that person has more objects in the world than those people from cultures without the words. For example, Eskimos have many more words for "snow" than do other peoples. They experience snow differently. For them there are a far greater number of different forms of snow than the non-Eskimo experiences. Chinese languages use gerunds (action words) for nouns. Their view of reality is one which has a much greater amount of activity in it and less isolation of objects from one another than those people who are not raised with Chinese as their first or basic language.

Form of Life or Language Games

Wittgenstein has observed that humans enter into different uses of language in which the words take on different meanings. There are in life different **situations or contexts** in which the language usage and meaning may vary and these are **repeatable and organized**. They are referred to as **language games** or **forms of life**. A person could enter into several different language games during a lifetime. For example, there is the ordinary form of life and then the sports form of life. There is the scientific form of life and language game and there is the religious form of life and language game. To "steal" is wrong ordinarily but to "steal" a base is acceptable and commendable in baseball and to "steal" the opponent's game plan or signals is acceptable in basketball or football. To " kill" one's opponent means one thing on the streets and another in an athletic contest.

READ this on Wittgenstein's Fideism

Basic Beliefs- Foundational Beliefs

Whether it be religion or science or athletics or commerce there are certain basic beliefs upon which an entire set of ideas are built or constructed or rest. These basic ideas are not tested for their truthfulness or accuracy. They are not verified. They are not capable of being verified. Yet, the entire system of ideas rests upon them. For example, in science the idea of **uniformity of nature** is a "given" or basic idea and so is the very existence of an **external universe** that is separate and apart from the knower or experiencer. Likewise the process of reasoning known as **Induction** is accepted as a form of reasoning and verification. Yet there are no "proofs" that such ideas are "true". Foundational beliefs are a "given."

READ this on Reformed Epistemology for some notion of the Basic or Foundational Beliefs

Reformed Epistemology

Evidentialist Position on Basic Belief Systems

Some theorists hold that any and all basic belief systems must be and are subject to a method of verification that utilizes physical evidence and phenomenal evidence. This requires that there be physical events, objects and experiences that confirm the basic beliefs or at least a substantial number of them.

READ this on Evidentialism **The Rejection of Enlightenment Evidentialism**

Coherentist Position on Basic Belief Systems

In this view the basic belief systems can not be verified or confirmed using actual evidence. It is enough for the believers to subject their belief systems to a rational examination utilizing the criteria of coherency. What is required for a believer is that the basic ideas be consistent with one another and make sense in reference to one another.

IV. Relationship of Faith to Reason

There are several possible views of the relationship of Faith to Reason. They are:

A. **Commensurable**

It is rational to believe in God and spirits and other religious claims. Reason and Faith are compatible with one another as is Science and Religion because there is but one truth.

This is the position of the single largest religious group on earth in 2004: the Roman Catholics and has been theirs for some time. It was clearly offered by Thomas Aquinas and has recently been re affirmed by Pope John Paul II (1998)

Compatible (***Aquinas***)

The basic religious beliefs are compatible with reason. There are rational supports for those beliefs. Other beliefs may be strictly matters of faith resting upon the basic beliefs.

For more detail: READ : On faith and reason

Complete Harmony (***Kant***)

> Religious belief and Reason are in complete harmony with one another.

B. Incommensurable

It is NOT rational to believe in God, spirits and other religious claims.

1. Irrational (***Hume, Kierkegaard***)

Faith is opposed to reason and is firmly in the realm of the irrational.

2.Transrational (***Calvin, Barth***)

Religious faith is over and above reason and is not to be subject to criteria generally used by reasoning beings. To use reason on matters of faith is not only inappropriate but irreverent and faithless.

For many of those who hold the transrational position religious faith may be rested upon revelation which is self-authenticating.

The relation of Reason to Faith and Religious Language Use

Logical Positivists came up with a principle that states that a statement or claim has meaning if and only if it can be proved or falsified empirically- with testing. With this principle some have attempted to totally disprove the whole of religion claiming that religious languages is devoid of meaning because it is incapable of empirical verification or falsification. But consider some points that are raised in a famous symposium. It was titled A "Symposium on Theology and Falsification," and the participants were Antony Flew, R. M. Hare and Basil Mitchell.

READ this summary of the Symposium on Theology and Falsification by Allen Stairs

Antony Flew

Antony Flew maintains that serious truth claims must be capable of rational scrutiny. For such claims to be meaningful there must exist conditions that would count against the claim being true. This is to claim that the statement must be capable of being falsified. This is known as falsifiability. If there are no conditions that would falsify the claim then for Flew the claim is meaningless and belief in it is not rational. Thus, Flew presents religious beliefs as resting upon meaningless claims because those claims can not be falsified. Anthony Flew argued this point in the Parable of the Garden by John Wisdom. Flew presented, in an essay he titled `Gods', written in 1944, that there are two men- a man who believes a gardener visits the garden unseen and unheard, giving order and life to the garden, and another man who doesn't believe in the gardener he, or any other person, has never seen. Anthony Flew takes the position of the skeptic to illustrate his point. How, exactly, does an invisible, intangible gardener differ from no gardener at all? His other argument against religious language was religious believers will let nothing count against their beliefs then they cannot be proved because they cannot be falsified.

READ Flew's **Theology and Falsification**

R.M Hare

Hare maintains that Flew's criteria for rationality should not apply to religious beliefs. Such beliefs are based upon and constitute a ***blik***, which is a set of profoundly unfalsifiable assumptions, which people use to order their lives. There are a variety of such ***bliks***. Science operates with its own ***blik*** and so religion is to be treated no differently. He coined the term `blik' to describe a state where you will not allow anything to count against your beliefs.

READ Hare's Reply to Flew

READ Flew's Reply to Hare

Basil Mitchell

Basil Mitchell's response to all of this was an attempt to take a position between Flew and Hare that held that religious believers do actually see things that count against their beliefs. Only they don't believe these things ultimately count against their beliefs. Professor Mitchell takes a compromise position between Hare and Flew. He argues that ***bliks*** exist but he holds that a gradual accumulation of evidence should be able to overturn or remove a ***blik***. Religious beliefs are either:

1. provisional hypotheses
2. significant articles of faith
3. empty or meaningless statements that make no difference in experience or to life.

The religious person can not accept position (1) and must avoid slipping into (3) which leaves only (2) and continued belief.

Mitchell provides another parable. This one is about the resistance movement and a stranger. A member of the resistance movement of an occupied country meets a stranger who claims to be the resistance leader. The stranger seems truthful and trustworthy enough to the member of the resistance movement, and he places his trust in him wholly. The stranger's behavior is highly ambiguous, and at times his trust is tried, at other times his trust in the stranger is strengthened. This is how Mitchell's parable differs from Hare's: the partisan in the resistance parable admits that many things may and do count against his belief, whereas, the believer who has a blik about dons doesn't admit that anything counts against his blik. Nothing can count against bliks.

According to Basil Mitchel, “evidence can be found which counts for and against such beliefs, but once a commitment to believe has been made, neither the partisan nor the religious believer will allow anything to count decisively against their beliefs.” So then what Mitchell has argued is that religious believers do not actually have bliks. Allen Stairs describes Mitchell's position as presenting the case that " the partisan in Mitchell's parable has been moved by the stranger enough to trust that even when it seems otherwise, the stranger really is on his side. The religious believer has a similar attitude of trust in God, Mitchell claims. The trust is not without a sense of tension and conflict -- if it were, it would be the sort of meaningless non-assertion that Flew attacks. But the believer has committed himself or herself to not abandoning belief in the face of seeming evidence to the contrary, because the believer has adopted an attitude of faith." -- the Symposium on Theology and Falsification by Allen Stairs

So Mitchell's argument is straightforward- religious beliefs are a matter of fact which can be proved or disproved. The stranger knows whose side he is on. After the war the ambiguity of the stranger's behavior will be capable of being resolved. In the same way, many religious claims such as including the existence or non-existence of a deity or characteristics of a deity such as it being all loving or all powerful or having concern for humans will also be capable of being proven or disproven. Mitchell claimed he had demonstrated that religious language is meaningful. For Mitchell all that remains is to prove or disprove the truth of the claims.

Flew's response to Mitchell

Flew was critical of Mitchell's attempt to argue by analogy using the parable of the partisan and the stranger. This was because Flew thought that the analogy was comparing a mere mortal human being to a deity. The stranger is only a human being and as Allen Stairs puts it " That makes it easy to explain why he does not always appear to be on our side. But God is not limited in any way; no excuses could be made for God's lapses. However, Mitchell could surely point out: it isn't a matter of making specific excuses. It is a matter of having faith that there is some explanation, even if we can't see what it is -- of saying that we don't understand, but we trust. The question Flew would presumably ask is: don't we understand well enough?" -- the Symposium on Theology and Falsification by Allen Stairs

As is often the case in Philosophy careful examination of positions reveals the assumptions held by the Philosophers. With Flew and Hare it may appear that they start with different assumptions about what it might mean to believe in God in the first place. For Flew it appears that a belief in God and religious practice involve at least some "truth" claims, i.e., some statements that are testable, that is, that could be checked to "see" if they were "true" or "false." Flew approaches the language used by religious people as being similar to ordinary language when making claims about what is real and what exists. Hare may not be thinking of religious language in the same way. Hare appear to think that there is more to religious beliefs and the use of religious language than to be simply a set of sentences that make propositions or claims about what is or is not the case. What else could religious language be doing then?

With religion there is a form of life or language game, as Wittgenstein and the fideists would have it. Religious language is used differently than elsewhere in life. The same words take on different meaning and expressions function in different ways. In the religious form of life language is conveying VALUE and MEANING without which it is difficult for a human to live. Many of the most

basic beliefs in the religious form of life are not subject to empirical verification from the science form of life. The claims appear to be empirical claims but they are not.

- There is an antelope in the field.
- There is a deity in heaven.
- There is the Tao in all.

The first claim may be subjected to the techniques of empirical verification/falsification. It has a potential truth value.

The other two claims are not subject to such empirical examination and verification or falsification. They are non-falsifiable claims. They have an immunity to being examined by science. Why?

The later claims are in the religious form of life and they are AXIOLOGICAL claims. They are claims about what a person believes and such beliefs are expression of what a person values most in life and what thereby provides for order and meaning in life.

For more on considering language about a deity and religious language as Axiological rather than as making Ontological claims : READ: Nicholas Rescher, On Faith And Belief

Michael Scriven

Professor Scriven argues for atheism on rational grounds. He holds that one should hold a belief based upon reason. There is not a rational argument to compel belief in a deity. None of the arguments offered to prove that a deity exists is rationally convincing. None of them lead to the conclusion that there is a deity without any flaw or weakness in the argumentation. Therefore there are only two choices: agnosticism and atheism. For Scriven one can be an agnostic if there is as much evidence for a position as against it. There being no compelling rational argument for belief in a deity, Scriven concludes that agnosticism must be rejected and atheism is the position which reason obliges one to take in the absence of any evidence and compelling arguments to the contrary. Again, there being no compelling proof for the existence of a deity, atheism is the rational conclusion.

C.S. Lewis

Dr. Lewis maintains that there is an accumulation of evidence in the life of a believer that becomes self-authenticating. In this sense religious beliefs can be claimed by the believer to be valuable and "true". The sense of their being "true " would not be the same sense as when scientists assert that a claim is true. In the later sense the claim has been empirically verified. In the former sense in the religious form of life or language game the religious belief is self authenticated as being a fulfillment of what was expected by believing in the claim. It is so authenticated by individual believers each in his or her own way. In the latter sense of true there is a public process of verifying the claim by a community of scientists. So it is the same word "true" but with two different meanings in the two different languages: science and faith.

Pragmatic Approach

In this view whether the ideas or claims of a religion are true or not or make sense or not is not that important as those questions may not be resolvable. What is important is whether or not there are reasons for a person to be a believer and what difference it makes in the world to be a believer.

Whether or not to believe becomes a matter for reasoning and calculating in terms of its consequences and not the veracity of the claims or the coherency of the set of religious beliefs.

***Pascal*'s Wager**

This French thinker held that one should use reason to determine whether or not to believe in the existence of God. He utilized a rationalization as the basis for belief. He thought that a person should conduct an evaluation of the advantages of belief and weigh them against the disadvantages; a cost-benefit analysis. The result of his "calculations" was that he thought it far more reasonable to believe than not to for the rewards are greater and the possible disadvantages are far less if one is mistaken and it turns out that there is no deity at all.

Table of possible consequences:

	God Exists	God does not exist
Believe in God	Rewards are great	Loss of a finite amount of pleasure
Don't Believe in God	Eternal suffering	Gain a finite amount of pleasure

Therefore , it is better to believe!!!

As summarized by Louis Pojman:

"If I believe in God and God exists I win eternal happiness and infinite gain. If God does not exist, I suffer minor inconvenience. If I do not believe in God, and God exists, I lose eternal bliss. I suffer infinite loss infinite loss unhappiness." "If I do not believe in God, and God does not exist "I gain a finite amount of pleasure."

Non-Epistemic proofs are arguments for the existence of God that are not knowledge-based arguments. If understood properly, the non-epistemic proof should invoke a personal response. The power of Pascal's Wager is not found in valid rules of inference but in probability and possible outcomes. The Wager appeals to the gambler in us - not the philosopher. Other non-epistemic proofs have been formulated based on pragmatic concerns, beauty, morality, and more.

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Problem with Pascal's Wager: Clifford vs James

W.K. Clifford argues against such a wager and the Ethics of Belief. He claims that we should never hold a belief without sufficient justification. The moral foundation for promoting the use of reason in drawing conclusions is argued in The Ethics of Belief (1877) (Originally published in Contemporary Review, 1877) wherein William K. Clifford concludes that :

> *We may believe what goes beyond our experience, only when it is inferred from that experience by the assumption that what we do not know is like what we know.*
>
> *We may believe the statement of another person, when there is reasonable ground for supposing that he knows the matter of which he speaks, and that he is speaking the truth so far as he knows it.*
>
> *It is wrong in all cases to believe on insufficient evidence; and where it is presumption to doubt and to investigate, there it is worse than presumption to believe.*

READ: Clifford, W. K. "The Ethics of Belief." *Lectures and Essays*. London: Macmillan, 1879.

Summary by Meghan Ramsay, QCC 2004

In his essay, W.K. Clifford opposes the pragmatic justifications, like Pascal's wager, for belief in the existence of a deity. Clifford maintains that beliefs based upon insufficient evidence are always wrong. In essence, believing in something just because it may prove to be beneficial in the long run is not genuine belief. To illustrate his point, Clifford gives an example of a ship owner who sees that his ship is old and in need of repairs. However, the ship owner manages to convince himself that his ship has made many voyages from which it has always returned safely, and he begins to sincerely believe that this trip will be no different than all of the previous ones. Although the evidence before him suggests danger for the passengers, the owner has faith and lets the ship sail. Clifford points out that if the ship sinks, the owner will be directly responsible for the deaths that occur as a result of his negligence. Clifford also points out that even if the ship managed to make the voyage, the owner would still be guilty, he just wouldn't be found out, as the question has to do with the foundation for his belief rather than the outcome. In this case, the ship owner had no right to believe that the ship would be safe because of the evidence before him. Clifford points out that it is not so much the belief that must be judged but the actions following the belief. Even though the ship owner believed in the seaworthiness of his ship, he could have taken the precaution of having it examined before putting the lives of others on the line. Yet Clifford points out that when acting in a way that is opposite of one's belief, it seems to condemn the belief. For example, if the ship owner truly believed that his ship was sound, he would have no reason to have it examined. The examination would suggest

that the owner did indeed have some doubts. Clifford maintains that it is one's duty to investigate both sides of an issue, and when one holds a belief that is not based upon evidence he looses his objectivity and is unable to perform that duty. Additionally, Clifford points out that beliefs are all incredibly significant, as they lay the foundation for accepting or rejecting all other beliefs and provide the framework for future action. Additionally, one's beliefs are not private. Beliefs are passed on within society and to future generations. Beliefs which are based upon evidence and have been thoroughly investigated allow humanity to have mastery over more of the world, but when those beliefs are unfounded and contrary to evidence, the mastery resulting is counterfeit. Clifford argues that beliefs that are unfounded are deceptive, as they make humans feel stronger and more knowledgeable when they really aren't.

Clifford suggests that holding beliefs based upon insufficient evidence can lead to the downfall of society. Even if these beliefs turn out to be true, society will suffer, as people will stop examining the issues with an open mind. Humans will no longer inquire as to the validity of their beliefs. They will become gullible and susceptible to fraud, hastening the downfall of civilization. Thus, holding these unfounded beliefs and suppressing doubts is a sin against humanity.

William James argues that there is sufficient justification. There is a practical justification when one considers that we must make a decision and that believing can place one in a much better position.

READ: James, William. *The Will to Believe*. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1897.

Summary by Meghan Ramsay, QCC 2004`

In his response to W.K. Clifford, William James points out that there are two ways of viewing humanity's duty in terms of opinion and belief. He points out that we are commanded to know the truth and avoid error. However, knowing the truth and avoiding errors are not one commandment stated in two ways. Instead, they are separable, and stressing one over the other will provide vastly different results. James maintains that those who place the avoidance of error above knowing the truth (such as W.K. Clifford), are keeping their minds in a constant state of suspense out of fear of being duped. James likens this to a general telling his soldiers to avoid battle so that they do not suffer any injuries. Victories over neither foes nor nature are won by not taking action. Thus, James says, he is willing to face the occasional falsehood or dupe in order to eventually arrive at a true belief. James does take into account that there are times when we can postpone making a decision until more sufficient evidence is provided. However, we can only postpone making up our minds if the option is not a crucial one with earth-shattering consequences. James points out that often the need to act is not so critical and urgent that we must risk acting upon a false belief than on no belief at all.

James then moves into religious beliefs. He states that religion essentially states two things:

1. The best things are those which are eternal.
2. Belief in the first affirmation betters us now and forever.

James says that although the skeptic says he is awaiting more evidence before making his decision, he has, in all actuality already decided. The skeptic, according to James has decided that it is better and wiser to dismiss the belief in these two affirmations for fear of being duped than it is to believe and hope that they are true. In essence, by choosing to wait, the skeptic joins the side of the non-believer. Since no one is absolutely certain as to the existence of God, one must make the choice whether or not to believe or wait for more proof. However, choosing to wait is not considered being inactive—it' is just as much an act as that of believing. Ultimately, James concludes that whether to believe or not is up to the individual. He maintains that one "enters at his/her own risk" (or does not enter at all at his/her own risk), and he concludes that no one should be intolerant of another's choice whether to believe or not.

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Notes on W.K. Clifford and William James

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READ: Philip L. Quinn, Gale on a Pragmatic Argument for Religious Belief PHILO, Volume 6, Number 1.

> **Abstract:** This paper is a study of a pragmatic argument for belief in the existence of God constructed and criticized by Richard Gale. The argument's conclusion is that religious belief is morally permissible under certain circumstances. Gale contends that this moral permission is defeated in the circumstances in question both because it violates the principle of universalizability and because belief produces an evil that outweighs the good it promotes. My counterargument tries to show that neither of the reasons invoked by Gale suffices to defeat the moral permission

established by the original argument.

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Other Problems with Pascal's Wager:

Based on this work: Richard T. Hull ***Pascal's Wager: Not a Good Bet***, Free Inquiry , Vol 25, No. 1. , Dec. 2004/Jan.2005

1. Many Gods Problem:

If a skeptic were to accept Pascal's invitation to believe in what deity would that person place their psychological commitment to believe? There are different conception of the deity in different religions of the West and the East. If the deity does exist and it is the one and only and it does pay attention to what humans do and it will reward and punish then the would-be believer needs more than Pascal's argument to arrive at the proper conclusion as to exactly which conception of a deity to place trust and hope in in order to avoid the possibly vindictive deity who would punish both non-believers and those who believed in a "false" or inaccurate conception of the deity.

While " Pascal clearly intended his argument to persuade the reader to adopt belief in Christianity... the same argument can be given , with suitable substitution for the word *God* and its associated concept, for any other religion."

2. The assumption that believing in God has no different result than not believing in god , if there is no god. This is not always the case however. If a person chooses to believe in a deity and that belief leads a person to certain actions such as using prayer in the place of medication for illnesses for which there are known cures then there is a decided difference. A believer in the deity of the Christians or Islamic people might lead a person to a negative regard for others or even into physical acts of violence towards infidels.

3. "a similar argument could be given for believing in any supernatural conception of the world: forces that determine earthquakes, tornadoes, or floods or the supposed power of other humans to make magic, do psychic surgery or read minds."

It would appear that Pascal's approach would have appeal for those who do not want to use the intellect to its fullest extent and investigate all claims about what exists or does not exist. It would appeal to those who want to have some being to appeal to for favor or exemption from harms and ills or favor for support against those they would oppose.

Fideism

Fideism is a view of religious belief that holds that faith must be held without the use of reason or even against reason. Faith does not need reason. Faith creates its own justification. There are two possible variations of fideism.

1. faith as against reason
2. faith as above reason

Soren Kierkegaard

For Kierkegaard faith is the highest human virtue. Faith is necessary for human fulfillment. It is above reason. Genuine faith is beyond the end of reason. Faith is higher than reason. Faith is the result of human striving. Faith should be the result of a subjective experience. The only way to know God is through such an experience that is extremely subjective and personal.

Robert Adams

Professor Adams argues against Kierkegaard's approach to faith. He argues against the approximation, postponement and passion arguments. For Adams, A person is justified in believing in a set of claims (S) if that person is willing to sacrifice everything else to obtain it even if there is but a small chance of success.

Ludwig Wittgenstein

For the British Philosopher, Wittgenstein, the religious believer is participating in a unique form of language or language game when speaking of religious matters. The ideas, concepts and claims of the religious believer can not be fully understood by someone who is not participating in the same language game or form of life as the religious believers. The claims of the religious language game can not be subjected to the rules of another language game, such as science. To attempt to do so would be

absurd. Wittgenstein has studied and observed the different types of linguistic framework. He has found that in some cultures there may exist different meanings for the same word. This leads him to believe that there are different usages of language, with different meanings. He has categorized then as language games or forms of life. He believes that a single person can enter into many different language games in his own lifetime. Some examples of these games are science, sports, and religions. So when a person claims that something exists it means one thing in the religious form of life and another in the scientific form of life.

Norman Malcolm

The American philosopher, Norman Malcolm shared in Wittgenstein's view. He held that religious beliefs are not to be treated as hypotheses as in science. Religious beliefs participate in another language game and form of life. Malcolm held that religious beliefs are groundless beliefs. Just as science has a set of basic beliefs that are not capable of verification upon which others are built or depend, so too does religion have such beliefs. Such beliefs can not and should not be rationally justified. They do not need such support. Science proceeds with the beliefs that (1) things don't just vanish, (2) the uniformity of nature and (3) self-knowledge of our own intentions.

Science and religion are two different language games and one should not submit the claims of one system of thought to the criteria or rules of another language game or system of thought. Neither is in any greater need for justification or support than the other is.

The word "true " in the science language game has a different meaning than the word "true" does in the religious language game. Religious beliefs can be claimed by the believer to be valuable and "true". The sense of their being "true " would not be the same sense as when scientists assert that a claim is true. In the later sense the claim has been empirically verified. In the former sense in the religious form of life or language game the religious belief is self authenticated as being a fulfillment of what was expected by believing in the claim. It is so authenticated by individual believers each in his or her own way. In the latter sense of true there is a public process of verifying the claim by a community of scientists. So it is the same word "true" but with two different meanings in the two different languages: science and faith.

Michael Martin

This American holds that while ***Wittgenstein*** and ***Malcolm*** may be correct concerning the variety of language games there must be some common conceptual framework with which the various forms of life or language games can be evaluated. He holds that there must be some criteria for rational assessment. Therefore, analysis and evaluation of all worldviews is possible and ought to be performed by rational beings. This is based on the following:

1. It is possible to distinguish one form of life from another
2. Each form of life has its own standards
3. External criticism is possible and does exist

> e.g., the argument for the existence of god may be considered as compelling within the religious form of life but not compelling or invalid external to the religious form of life.

Martin concludes that fideism is no more successful than the traditional or existential and pragmatic approaches to religious faith.

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Martin, Michael. "A Critique of Fideism." ***Atheism: A Philosophical Justification.*** **Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990.**

Summary by Meghan Ramsay, QCC 2004

Michael Martin disagrees with the notion held by Wittgensteinian fideists that religions cannot be examined and criticized externally. Martin argues that religions and their language games can be criticized from the outside and this external evaluation and critique is necessary as the adherents to the faith may be blind to contradictions and problems. For Martin, an outsider's eyes are often needed to shed light on inconsistencies. Although Wittgenstein and other fideists argue that religions have their own language which cannot be taken out of context. To the Wittgensteinians, the language of religion is specific to religion. However, Martin argues that this is not exactly the case. Martin makes it clear that it is certainly possible for a scientist and a religious person to hold a dialogue, just as it is possible for a Christian and a non-Christian to do so, or a Catholic and a Baptist to do so. Martin maintains that religious language as a whole is neither compartmentalized from all other languages and the languages of

each sect are not compartmentalized from the other sects.

Additionally, the Wittgenstein fideists argue that religious belief is groundless—it is agreed upon and embedded because of common training. The fideists believe that within the religious language game, religious beliefs can be justified. However, they admit that there is no justification for the game itself. Malcom, a Wittgenstein student, argues that the belief in God is similar to our belief that objects do not vanish into thin air (another groundless belief). However, Martin points out that there are not many sane persons in our society that question the idea that objects do not vanish into thin air, yet there are many people who question the existence of God or find it difficult to defend the belief in the existence of God.

In reply to the idea that a religious belief is reasonable within the language game but becomes unreasonable when viewed from outside the game, Martin says that it is unclear how an argument could be both reasonable and unreasonable at the same time, unless, of course, religious language is so incredibly compartmentalized. However, the idea of complete compartmentalization was refuted earlier in the essay. In conclusion, Martin finds Wittgensteinian fideism unsuccessful in explaining religious faith.

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This next article considers the reasonableness of belief in the Judeo-Christian-Muslim God ('God,' for short), the nature of reason, the claim that belief in God is not rational, defenses that it is rational, and approaches that recommend groundless belief in God or philosophical fideism.

READ Religious Epistemology

Conclusion: "Is belief in God rational? The evidentialist objector says "No" due to the lack of evidence. Theists who say "Yes" fall into two main categories: those who claim that there is sufficient evidence and those who claim that evidence is not necessary. Theistic evidentialists contend that there is enough evidence to ground rational belief in God, while Reformed epistemologists contend that evidence is not necessary to ground rational belief in God (but that belief in God is grounded in various characteristic religious experiences). Philosophical fideists deny that belief in God belongs in the realm of the rational. And, of course, all of these theistic claims are widely and enthusiastically disputed by philosophical non-theists."

READ Reformed Epistemology From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

> **Reformed epistemology** is the title given to a broad body of epistemological viewpoints relating to God's existence that have been offered by a group of Protestant Christian philosophers that includes Alvin Plantinga, William Alston, and Nicholas Wolterstorff among others. Rather than a body of arguments, reformed epistemology refers more to the epistemological stance that belief in God is properly basic, and therefore no argument for His existence is needed. It has been said the title comes from the fact that this view represent a continuation of the thinking about the relationship between faith and reason found in the 16th century Reformers, particularly John Calvin.
>
> Reformed epistemology aims to demonstrate the failure of objections that theistic Christian belief is unjustified, unreasonable, intellectually sub-par or otherwise epistemically-challenged in some way. Rationalists, foundationalists and evidentialists claim that theistic belief is rational only if there is propositional and or physical evidence for it, of which they assert there is none.
>
> Reformed epistemology seeks to defend faith as rational by demonstrating that epistemic propositions of theistic belief are properly basic and hence justified; as opposed to the truth of theistic belief. Reformed epistemology grew out of the parity argument presented by Alvin Plantinga in his book 'God and Other Minds' of 1967. There Plantinga concluded that belief in other minds is rational, hence, belief in God is also rational. Later, Plantinga in his 1999 book 'Warranted Christian Belief' argues that theistic belief has 'warrant' because there is an epistemically possible model according to which theistic belief is justified in a basic way. In epistemology, warrant refers to that part of the theory of justification that deals with understanding how beliefs can be justified or warranted. Plantinga contends that this model is likely true if theistic belief is true; and on the other hand, the model is unlikely to be true if theism is false. This connection between the truth of theism and its positive epistemic status implies that the goal of showing theistic belief to be externally rational or warranted requires reasons for supposing that theism is true.
>
> Those of faith have frequently criticized Reformed epistemology for favoring or for being exclusively committed to negative apologetics, counter-arguments to arguments that faith is not rational, and that it offers no reasons for supposing that theism or Christianity is true, so-called positive apologetics.
>
> Criticisms from those critical of or neutral to faith as rational have included that Reformed epistemology rests

on the presupposition that there is religious truth, but does not present any argument to show that there is any. Another common criticism is that as a tool for discriminating justified from unjustified constituent beliefs, Reformed epistemology falls short; that it springs forth from a presupposition that within each of us resides a doxastic mechanism that generates religious convictions, belief in God, etc., supporting the conclusion that such beliefs are innate, hence properly basic.

Now after the first overview of the basic positions the reader is better prepared to read this work providing another overview of the positions on religion and reason or religion and epistemology.

READ The Epistemology of Religion

VII. Role of Reason

What might the role of reason be in the life of a religious person? How can a religious person use reason within the religious life? How can a person use reason with religious beliefs?

John Hick

For Hick religious experiences generate religious beliefs. These beliefs are natural beliefs. They are overwhelmingly evident to the believer.

Alvin Plantinga

Professor Plantinga opposes the view of religious beliefs that subjects them to verification to the need for evidence to support claims. ***Plantinga*** holds that religious beliefs are foundational beliefs or basic beliefs. Belief in the existence of God is a proper and basic belief that is part of the set of foundational beliefs.

Michael Martin

Martin opposes ***Plantinga***'s view. ***Martin*** hold claims that ***Plantinga***'s view leads to radical and absurd relativism wherein any beliefs may become basic and called rational simply because one chooses to hold them. ***Martin*** thinks that on ***Plantinga***'s view anyone could justify any belief system.

Louis Pojman

Pojman rejects the foundationalist view of religious beliefs and in its place he prefers a coherentist view. In this view religious belief systems, indeed all such systems, are subject to reason. A belief system is a web or network of mutually supportive beliefs. Some beliefs in the set are more privileged than others because they are more self evident to the believer. Few of the beliefs are sustained outside of the system. All believers access the beliefs within the system (world view) from personal interpretive perspectives. The goal of the use of rational processes upon such systems of beliefs is a set of optimally rational positions. ***Pojman*** holds that that it is difficult but not impossible to be critically rational about religious belief and experiences.

All religious experiences must be scrutinized rationally, honestly.

All religious belief must be justified.

All religious belief systems should be coherent.

Religious beliefs sometimes consist of conflicting accounts that impedes coherency that reason demands. Physical or phenomenal evidence to substantiate religious beliefs is impossible to produce. Religious experiences usually occur privately, and are subjective, making it impossible to be justified, and scrutinized rationally and honestly. It is more logical to trust and believe that which is reasonably evidenced, than that which is absent of reason and evidence. Reason can discredit many religious experiences. In the absence of evidence, veracity is questionable. That which is contradictory or incoherent can be reasonably rejected.

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Pojman, Louis P., ed. "Can Religious Belief Be Rational?," *Philosophy of Religion, An Anthology*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1998.

Summary by Meghan Ramsay, QCC 2004

Pojman argues that there is an ethical duty to believe what is supported by the best evidence available. Since a person's beliefs can have an affect on the well-being of others, one is compelled to maintain an open mind towards criticism and investigation. Pojman likens the believer to a doctor who must keep up with the newest trends in medicine to avoid being negligent. Pojman points out that beliefs which are the most rational, justifiable beliefs are more likely to be true than beliefs that go against rationality and justification. Pojman also argues the case for "soft-perspectivism" in which he states that there are certain universal inductive and deductive rules of inference. Thus, humans are capable of understanding the worldviews of others. In comparing one's own views to that of others, one is more equipped to find flaws in his/her beliefs and disregard weak and irrational explanations.

Pojman also explains that rationality does not imply neutrality. While many think that in order for someone to use reason and to be able to accept criticism of his/her beliefs, s/he must be neutral. This, according to Pojman, is not the case. Neutrality implies inaction or passivism. However, one need not remain on the sidelines in order to rationally believe. Instead, one must remain impartial, which implies action. When one is impartial, s/he is actively involved in the conflict because s/he objective and eventually choose a side. Rather than a bystander (neutral), one must be a judge who is willing to hear both sides of the case and make a well informed, objective decision when it comes to religious beliefs.

While he states that rationality leans towards truth, Pojman admits that rationality and truth are not mutually exclusive. Pojman states that there are two components that make up rational judgment: *intention* and *capacity-behavioral*. One must have the intention of seeking the truth, s/he must revere the truth even when there may be a discrepancy between the truth and one's desires. Additionally, one must be capable to make impartial judgments—to be willing and able to make judgments that hold an "ideal standard of evidence" above self-interest and emotion.

Additionally, Pojman argues that one cannot immediately abandon his/her beliefs when faced with an obstacle. He uses the analogy of a researcher with a hypothesis that comes into conflict with evidence. The researcher does not immediately dismiss the hypothesis as false. Instead, s/he surrounds it with ad hoc theories which cushion the core hypothesis and resolve the obstacles. However, after a certain point of tearing down and putting up new ad hoc hypotheses, the researcher must eventually decide whether or not it is rational to go on believing in his/her core hypothesis. The same holds true for religious beliefs. The believer can cushion his/her core belief with other ad hoc explanations until the point where a decision must be made.

Although many philosophers argue that one should hold off on believing until there is irrefutable evidence proclaiming that belief to be true, Pojman argues that one must simply make an educated and objective decision, again, much like a judge or a jury.

Pojman also argues that it is possible to approach the Bible and other Scriptures within a rationalist point of view. He argues that the Bible, particularly the Old Testament, often focuses on "evidence, acts of deliverance, and the testimony of the saints and prophets who hear God's voice..." While he mentions these points, Pojman also explicitly states that he is not attempting to claim that the Bible is fully based upon reason.

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Louis Pojman

Faith without Belief?

Is it possible to have faith without belief? ***Pojman*** thinks that it is. He substitutes an interim assent with hope.

Importance of Belief as a religious attitude

a. intellectual and emotional end to doubt
b. guides action

Faith as Hope

1. the object of desire may not obtain
2. hope precludes certainty
3. hope entails desire for a state of affairs
4. hope disposes one to bring about a state of affairs

Hope does not entail belief but a more proactive attitude favoring the desired state of affairs.

Pojman recommends that people live imaginatively in hope. Religious believers can give interim assent with honest doubt. Decisive assent (firm belief) should not be a requirement for religious participation and for salvation. Interim assent and hope should be enough. It is a position which reason can support.

"Faith Without Belief?" by Louis P. Pojman

Summary by Meghan Ramsay (QCC, 2004)

Pojman argues that it is possible for one to have religious faith based upon hope rather than steadfast belief that the object of the faith exists. There are many people who have doubts as to the existence of God, yet they maintain faith based upon hope rather than a will to believe or a Pascalian viewing of selective evidence. Pojman argues that one can live an experimental faith, in which he hopes that the existence of God is true, and he believes that such an existence would be a good thing. Even if the hopeful believer finds it only slightly probable that this God exists, the fact that he hopes for the existence to be true gives him faith. One who has hope in God rather than undoubted belief is, Pojman argues, more apt to have an open mind towards evidence. Although the hopeful man does not act out of complete certainty as the believer does, he still acts as though God exists, and his occasional doubt or skepticism provides him with the opportunity to notice inconsistencies, problems, or evidence that the believer pays no mind to. Although some would argue that the man who only hopes for the existence of God is not entitled to the same benefits of salvation as the believer, Pojman disagrees. Instead, Pojman finds that there may be just as much virtue in doubt as there is in belief. He certainly holds that the man who lives in doubtful hope is more virtuous than the man who simply pretends to believe or the man who believes simply because it may prove beneficial in the future (i.e. Pascal's wager).

Some argue that this idea of experimental faith set forth by Pojman is objectionable because the experimental believer lacks the complete commitment that believers find necessary for religious faith. Pojman cites philosopher Gary Gutting who argues that experimental faith or "interim assent" is inadequate because rather than longing for God as the believer is required to do, the man living with experimental faith only longs to conclude whether or not God exists. Additionally, Gutting argues that religious belief requires complete acceptance of the implications of the beliefs, and in constantly doubting or reflecting upon the truth, the man with only hope is incapable of the complete abandonment and sacrifice required by the believers. Finally, it is typical of many religious believers to equate non-belief as being fundamentally bad. Thus the man living in experimental faith is also bad, and thus, not worth of salvation.

In reaction to Gutting's claims, Pojman argues that since there is not irrefutable evidence for belief, it seems that believers have not fully examined their beliefs—that they are closed minded. Additionally, Pojman argues that perhaps the traditional religions place too much emphasis on having a firm set of beliefs. Pojman also argues that the hoper in God can use his longing for the truth as a method of worshipping and longing for God, thus refuting Guttings first objection to experimental faith. In response to the idea that the hoper is less able to surrender to the life of complete sacrifice led by true believers, Pojman argues that while it is true that a hoper in God might not be as fanatic or willing to die for God as the believer, the hoper still lives as if God exists—he behaves in accordance with the moral principles set forth by this possible God and he lives as this possible God would expect him to live. Finally, in response to Gutting's third argument, Pojman once again reiterates that living as if God exists while balancing both hopes and doubts must certainly be good—especially in comparison to those who believe only because they have tricked themselves into belief.

In conclusion, Pojman states that it is not necessary to have undoubted belief in God in order to have faith. Instead, one can use his doubts to attempt to arrive at a clearer answer, and in the meantime he can live a "dedicated and worshipful moral life" based upon the hope that God exists.

Pojman, Louis P. "Faith Without Belief." *Faith and Philosophy*. 3.2 (April, 1986).

Final Questions

After examining religious language from a variety of perspectives and examining a variety of positions on the basic questions what questions are left unresolved? All the original issues and questions have been considered from a number of different perspectives and with a few different set of initial assumptions or worldviews and conceptual frameworks. What then is the result? The following questions remain as most important and, in some way, fundamental to understanding what religion is about :

1. Are religious beliefs subject to rational analysis and evaluation?
2. Are religious beliefs subject to scientific investigation for veracity?
3. Must religious beliefs satisfy the criteria of reasoning?
4. Is religious belief to be based upon a suspension of reasoning?

5. Are religious beliefs above reason or at least separate from reason?
6. If religious beliefs are not to be subject to reasoning or to scientific verification, how are humans who are rational beings to deal with them?

What are the possible positions that one can have on the issue of the relation of reason to faith? There are several and they include these:

1.Commensurable: Religious beliefs can be subject to reason and if they are they will be found to be quite reasonable and the basic claims.

2.Incommenserable : Religious beliefs should not be subject to reason as they are not reasonable and they do not need to be.

A. Irrational (***Hume, Kierkegaard***) It is NOT rational to believe in God, spirits and other religious claims. Faith is opposed to reason and is firmly in the realm of the irrational.

B.Transrational (***Calvin, Barth***) Religious faith is over and above reason and is not to be subject to criteria generally used by reasoning beings. To use reason on matters of faith is not only inappropriate but irreverent and faithless.

For many of those who hold the transrational position religious faith may be rested upon revelation which is self-authenticating.

3. Fideism: This is a view of religious belief that faith must be held without the use of reason or even against reason. Faith does not need reason. Faith creates its own justification. There are two possible variations of fideism.

1. faith as against reason
2. faith as above reason

4. Coherentist: There is a role for reason in relation to religious beliefs. It may be limited but there is a role. Reason can not be used to determine the veracity of the reports and the veridical nature of accounts or to verify the claims made within the religious system. Yet, sets of religious beliefs or religious belief systems are at least subject to the use of reason upon them to the extent that they can be critically examined for the degree to which they are coherent and avoid inconsistencies and contradictions.

Which position is the one that makes the most sense and is supported by reasoning and evidence?

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6.2.14: What is Religion?

Introduction

Once people start to think about religion seriously and they study a variety of religions they are prompted to ask questions about the very nature of religion itself. What is the essence of religion? What is religion all about? What is the common element that links all religions that makes them belong or fit into the same category? A variety of answers has been offered by philosophers, theologians, scientists and a host of others from various disciplines and worldviews

The Questions

1. What is religion?
2. What is the essence of religion?
3. What do all religions have in common?
4. What is it about religion that makes it so distinct from other forms of life, from other worldviews?
5. What is it about religion that makes it appear resistant to the efforts of philosophers and scientists and skeptics to disprove religious claims?
6. How can religious believers go on believing without evidence to support their positions and beliefs and even against arguments that show their beliefs to contain irrational elements such as inconsistencies and contradictions?

The Requirements of a Definition

Note: What follows is based upon the work of Frederick Ferre in his Basic Modern Philosophy of Religion.

Any definition of religion must satisfy not only the general criteria that all definitions must meet, but a few additional concerns specific to religious phenomena as well. Definitions must:

1. use ordinary language
2. avoid ambiguity
3. avoid contradictions
4. include all that needs to be included
5. exclude all that needs to be excluded
6. avoid circularity

Ordinary language usage of the term "religion" is inadequate to the task of definition because it is among other things, ambiguous and oftentimes contradictory as well. Ordinary language usage is blind and can not deal with new phenomena and can not resolve confusions.

Consider some of these examples of common definitions offered by ordinary language.

Religion is:

- belief in god
- conviction in supernatural realities relevant to human well being
- all of life
- whatever gives meaning to life

These offerings make religion into something that is irrational, too superficial or they are too inclusive or too exclusive as definitions for they fail to appreciate the breadth and depth of religious phenomena.

Whatever religion is it must be relevant to:

1. all kinds of people
2. all aspects of life
3. relate to social and public practices
4. relate to private experiences and practices

Furthermore, any definition of religion must satisfy these requirements:

A. Scope

1. inclusive
2. specific

B. Cruciality

1. Unspecialized- relevant to all types of people and all aspects of life
2. hospitable- to the diversity of the phenomena
3. permissive- as to personal and social role
4. open- as to the truth or falsity of claims
5. unprejudiced- as to possible harm or benefit of the phenomena

So, considering all of the above requirements what would the definition need to notice about religion?

Religion:

a. involves the whole of life

b. is open to all kinds of people

c. issues naturally in widely various activities

d. issues in widely various ideas and beliefs

e. exists and is exhibited in private and social settings

f. is open to different opinions as to the truth or falsity of its beliefs

g. has consequences considered to be either harmful or beneficial to individuals and groups

The Definition

To satisfy the above requirements and conditions religion must be placed within a category of human phenomena that manifests itself in a manner with features illustrative of the characteristics listed above.

After placing religion in such a category it is necessary to distinguish it from other members of that category. What is the genus and what is the species that identifies religion uniquely?

VALUATION is the genus and the distinguishing characteristics of religion that separate it from other forms of valuation are intensity and comprehensiveness.

Religion is the most intensive and comprehensive method of valuing that is experienced by humankind.

Religion is a way of valuing that is most comprehensively and intensively experienced.

This definition is both ideal and actual. It enables us to both understand and explain religious phenomena better.

It enables us to understand how it is distinguished from other types of human experiences.

It enables us to understand better how it relates to other forms of life or language games.

Organized religion is an institutionalized way of valuing that is comprehensive and intensive.

As *cultus* it involves ritual and practices as aids to emotions and expressions of the valuation.

As *doctrinus* it involves ideational elements that enable the comprehensive inclusion of the valuation.

People participate in religion in different ways. People are religious to different degrees.

People have a religion in different manners:

a. to be associated with a religion
b. partial personal appropriation –"latent residue" in experience once religion has been internalized
c. religion guides and integrates a person's valuing in all aspects of life

This definition and this view of religion includes all the religions that have been traditionally thought of as religions and it excludes phenomena such as magic, art, and science from being considered as candidates for the title of religion. It has the power to discriminate among phenomena.

When religion is seen as a form of valuing and the most intensive and comprehensive form of valuing at that, then it is possible to understand why scientific findings and philosophical criticisms do not necessarily disturb its adherents.

Religion is about valuing and not about reasoning or about truth! This explains why the following is true of religion:

- **Religion is more important than GOD!**
- **Religion is more important than TRUTH!**
- **Religion is more important than reasoning!**
- **Religion is more important than nearly anything else!**

Think again of the ideas of Paul Tillich that faith is the state of being ultimately concerned and how the word ultimately reflects what is most intensely valued.

"***Faith as Ultimate Concern***" by Paul Tillich Summary by Meghan Ramsay (QCC, 2004)

According to Tillich, "faith is the state of being ultimately concerned." The Ultimate Concern is that which demands complete surrender of the person who faithfully accepts the Ultimate. Additionally, faith in and surrender to the Ultimate promises total completion regardless of what must be sacrificed in the name of faith. Tillich argues that faith is a task for the believer's complete being—for instance, it is an act of both the conscious and the unconscious. He refers to faith as a "total and centered act of the personal self, the act of unconditional, infinite and ultimate concern." Tillich then goes on to examine the sources for faith. He asserts that faith arises out of man's awareness that he is a part of the infinite yet he is not the owner of this infinity. Additionally, he points out that God cannot be an object of faith without also being the subject of man's faith. God, asserts Tillich, is present as the subject and object of ultimate faith while at the same time is transcendent beyond both subject and object. Tillich warns that there are finite things that claim infinity, such as the nation or state. However, unlike God, believers can approach such finite things with "ordinary knowledge." Since God is infinite and ultimate and faith in God is the ultimate concern, Tillich asserts that only symbolic language is sufficient to express faith and God. Thus, he outlines the definition of the term "symbol." Like signs, symbols refer to that which is beyond themselves. For instance, a stop sign points to the command to stop the movement of a vehicle. Similarly letters refer to sounds and meanings. However, unlike signs, symbols play a part in that which they represent and cannot be easily replaced. For instance, a country's flag not only represents the nation that it stands for but also is an active participant in portraying the country's "power and dignity." Thus, it cannot simply be replaced unless the character of the nation itself is also changed. Tillich also asserts that symbols allow us to experience other levels of reality that are normally off limits to us. For instance art creates a symbol for a plane that we cannot move toward by science alone. Additionally, symbols open aspects of our souls which allow us to experience awareness of ourselves that we were not conscious of prior to experiencing the symbol (such as the depths that we can reach by listening to the "melodies and rhythms in music"). Another characteristic of a symbol is that it cannot be manufactured. Symbols arise from the unconscious and must be accepted on that level before conscious acceptance. Finally, since symbols cannot be intentionally produced, they come about and cease to exist in due time. In essence, they are borne out of a need and they perish when they no longer generate a reaction within the group that originally used them for expressive purposes.

Tillich then goes on to assert that anything that achieves ultimate concern for man is elevated to the status of god. However, when things like a nation or success become elevated to the level of ultimacy, they are merely false or idolatrous symbols of ultimate concern. Tillich also discusses that myths are an integral part of our ultimate concern. While a myth must be recognized as a myth (much like how a symbol must be recognized as a symbol), Tillich argues that any attempt to remove the mythological from

our consciousness will be unsuccessful because myths signify a collection of symbols which stand for our ultimate concern. One might be able to replace one myth with another, but s/he could never completely remove mythology from human consciousness. In fact, Tillich argues that even a “broken myth,” one which has been proven to be understood as a myth and has not been removed from or replaced within consciousness, cannot be replaced with a scientific substitute because myths are the symbolic language of faith. However, Tillich also warns that one cannot simply accept myths as literal truths because they then loose their symbolic meaning and rob God of his standing as the ultimate.

Tillich, Paul. ***Dynamics of Faith.*** HarperCollins, 1957.

There are other sources that serve as the object of faith for humans. People can have faith in science and in their family. But there are few other sources for value. People need to have faith and meaning and value in order to orient themselves to life in this world. Religion is a phenomena that arises out of that need. Religious people are willing to live according to and at times to die for what they most value. Religion is the primary form in which that valuation is expressed and transmitted from one generation to the next. It provides for a foundation for a moral order and in past times it has supplied answers to many questions of great importance. Science may now serve many people as a better source of answers for many of those questions but it does not serve as a source of value.

Religion is likely to continue for some time as a popular and important feature of human culture. As more people come to have a better understanding of the nature of religion there will be a more intelligent and penetrating questioning of religious phenomena. Philosophy serves to provide a methodology for that activity.

To satisfy the above requirements and conditions religion must be placed within a category of human phenomena that manifests itself in a manner with features illustrative of the characteristics listed above.

After placing religion in such a category it is necessary to distinguish it from other members of that category. What is the genus and what is the species that identifies religion uniquely?

VALUATION is the genus and the distinguishing characteristics of religion that separate it from other forms of valuation are intensity and comprehensiveness.

Religion is the most intensive and comprehensive method of valuing that is experienced by humankind.

Religion is a way of valuing that is most comprehensively and intensively experienced.

This definition is both ideal and actual. It enables us to both understand and explain religious phenomena better.

It enables us to understand how it is distinguished from other types of human experiences.

It enables us to understand better how it relates to other forms of life or language games.

Organized religion is an institutionalized way of valuing that is comprehensive and intensive.

As *cultus* it involves ritual and practices as aids to emotions and expressions of the valuation.

As *doctrinus* it involves ideational elements that enable the comprehensive inclusion of the valuation.

People participate in religion in different ways. People are religious to different degrees.

People have a religion in different manners:

a. to be associated with a religion
b. partial personal appropriation –"latent residue" in experience once religion has been internalized
c. religion guides and integrates a person’s valuing in all aspects of life

This definition and this view of religion includes all the religions that have been traditionally thought of as religions and it excludes phenomena such as magic, art, and science from being considered as candidates for the title of religion. It has the power to discriminate among phenomena.

When religion is seen as a form of valuing and the most intensive and comprehensive form of valuing at that, then it is possible to understand why scientific findings and philosophical criticisms do not necessarily disturb its adherents.

Religion is about valuing and not about reasoning or about truth! This explains why the following is true of religion:

- **Religion is more important than GOD!**
- **Religion is more important than TRUTH!**
- **Religion is more important than reasoning!**
- **Religion is more important than nearly anything else!**

Think again of the ideas of Paul Tillich that faith is the state of being ultimately concerned and how the word ultimately reflects what is most intensely valued.

"***Faith as Ultimate Concern***" by Paul Tillich Summary by Meghan Ramsay (QCC, 2004)

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Religion is likely to continue for some time as a popular and important feature of human culture. As more people come to have a better understanding of the nature of religion there will be a more intelligent and penetrating questioning of religious phenomena.

Philosophy serves to provide a methodology for that activity.

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6.2.15: Conclusion

This has been a very long series of sections with a great deal of material in them. You will have your notes and references to refer to over the years should you wish to refer back to these materials and think about these matters some more.

For more of this author's ideas on the matter of religion the reader might examine the author's online textbook on **Philosophy of Religion**.

For the **Final Thoughts** of this author on this topic the reader is directed to this passage **Final Thoughts** in that online textbook.

The topic of religion is one that is capable of raising great passion in human beings. Hopefully, the reader is now better informed as to the major issues in and perspectives on religion and may have a better understanding of religion as a human phenomena and of the intensity of experience with which it is often associated. The key questions concerning the nature of faith and the existence of divine, spiritual or supernatural beings have not been resolved in this work. It is for each person to make the best reasoned judgment on these matters after a careful consideration of all the evidence and all the alternative positions. To avoid such judgments becoming matters of faith and doctrine and dogma then such judgments, in the realm of Philosophy and rational discourse, must also be kept under continuing scrutiny in the light of new evidence and the presentation of new perspectives and arguments.

On the relation of Science and Philosophy and Religion to one another please look at Dallas Roark's **Knowledge and Method in Science, Philosophy and Religion**

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6.3: 8-Bit Philosophy

Is God Useful?

YouTube Video

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7.1.1: An Introduction to Utilitarianism

Some things appear to be straightforwardly good for people. Winning the lottery, marrying your true love or securing a desired set of qualifications all seem to be examples of events that improve a person's life. As a normative ethical theory, Utilitarianism suggests that we can decide what is morally right or morally wrong by weighing up which of our future possible actions promotes such goodness in our lives and the lives of people more generally.

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7.1.2: Hedonism

Hedonism is a theory of well-being — a theory of how well a life is going for the person living that life. What separates Hedonism from other theories of well-being is that the hedonist believes that what defines a successful life is directly related to the amount of pleasure in that life; no other factors are relevant at all. Therefore, the more pleasure that a person experiences in their life then the better their life goes, and vice versa. Whereas other theories might focus on fulfilling desires people have, or an objective list of things such as friendship and health.

The roots of Hedonism can be traced back at least as far as **Epicurus** (341–270 BC) and Ancient Greece. Epicurus held the hedonistic view that the primary *intrinsic* good for a person is pleasure; meaning that pleasure is always good for a person in and of itself, irrespective of the cause or context of the pleasure. According to this theory pleasure is always intrinsically good for a person and less pleasure is always intrinsically bad.

Hedonism is a relatively simple theory of what makes your life better. If you feel that your life would be better if you won the lottery, married your true love or achieved your desired qualifications, then the hedonistic explanation of these judgments is that these things are good for you only if they provide you with pleasure. Many pleasures may be physical, but **Fred Feldman** (1941–) is a defender of a theory known as Attitudinal Hedonism. According to this theory, psychological pleasures can themselves count as intrinsically good for a person. So, while reading a book would not seem to produce pleasure in a physical way, a hedonist may value the psychological pleasure associated with that act of reading and thus accept that it can improve a person's well-being. This understanding of hedonistic pleasure may help to explain why, for example, one person can gain so much pleasure from a Lady Gaga album while another gains nothing at all; the psychological responses to the music differ.

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7.1.3: Nozick's Experience Machine

One important problem for Hedonism is that our well-being seems to be affected by more than just the total pleasure in our lives. It may be the case that you enjoy gaining a new qualification, but there seems to be more to the value of this event than merely the pleasure produced. Many people agree that success in gaining a meaningful qualification improves your life even if no pleasure is obtained from it. Certainly, many believe that the relationship between what improves your life and what gives pleasure is not directly proportional, as the hedonist would claim.

Robert Nozick (1938–2002) attacked the hedonistic idea that pleasure is the only good by testing our intuitions via a now famous thought-experiment. Nozick asks:

> *Suppose there was an experience machine that would give you any experience you desired. Super-duper neuropsychologists could stimulate your brain so that you would think and feel you were writing a great novel, or making a friend, or reading an interesting book. All the time you would be floating in a tank, with electrodes attached to your brain. Should you plug into this machine for life, pre-programming your life experiences?* [...] *Of course, while in the tank you won't know that you're there; you'll think that it's all actually happening* [...] *would you plug in?*

Nozick's challenge to Hedonism is based on the thought that most people who consider this possible situation would opt *not* to plug in. Indeed, if you ask yourself if you would actually choose to leave behind your real friends, family and life in favour of a pre-programmed existence you also might conclude that plugging into the experience machine would not be desirable. However, if Hedonism is correct and our well-being is determined entirely by the amount of pleasure that we experience, then Nozick wonders "what else can matter to us, other than how our lives feel from the inside?" The experience machine guarantees us pleasure yet we find it unappealing compared to a real life where pleasure is far from assured. This may suggest that our well-being is determined by other factors in addition to how much pleasure we secure, perhaps knowledge or friendships.

The hedonists need not give way entirely on this point, of course, as they may feel that the experience machine is desirable just because it guarantees experiences of pleasure. Or, you might believe that our suspicions about the machine are misplaced. After all, once inside the machine we would not suspect that things were not real. You may feel that the hedonist could bite-the-bullet (accept the apparently awkward conclusion as a non-fatal implication of the theory) and say that any reticence to enter the machine is *irrational*. Perhaps the lives of those choosing to be plugged in to the machine would go extraordinary well!

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7.1.4: The Foundations of Bentham's Utilitarianism

Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832) was the first of the "classical utilitarians". Driven by a genuine desire for social reform, Bentham wanted to be as much involved in law, politics and economics as abstract philosophising.

Bentham developed his moral theory of Utilitarianism on the foundation of the type of hedonistic thinking described in section two. For Bentham, the only thing that determines the value of a life, or indeed the value of an event or action, is the amount of pleasure contained in that life, or the amount of pleasure produced as a result of that event or action. Bentham is a *hedonistic utilitarian*. This belief in Hedonism, however, was not something that Bentham took to be unjustified or arbitrary; for him Hedonism could be *empirically justified* by evidence in the world in its favour. According to Bentham:

> *Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, pain and pleasure. It is for them alone to point out what we ought to do, as well as to determine what we shall do.*

Bentham moves from this empirical claim about the factors that guide our behaviour to a normative claim about how we *ought* to live. He creates a moral theory based on the bringing about of more pleasure and less pain.

When first understanding Utilitarianism, it is also crucial to understand what is meant by the term "utility". Bentham defined it as "[...] that property in any object, whereby it tends to produce benefit, advantage, pleasure, good, or happiness [...] or [...] to prevent the happening of mischief, pain, evil, or unhappiness". Utility is thus promoted when pleasure is promoted and when unhappiness is avoided. Bentham's commitment to Hedonism means for him that goodness is just an increase in pleasure, and evil or unhappiness is just an increase in pain or decrease in pleasure. With this understanding of utility in mind, Bentham commits himself to the *Principle of Utility*:

> *By the principle of utility is meant that principle which approves or disapproves of every action whatsoever, according to the tendency which it appears to have to augment or diminish the happiness of the party whose interest is in question: or, what is the same thing in other words, to promote or to oppose that happiness.*

In effect, this principle simply says that promoting utility, defined in terms of pleasure, is to be approved of and reducing utility is to be disapproved of.

The Principle of Utility, backed by a commitment to Hedonism, underpins the central utilitarian claim made by Bentham. Based on a phrase that he wrongly attributed to **Joseph Priestley** (1733–1804), Bentham suggests that the measure of right and wrong is the extent to which an action produces the greatest good for the greatest number of people. Of course, what counts as good, for Bentham, is pleasure. We can then rephrase what Bentham himself call his fundamental axiom as a requirement to *promote the greatest pleasure for the greatest number of people, in order to act morally*.

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7.1.5: The Structure of Bentham's Utilitarianism

In addition to being hedonistic, Bentham's Utilitarianism is also:

1. Consequentialist/Teleological
2. Relativist
3. Maximising
4. Impartial

Bentham's Utilitarianism is *consequentialist* because the moral value of an action or event is determined entirely by the consequences of that event. The theory is also described as *teleological* for the same reason, based on the Greek word *telos* that means "end" or "purpose". If more pleasure follows as a consequence of "Action A" rather than "Action B", then according to the fundamental axiom of Utilitarianism "Action A" should be undertaken and is morally right; choosing "Action B" would be morally wrong.

In addition, Bentham's Utilitarianism is *Relativistic* rather than *Absolutist*. Absolutist moral views hold that certain actions will always be morally wrong irrespective of context or consequences. For example, many campaigning groups suggest that torture is always morally unacceptable whether it is carried out by vindictive dictators seeking to instil fear in a population or whether it is authorised by democratically elected governments seeking to obtain information in order to stop a terrorist attack. For absolutists then, the act of torture is absolutely wrong in all cases and situations.

Clearly, Bentham cannot hold this type of view because sometimes the pain involved in torture may lead to the promotion of greater pleasure (or less intense pain) overall, such as in the case where torture stops a terrorist atrocity. On this basis, the Benthamite utilitarian must believe that whether a certain action is right or wrong is always relative to the situation in which the action takes place.

Bentham's Utilitarianism is *maximising* because it does not merely require that pleasure is promoted, but that the *greatest* pleasure for the *greatest* number is secured. This means that some actions that lead to pleasure will still not be morally good acts if another action that could have produced even more pleasure in that setting was rejected. Thus, for example, if you gain some pleasure from spending money on a new book, but that money could have produced more pleasure had it been donated to a local charity for the homeless, then buying a new book would be morally wrong even though it led to some pleasure because it did not maximise the total amount of pleasure that was possible in that circumstance.

Finally, Bentham's Utilitarianism is also *impartial* in the sense that what matters is simply securing the maximum amount of pleasure for the maximum number of people; the theory does not give special preference regarding which people are supposed to have access to, or share in, that total pleasure. Bentham's utilitarian theory is associated with the idea of *equal consideration of interests*; as long as total pleasure is maximised then it does not matter if that pleasure is experienced by royalty, presidents, siblings, children, friends or enemies. In the total calculation of pleasure, we are all equal regardless of our status, behaviour or any other social factor.

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7.1.6: Hedonic Calculus

Hopefully it is now clear that for Bentham the consequences in terms of pleasure production of any action are what determine the morality of that action, and that no other factors are relevant. However, it is not clear how exactly we should go about working out what to do in specific cases. For example:

You are a military airman flying a fighter jet that is about to intercept a passenger airliner that seems to have been hijacked by an as yet unknown figure. The plane appears to be on a path that could take it either to an airport or, potentially, directly to a major and highly populated city. You are tasked with deciding how to act and must, therefore, choose whether or not to fire a missile at the plane. Firing at the plane would kill the passengers but save all lives on the ground, yet not firing may save the passengers, or it may give the passengers only a few more minutes before the plane is flown into a city full of innocents and they are killed in any case. Suggesting that the pilot weigh up the options and choose the action that secures the greatest pleasure for the greatest number is not obviously helpful in making such a difficult decision with so many variables.

Bentham recognised that such *Problems of Calculation* relating to the pleasure associated with future actions needed addressing in order for Utilitarianism to be a workable moral theory. Bentham therefore created the Hedonic Calculus (sometimes known as the Felicific Calculus) in order to help an individual work out how much pleasure would be created by differing possible actions. The Hedonic Calculus, as suggested by Bentham, is based on assessing possible pleasures according to their:

1. Intensity
2. Duration
3. Certainty
4. Remoteness (i.e. how far into the future the pleasure is)
5. Fecundity (i.e. how likely it is that pleasure will generate other related pleasures)
6. Purity (i.e. if any pain will be felt alongside that pleasure)
7. Extent (i.e. how many people might be able to share in that pleasure)

The Hedonic Calculus is therefore supposed to provide a decision-procedure for a utilitarian who is confused as to how to act in a morally tricky situation. Thus, our fighter-pilot might consider the intensity of the pleasure of surviving versus the duration of the pain of death, while also needing to balance these factors against the relative certainty of the possible pains or pleasures. No doubt, the fighter pilot would still face an agonising moral choice but it seems that he would at least have some methodology for working out what Utilitarianism morally requires of him.

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7.1.7: Problems with Bentham's Utilitarianism

However, whether or not measuring possible actions in terms of "units of pleasure" associated with them is actually plausible is very much an open question and so the problem of calculation is not necessarily solved simply by the existence of the Hedonic Calculus. Consider the most recent highly pleasurable experience that you enjoyed and compare it to a highly pleasurable experience from earlier in your life. It may be that you cannot say confidently that one provided more pleasure than the other, especially if the experiences were extremely varied; perhaps winning a sporting trophy versus going on your first holiday. Pleasures that are so fundamentally different in nature may simply be incommensurable — they may be incapable of being measured by a common standard such as the Hedonic Calculus.

In addition, the problem of calculation can be extended beyond the issues raised above. Remember that Bentham's Utilitarianism is impartial in the sense that all individuals who gain pleasure as a result of a certain action count towards the total amount of pleasure. However, the following case raises the *Problem of Relevant Beings*:

You are considering whether or not to approve a new housing development on a piece of unoccupied land outside the current boundary of your town. You are clear that, if approved, the development will create a great deal of pleasure for both new residents and construction workers without any pain being experienced by others. You are aware, however, that the development will require the culling of several badgers and the removal of a habitat currently supporting many birds, stray cats and rodents of various types.

On the surface, this case should be obvious for the utilitarian without any special problem of calculation; the greatest good for the greatest number would be secured if the development were permitted to go ahead. However, this assumes that non-human animals are not relevant to the calculation of pleasures and pains. Yet, if pleasure is all that matters for how well a life goes then it is not clear why animals, that may be able to experience some form of pleasure and can almost certainly experience pain, should be excluded from the calculation process.

Indeed, Bentham, when referring to the moral value of animals, noted that: "The question (for deciding moral relevance) is not 'Can they reason?', nor 'Can they talk?', but 'Can they suffer?'" If the suffering and pain of humans is relevant to moral calculations then surely it is at least plausible that so should the suffering and pain of non-human animals.

Being a maximising ethical theory, Utilitarianism is also open to a *Demandingness Objection*. If it is not the case that pleasure needs to be merely promoted but actually *maximised at all opportunities*, then the standard for acting morally appears to be set extremely high. For example, did you buy a doughnut at some point this year or treat yourself to a magazine? Live the life of a high-roller and treat yourself to a taxi ride rather than walking to your destination? While your actions certainly brought about differing degrees of pleasure to both yourself and to those who gained economic benefit from your decision, it seems that you could have created much more pleasure by saving up your money and ensuring it reached those suffering extreme financial hardships or residing in poverty around the world. As a result of being a maximising moral theory, Utilitarianism seems to make immorality very hard to avoid as it is so utterly demanding on our behaviour.

A further problem for Utilitarianism relates to the *Tyranny of the Majority*. Remember that as a relativistic moral theory, Utilitarianism does not allow for any moral absolutes — such as the absolute right to democracy, or absolute legal or basic human rights. Indeed, Bentham himself dismissed the idea of "natural rights" as a nonsensical concept masqueraded as a meaningful one. However, if we accept that absolute rights are simply "nonsense upon stilts" as Bentham put it, then Utilitarianism seems to be open to cases where the majority are morally required to exploit the minority for the greater good of maximising total pleasure. For example, imagine that total pleasure would be maximised if the resources of a small country were forcibly taken from them to be used freely and exploited by the people of a much larger country (this is hardly unrealistic). However, such forceful theft — only justified by the fact that a greater majority of people would gain pleasure — does not seem to be morally justifiable. Yet, according to Utilitarianism's commitment to maximising pleasure, such an action would not only be morally acceptable but it would be morally required.

As a consequentialist/teleological moral theory Utilitarianism is also open to the *Problem of Wrong Intentions*. This problem can be highlighted by considering the cases of Dominic and Callum.

Dominic is seating in a coffee shop when a masked intruder bursts in threatening to rob the shop. Dominic, with the intention of saving lives, attempts to stop the intruder but sadly, in the ensuing struggle, the intruder's gun is accidentally fired and an innocent person is killed. Now, consider a second case where an intruder bursts in with a gun but Callum, rather than trying

to intervene, immediately ducks for cover with the intention of saving himself and leaving the rest of the customers to fend for themselves. Luckily for Callum, when he ducks for cover he accidentally trips into the would-be thief, knocking him unconscious thus allowing his peaceful detention until police arrive.

According to the utilitarian calculation, Callum acted in a way that maximised pleasure while Dominic acted wrongly because the consequence of his act was tragic pain. However, it seems unfair and wrong to suggest that Callum acted rightly when he had just intended to save himself, although he had a lucky outcome, while Dominic acted wrongly when his intention was to save others but was unlucky in his outcome. Utilitarianism, as a consequentialist theory, ignores intentions and focuses only on consequences.

Utilitarianism also faces the *Problem of Partiality*. This is clear if we consider the familiar moral dilemma of being stuck on a life raft with three other people but with only enough supplies for two people. On the raft with you is a doctor who is confident that he can pass on a cure for cancer if he survives, a world class violinist who brings pleasure to millions each year, and one of your parents or siblings. I am afraid to report that, for the purposes of this example, your parent or sibling is nothing special in comparison to other individuals on the raft. In this circumstance, Utilitarianism would seem to require you not only to give up your own space on the raft but ensure that your parent or sibling joins you in the freezing water with no hope of survival; this is the way of maximising total pleasure in such a scenario. Yet, even if you believe that the morality might call for your own self-sacrifice, it seems extremely unfair not to allow you to give *extra moral weight* to the life of a loved one. Unfortunately for the utilitarian, perhaps, the status as a beloved family member should make no special difference to your judgment regarding how to act. This seems to be not only over-demanding but also overly cold and calculating. Utilitarianism requires *Agent-Neutrality* — you must look at the situation as any neutral observer would and not give special preference to anyone irrespective of your emotional attachments, because each individual must count for one and no more than one.

Finally, Bentham's Utilitarianism also comes under attack from the related *Integrity Objection*, framed most prominently by **Bernard Williams** (1929–2003). As an agent-neutral theory, no person can give up impartiality when it comes to judgements about the impact of a potential action upon their family or loved ones. In addition, no person can give up impartiality when it comes to the impact of an action upon their own feelings, character and general sense of integrity. In order to make clear the potential worry associated with this, Williams describes the fictional case of Jim and the Indians.

Jim is an explorer who stumbles upon an Indian leader who is about to execute twenty people. Jim knows nothing of their possible crimes or any other factors involved, but he is offered a difficult choice by the Indian chief who is eager to impress his foreign traveller. Jim can either shoot one of the prisoners himself and then the rest will be set free as a mark of celebration, or he can refuse the offer in which case all twenty prisoners will be executed as was planned. It is key to note that Jim does not have control of the situation in the sense that he is powerless to bargain or negotiate with anyone, and nor can he use a weapon to successfully free any prisoners. He has only the two options laid out.

The point of this example is not to establish what the right action is. You may find yourself in agreement with utilitarians who suggest Jim must shoot one prisoner in order to save the lives of the rest. Rather, the purpose of the example is to show that Utilitarianism forces us to reach this conclusion *too quickly*. Given the commitment to Agent-Neutrality, Jim must treat himself as a neutral observer working out which action will produce the greatest good for the greatest number. Morally, he is not entitled to give more weight to his own feelings than he would give to the feelings of any other and therefore it does not matter whether Jim is a pacifist and has been a lifelong advocate for prisoner reform and rehabilitation. If the utilitarian calculation suggests that he must shoot one of the prisoners then he must shoot with no regard to any compromising of his integrity and self-identity. You may accept this as an unfortunate consequence of a terrible situation, but it may be a problem for a moral theory if it fails to recognise or respect a person's most sincere and deepest convictions.

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7.1.8: Mill's Utilitarian Proof

John Stuart Mill (1806–1873) was concerned by many of the problems facing the utilitarian theory put forward by Bentham, but as a hedonist he did not wish to see the theory rejected. Mill sought to refine and improve the Benthamite utilitarian theory in order to create a successful version of Hedonistic Utilitarianism.

Mill was so confident about the prospects for a version of Hedonistic Utilitarianism because he believed that there was an empirically backed proof available to support the principle that the greatest happiness/pleasure should always be secured for the greatest number. Mill's proof, much like Bentham's empirical defence of Hedonism, relies on the evidence from observation that people desire their own happiness. This observation of fact supports Mill's claim that since people desire their own happiness, this is evidence that such happiness is desir*able*. Mill says "...each person's happiness is a good to that person, and the general happiness, therefore, a good to the aggregate of all persons". Since our happiness is good for us, and general happiness is just the total of the happiness of all persons, then general happiness is also good. To put it another way, if individual happiness is a good worth pursuing then happiness in general must be worth pursuing.

In order to justify Hedonism, Mill sought to justify the claim that the good of happiness is the *only* thing that makes our lives go better. Mill defends this claim by suggesting that knowledge, health and freedom etc. (as other plausible goods that might make a life go better) are only valuable *in so far as* they bring about happiness. Knowledge is desired only because it provides happiness when acquired, not because it, by itself and in isolation, makes life go better.

Mill's proof of Utilitarianism in terms of the general desirability of maximising total happiness is, however, open to criticism. For one thing, the fact that something is desired does not seem to justify the claim that it is desirable. **G. E. Moore** (1873–1958) points out that Mill moves from the factual sense that something is desirable if it is desired to the normative sense that it s*hould* be desired without any justification. It is possible, for example, to desire to kill another person. This is desirable in the sense people could and do desire it (it is possible to do so — it is an action that is desire-*able*), but not in the sense that we would want them to desire it.

In addition, the idea that other apparent goods, such as knowledge and health, are only valuable in so far as they promote happiness/pleasure is extremely controversial; can you imagine a situation in which you gained value from knowledge without any associated pleasure or happiness? If so, you may have a counter example to Mill's claim.

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7.1.9: Mill's Qualitative Utilitarianism

In attempting to redraw Bentham's Utilitarianism, Mill's most substantial thought was to move away from Bentham's idea that all that mattered was the *quantity* of total pleasure. Instead, Mill thought that *quality* of pleasure was also crucial to deciding what is moral.

Bentham's Utilitarianism is quantitative in the sense that all Bentham focusses on is the maximisation of hedonically calculated quantities of total pleasure. Thus, he says that "Prejudice apart, the game of push-pin is of equal value with the arts and sciences of music and poetry". All that matters for Bentham is producing pleasure and the way this is achieved is unimportant. If playing on a console affords you more pleasure than reading Shakespeare, then Bentham would view your life as going better if you play the console. However, Mill introduces a quality criterion for pleasure. Mill says that:

> *It is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied; better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied. And if the fool, or the pig, is of a different opinion, it is only because they only know their own side of the question.*

Bentham could not admit that the unhappy Socrates would be living a life with more value than the happier fool. Mill, on the other hand, believes that *quality*, not merely quantity, of pleasure matters and can therefore defend the claim that Socrates has the better life even by hedonistic standards.

According to Mill, higher pleasures are worth more than lower pleasures. Higher pleasures are those pleasures of the intellect brought about via activities like poetry, reading or attending the theatre. Lower pleasures are animalistic and base; pleasures associated with drinking beer, having sex or lazing on a sun-lounger. What we should seek to maximise are the higher quality pleasures even if the total pleasure (hedonically calculated via Bentham's calculus) turns out to be quantitatively lower as a result. Justifying this distinction between higher and lower quality pleasures as non-arbitrary and not just an expression of his own tastes, Mill says that *competent judges*, those people who have experienced both types of pleasure, are best placed to select which pleasures are higher and lower. Such competent judges, says Mill, would and do favour pleasures of the intellect over the base pleasures of the body. On this basis, Mill is open to the criticism that many people have both read books and drunk beer and that if given the choice would choose the latter. Whether or not Mill's defence of his supposedly non-prejudiced distinction of higher and lower pleasures is successful is an open question for your evaluation and analysis.

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7.1.10: Mill's Rule Utilitarianism versus Bentham's Act Utilitarianism

In addition to a difference in views regarding the importance of the quality of a pleasure, Mill and Bentham are also separated by reference to Act and Rule Utilitarianism and although such terms emerged only after Mill's death, Mill is typically considered a rule utilitarian and Bentham an act utilitarian.

An act utilitarian, such as Bentham, focuses only on the consequences of individual actions when making moral judgments. However, this focus on the outcome of individual acts can sometimes lead to odd and objection-raising examples. **Judith Jarvis Thomson** (1929–) raised the problem of the "transplant surgeon".

Imagine a case where a doctor had five patients requiring new organs to stop their death and one healthy patient undergoing a routine check. In this case, it would seem that total pleasure is best promoted by killing the one healthy patient, harvesting his organs and saving the other five lives; their pleasure outweighs the cost to the formerly healthy patient.

While Bentham does suggest that we should have "rules of thumb" against such actions, for typically they will lead to unforeseen painful consequences, in the case as simply described the act utilitarian appears powerless to deny that such a killing is required in order to maximise total pleasure (just add your own details to secure this conclusion for the act utilitarian).

Rule utilitarians, in whose camp we can place Mill, adopt a different moral decision-procedure. Their view is that we should create a set of rules that, if followed, would produce the greatest amount of total happiness. In the transplant case, killing the healthy man would not seem to be part of the best set of utilitarian-justified rules since a rule allowing the killing of healthy patients would not seem to promote total happiness; one outcome, for example, would be that people would very likely stop coming to hospitals for fear for their life! Therefore, if a rule permitting killing was allowed then the maximisation of total happiness would not be promoted overall.

It is through Rule Utilitarianism that we can make sense of Mill's "harm principle". According to Mill, there is:

...one very simple principle, as entitled to govern absolutely the dealings of society with the individual in the way of compulsion and control.

That principle is:

The only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant.

Even if a particular act of harming another person might bring about an increase in total pleasure on a single occasion, that act may not be condoned by the set of rules that best promotes total pleasure overall. As such, the action would not be morally permitted.

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7.1.11: Strong versus Weak Rule Utilitarianism

Rule utilitarians may seem to avoid troubling cases like the transplant surgeon and be able to support and uphold individual human and legal rights based on rules that reflect the harm principle. This fact would also help rule utilitarians overcome objections based on the treatment of minorities because exploitation of minority groups would, perhaps, fail to be supported by the best utilitarian-justified set of rules. Yet, rule utilitarians face a troubling dilemma:

1. *Strong Rule Utilitarianism*: Guidance from the set of rules that, if followed, would promote the greatest amount of total happiness must *always* be followed.
2. *Weak Rule Utilitarianism*: Guidance from the set of rules that, if followed, would promote the greatest amount of total happiness can be ignored in circumstances where more happiness would be produced by breaking the rule.

The strong rule utilitarian appears to suffer from what **J. J. C. Smart** (1920–2012) described as “Rule Worship”. No longer focussing on the consequences of the action before them, the strong rule utilitarian appears to ignore the option to maximise total happiness in favour of following a general and non-relative rule regarding how to act. The strong rule utilitarian may be able to avoid problems based on treatment of minorities or a lack of absolute legal and human rights, but it is not clear that they survive these problems holding on to a teleological, relativistic utilitarian theory. Utilitarianism seems to be saved from troubling implications only by denying core features.

On the other hand, while Weak Rule Utilitarianism retains a teleological nature it appears to collapse into Act Utilitarianism. The rules provide guidelines that can be broken, and given that the act utilitarian can also offer “rules of thumb” against actions that tend not to produce maximum goodness or utility in general, such as killing healthy patients, it is not clear where this version of Rule Utilitarianism gains a unique identity. In what cases would Act Utilitarianism and Weak Rule Utilitarianism actually provide different moral guidance? This is something you should consider in the light of your own examples or previous examples in this chapter.

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7.1.12: Comparing the Classical Utilitarians

Bentham

- Hedonist
- All pleasure equally valuable
- Act Utilitarian
- Teleological, impartial, relativistic, maximising

Mill

- Hedonist
- Quality of pleasure matters: intellectual versus animalistic
- Viewed as rule utilitarian
- If strong rule utilitarian, not clear if teleological or relativistic
- Impartial, maximising theory

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7.1.13: Non-Hedonistic Contemporary Utilitarianism- Peter Singer and Preference Utilitarianism

Utilitarianism is not a dead theory and it did not end with Mill. **Henry Sidgwick** (1838–1900) is considered to have taken over the baton after Mill, and **R. M. Hare** (1919–2002) was perhaps chief advocate in the mid twentieth century. However, few contemporary philosophers can claim as much influence in public life outside philosophy as can the preference utilitarian, **Peter Singer** (1946–).

Singer advocates a non-hedonistic version of Utilitarianism. His utilitarian theory is teleological, maximising, impartial and relativistic but he does not claim that the greatest good for the greatest number can be reduced to pleasure in either raw or higher forms. Instead, Singer believes that what improves a person's life is entirely determined by the satisfaction of their preferences. If you satisfy your preference to achieve a good qualification your life goes better *in virtue of satisfying that preference*. If someone else desires to get a job rather than continue in education, their life goes better for them if they secure their preference and gain employment. Individuals, according to Singer, must be at the core of moral thinking:

There would be something incoherent about living a life where the conclusions you came to in ethics did not make any difference to your life. It would make it an academic exercise. The whole point about doing ethics is to think about the way to live. My life has a kind of harmony between my ideas and the way I live. It would be highly discordant if that was not the case.[16]

On this basis, when making moral decisions we should consider how best to ensure the maximisation of total preference satisfaction — it does not matter if our preference satisfaction fails to provide pleasure for us. Continuing to follow Bentham's commitment to impartiality, Singer also supports equal weighing of preferences when deciding which action better promotes greater preference satisfaction; all preferences are to weigh equally. This potentially leaves Singer open to the same issues that plagued Bentham. Namely, regarding circumstances where partiality seems desirable, or when the preferences of the majority seem to threaten a minority group, or require us to sacrifice our integrity. Further, the problem of calculation also seems to be relevant, because it is not obvious how you could work out the preferences of others in at least some difficult moral cases (let alone the preferences of animals, if they are also relevant).

In response to a concern regarding the moral relevance of satisfying bloodthirsty or apparently immoral preferences, and counting such satisfaction as a moral achievement (consider the preferences of a nation of paedophiles, for example), we might look to the ideas of **Richard Brandt** (1910–1997). Brandt, writing about the rationality of certain preferences, suggested that rational preferences were those that might survive cognitive psychotherapy.[17] However, there is a question as to how arbitrary this requirement is and whether or not some unnerving preferences might form the core of certain individual characters therefore being sustained even after such therapy.

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7.1.14: Summary

Utilitarianism remains a living theory and retains hedonistic and non-hedonistic advocates, as well as supporters of both act and rule formulations. The core insight that consequences matter gives the theory some intuitive support even in the light of hypothetical cases that pose serious problems for utilitarians. The extent to which the different versions of Utilitarianism survive their objections is very much up to you as a critically-minded philosopher to decide.

COMMON STUDENT MISTAKES

- Not reflecting the attitudinal aspect of pleasure that Bentham's theory may account for.
- Minimising the long-term impact of actions when it comes to pleasure/pain production.
- Imprecise understanding of the hedonic/non-hedonic split in Utilitarianism.
- Imprecision in use of examples to defend/challenge Utilitarianism.
- Suggesting that "Jim and the Indians" is not a counterexample to Utilitarianism simply because you judge killing the fewer number of people is ultimately the morally right thing to do.

ISSUES TO CONSIDER

1. Is there anything that would improve your life that cannot be reduced to either pleasure or preference satisfaction?
2. Would you enter Nozick's experience machine if you knew you would not come out? Would you put someone you care about into the machine while they were asleep, so that they never had to make the decision?
3. Can pleasure be measured? Does Bentham go about this task correctly?
4. Which is the most serious problem facing Bentham's Act Utilitarianism? Can it be overcome?
5. Does Mill successfully improve Bentham's Act Utilitarianism in any way?
6. Are you ever told to stop watching television and do something else? Is this good for you? Why?
7. Look at the quote at the start of the chapter by Dara Ó Briain — is it possible that some pleasures are inferior in value to others?
8. Do you have convictions or beliefs you would not want to sacrifice for the greater good, should you ever be forced to?
9. Why do utilitarians not give up on the idea of maximising pleasure and just talk in terms of promoting sufficient pleasure? Would this solve or raise problems?
10. Is Weak Rule Utilitarianism merely Act Utilitarianism by another name?
11. Does Strong Rule Utilitarianism deserve to be labelled as a utilitarian theory?
12. If your preferences change after psychotherapy, did the original preferences ever matter?

KEY TERMINOLOGY

Normative

Relativistic

Teleological

Consequentialist

Principle of Utility

Agent-Neutrality

Hedonic Calculus

Utility

Intrinsic

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7.2: KANTIAN ETHICS

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7.2.1: An Introduction to Kantian Ethics

Immanuel Kant was born in 1724 in Königsberg in East Prussia, where he died in 1804. Kant is famous for revolutionising how we think about just about every aspect of the world — including science, art, ethics, religion, the self and reality. He is one of the most important thinkers of all time, which is even more remarkable by the fact that Kant is a truly awful writer. His sentences are full of technical language, are very long, and are incredibly dense. You have been warned!

Kant is a rationalist writing during the Enlightenment (1685–1815). He thinks that we can gain knowledge from our senses and through our rational capacities. This means his general philosophical approach starts by asking what we can know *a priori*.

This is key to understanding his work but also makes his writing on ethics seem a bit odd. We think the study of ethics — unlike say maths — ought to direct our eye to what is going on around us in the world. Yet Kant starts by turning his eyes "inward" to thinking about ethical *ideas*.

Kant believes that in doing this people will come to recognise that certain actions are right and wrong irrespective of how we might feel and irrespective of any consequences. For Kant, actions are right if they respect what he calls the Categorical Imperative. For example, because lying fails to respect the Categorical Imperative it is wrong and is wrong irrespective of how we might feel about lying or what might happen if we did lie; it is actions that are right and wrong rather than consequences. This means that Kant's theory is deontological rather than teleological. It focuses on our *duties* rather than our ends/goals/consequences.

There is, however, something intuitive about the idea that morality is based on reason rather than feelings or consequences. Consider my pet cat Spartan. He performs certain actions like scrabbling under bed covers, meowing at birds and chasing his tail. Now consider my daughter Beth, she performs certain actions like caring for her sister and helping the homeless.

Spartan's actions are *not* moral whereas Beth's actions are. Spartan's thinking and actions are driven by his desires and inclination. He eats and plays and sleeps when he desires to do so, there is no reasoning on his part. Beth, in contrast, can reflect on the various reasons she has, reasons to care for her sister and the homeless.

We might think then that humans are moral beings not because we have certain desires but precisely because we are *rational*. We have an ability to "stand back" and consider what we are doing and why. Kant certainly thought so and he takes this insight as his starting point.

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7.2.2: Some Key Ideas

Duty

Kant's main works in ethics are his *Metaphysics of Morals* (1797) and the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785). Neither give practical advice about particular situations but rather through rational reflection, Kant seeks to establish the supreme principle of morality.

He starts from the notion of "duty" and although this is a rather old-fashioned term, the idea behind it should sound familiar. Imagine, your friend has told you that she is pregnant but asks you to promise to keep her secret. Through the coming weeks this juicy bit of gossip is on the tip of your tongue but you do not tell anyone because of your promise. There are things we recognise as being required of us irrespective of what we (really) desire to do. This is what Kant means by duty.

But this raises the question. If it is not desires that move us to do what is right (even really strong desires), what does? In our example, why is it that we keep our promise despite the strong desire to gossip? Kant's answer is "the good will".

Good Will

Kant gives the following characterization of the good will. It is something that is *good irrespective of effects*:

A good will is good not because of what it effects or accomplishes — because of its fitness for attaining some proposed end: it is good through its willing alone — that is, good in itself.

It is also good without qualification.

It is impossible to conceive anything at all in the world, or even out of it, which can be taken as good without qualification, except a good will.

What does Kant mean? Well, pick anything you like which you think might make an action good — for example, happiness, pleasure, courage, and then ask yourself if there are any situations you can think of where an action having those features makes those actions worse?

It seems there are. Imagine someone who is *happy* when kicking a cat; or someone taking *pleasure* in torture; or a serial killer whose courage allows her to abduct children in broad daylight. In such cases the happiness, pleasure and courage make the actions worse. Kant thinks we can repeat this line of thinking for anything and everything, except one thing — *the good will*.

The good will unlike anything else is good *unconditionally* and what makes a good will good is willing alone; not other attitudes, or consequences, or characteristics of the agent. Even Kant thinks this sounds like a rather strange idea. So how can he (and we) be confident that the good will even exists?

Consider **Mahatma Gandhi**'s (1869–1948) non-violent protest for Indian independence. He stood peacefully whilst the British police beat him. Here is a case where there must have been an overwhelming desire to fight back. But he did not. In this type of action Kant would claim that we "see" the good will — as he says — "shining like a jewel". Seeing such resilience in the face of such awful violence we are humbled and can recognize, what Kant calls, its moral worth. Obviously not all actions are as significant as Gandhi's! However, Kant thinks that any acts like this, which are *performed despite conflicting desires*, are due to the good will. Considering such actions (can you think of any?) means we can recognize that the good will exists.

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7.2.3: Acting for the Sake of Duty and Acting in Accordance with Duty

From what we have said above about the nature of duty and good will we can see why Kant says that to act from good will is acting for the sake of duty. We act despite our desires to do otherwise. For Kant this means that acting for the sake of duty is the *only* way that an action can have moral worth. We will see below what we have to do for our actions to be carried out for the sake of duty. However, before we do this, we need to be really clear on this point about moral worth.

Imagine that you are walking with a friend. You pass someone begging on the street. Your friend starts to weep, fumbles in his wallet and gives the beggar some money and tells you that he *feels* such an empathy with the poor man that he just has to help him.

For Kant, your friend's action has *no* moral worth because what is moving him to give money is empathy rather than duty! He is *acting in accordance with duty*. However, Kant does think your friend should be applauded as such an action is something that is of value although it wouldn't be correct to call it a *moral* action.

To make this point clearer, Kant asks us to consider someone who has no sympathy for the suffering of others and no inclination to help them. But despite this:

...he nevertheless tears himself from his deadly insensibility and performs the action without any inclination at all, but solely from duty then for the first time his action has genuine moral worth.

In contrast to our friend, this person is acting *for the sake of* duty and hence their action is moral. We must be careful though. *Kant is not telling us to become emotionally barren robots*! He is not saying that before we can act morally we need to get rid of sympathy, empathy, desires, love, and inclinations. This would make Kant's moral philosophy an absurd non-starter.

Let us see why Kant is not saying this. Consider an action such as giving to others. We should ask whether an action of giving to others *would have* been performed *even if* the agent lacked the desire to do so. If the answer is "yes" then the act has moral worth. This though is consistent with the agent *actually having* those desires. *The question for Kant is not whether an agent has desires but what moved the agent to act*. If they acted *because* of those desires they acted in accordance with duty and their action had no moral worth. If they acted for the sake of duty, and just happened to have those desires, then their action has moral worth.

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7.2.4: Categorical and Hypothetical Imperatives

If we agree with Kant and want to act for the sake of duty what should we do? His answer is that we have to act out of *respect for the moral law*. He has two examples of how this works in practice: lying and suicide. However, before doing this we need to get a sense of what Kant has in mind when he talks about acting out of respect for the moral law.

The moral law is what he calls the "Categorical Imperative". He thinks there are three formulations of this.

> CI-1: *...act only according to that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it become a universal law.*
>
> CI-2: *So act that you use humanity, in your own person as well as in the person of any other, always at the same time as an end, never merely as a means.*
>
> CI-3: *...every rational being must so act as if he were through his maxim always a lawmaking member in the universal kingdom of ends.*

We will consider these in turn, showing how they are linked. Consider then, CI-1.

Kant's idea is that we use this "test" to see what maxims are morally permissible. If we act in accordance with those then we are acting from duty and our actions have moral worth. Let us look at what this means.

Initially it is worth considering what "categorical" and "imperative" mean. An imperative is just a command. "Clean your room!" is an imperative I give my daughter every Saturday. "Do not park in front of these gates!" is a command on my neighbour's gate. "Love your God with all your heart, mind and soul" is a command from the Bible.

What about the "categorical" part? If a command is categorical then people ought to follow it irrespective of how they feel about following it, irrespective of what consequences might follow, or who may or may not have told them to follow it. For example, the command "do not peel the skin of babies" is categorical. You ought not to do this and the fact that this might be your life's ambition, or that you really want to do it, or that your teacher has told you to do it, is completely irrelevant.

Contrast this with Hypothetical Imperatives. If I tell my daughter to clean her room, this is hypothetical. This is because whether she ought to clean her room is dependent on conditions about her and me. If she does not care about a clean room and about what her dad thinks, then it is not true that she ought to clean her room. Most commands are hypothetical. For example, "study!" You ought to study only *if* certain things are true about you; for example, that you care about doing well, that you want to succeed in the test etc.

Kant thinks that moral "oughts" — for example, "you ought not lie" — are *categorical*. They apply to people irrespective of how they feel about them.

The next thing we need is the idea of a "maxim". This is relatively simple and is best seen through the following examples. Imagine I'm considering whether to make a false promise. Perhaps I think that by falsely promising you that I will pay you back I will be more likely to get a loan from you. In that case my maxim is something like "*whenever I can benefit from making a false promise I should do so*".

Imagine I decide to exercise because I feel depressed, then I may be said to be acting on the maxim "*Whenever I feel depressed I will exercise*". A maxim is a general principle or rule upon which we act. We do not decide on a set of maxims, perhaps writing them down, and then try to live by them but rather a *maxim is the principle or rule that can make sense of an action whether or not we have thought about it in these terms.*

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7.2.5: The First Formulation of the Categorical Imperative

Let's put these bits together in relation to CI-1

...act only according to that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it become a universal law.

The "test" that CI-1 prescribes is the following. Consider the maxim on which you are thinking about acting, and ask whether you can either (i) conceive that it become a universal law, or (ii) will that it become a universal law. If a maxim fails on either (i) or (ii) then there is no good reason for you to act on that maxim and it is morally impermissible to do so. If it passes the CI test, then it is morally permissible.

Kant is *not* saying that the CI-1 test is a way of working out what is and what is not moral. Presumably we can think of lots of maxims, which are non-moral, which pass the test, for example, "whenever I am bored I will watch TV".

Equally he is not saying that if a maxim cannot be universalized then it is morally impermissible. Some maxims are just mathematically impossible. For example, "whenever I am going to exercise I will do it for an above the average amount of time". This maxim cannot be universalized because we cannot conceive that everyone does something above "average".

Finally, it is worth remembering that the maxim must be able to be *willed* as a universal law. This is important because maxims such as "if your name is Jill and you are 5ft 11, you can lie" will fail to be universalized because you cannot will that your name is Jill or that your height is 5ft11. It has to be possible to will as a universal law and for this to be true it must be at least possible for it actually to come about. This shows that the common concern that we can get any maxim to pass the CI-1 test by simply adding more and more specific details, such as names, heights or locations, *fail*s. This is very abstract (what did we tell you about Kant's work!). Let us consider an example.

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7.2.6: Perfect and Imperfect Duties

Recall the example of making a false promise to secure a loan. The maxim is "*whenever I can benefit from doing so, I should make a false promise*". The question is whether I could conceive or will that this become a universal law.

I could not. If everyone followed this maxim then we would all believe everyone else could make a false promise if it would benefit them to do so. Kant thinks such a situation is not conceivable because the very idea of making a promise relies on trust. But if "whenever it is of benefit to you, you can make false promises" was to become a universal law then there would be no trust and hence no promising. So by simply thinking about the idea of promising and lying we see the maxim will fail the test and, because we cannot universalize the maxim, then making a false promise becomes morally impermissible. This is true universally for all people in all circumstances for anyone can, in principle, go through the same line of reasoning.

A maxim failing at (i) is what Kant calls a *contradiction in conception*, and failing at (i) means we are dealing with what Kant calls a *perfect duty*. In our example we have shown we have a perfect duty not to make false promises.

Consider another example. Imagine that someone in need asks us for money but we decide not to help them. In this case our maxim is "whenever someone is in need and asks for money do not give them money". Does this pass the CI-1 test?

No it fails the CI-1 test. Although it is true that the maxim passes (i) not giving to the needy does not threaten *the very idea* of giving money away. Kant thinks that anyone thinking about this will see that that maxim will fail at (ii) and hence it is morally impermissible. Here is why.

You cannot know if you will be in need in the future and presumably you would want to be helped if you were in need. In which case you are being inconsistent if you willed that "people should not help those in need" should become a universal law. For you might want people to help those in need in the future, namely, *you*.

So we cannot will the maxim "whenever someone is in need do not help them" to become a universal moral law. Again this is a thought process that *anyone* can go through and it means that this moral claim is true universally for all people in all circumstances. Failing at (ii) is what Kant calls a *contradiction in will*, and failing at (ii) means we are dealing with what Kant calls an *imperfect duty*.

It is absolutely key to recognize that CI-1 is not simply asking "what if everyone did that?" CI-1 is *not a form of Utilitarianism* (see Chapter 1.1). Kant is not saying that it is wrong to make false promises because if people did then the world would be a horrible place. Rather Kant is asking about whether we can *conceive or will* the maxim to become a universal law.

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7.2.7: Second Formulation of the Categorical Imperative

The second formulation (CI-2) is the following:

So act that you use humanity, in your own person as well as in the person of any other, always at the same time as an end, never merely as a means.

Kant thinks that CI-1 and CI-2 are two sides of the same coin, though precisely how they are related is a matter of scholarly debate. Put very simply CI-2 says you should not use people, because if you do, you are failing to treat them as a rational agent and this is morally wrong.

For example, if I use your essay without your knowledge then I have not treated you as a rational agent. I would have done had I asked you for your essay and you had freely chosen to let me have it. But given that I did not ask you, I was in a sense *making choices on your behalf* and thus did not treat you as a rational agent. So according to Kant I should always treat you as an end not a means. I should always treat you as a free rational agent.

Kant's theory then has a way of respecting the *dignity* of people. We should treat people with respect and with dignity purely on the basis that they are rational agents, and not because of their race, gender, education, upbringing etc. From this you can also see that Kant's theory allows us to speak about "rights". If someone has a right then they have this right irrespective of gender, education, upbringing etc. For example, Jill has a right to free speech because she is a person, consequently that right will not disappear if she changes her location, personal circumstances, relationship status, political viewpoint etc. After all she does not stop being a person.

Importantly, CI-2 does not say that you *either* treat someone as a means *or* an end. I could treat someone as an end *by* treating them as a means. Suppose that you have freely decided to become a taxi driver. If I use you as a means by asking you to take me to the airport I am also treating you as an end. But Kant does not believe this to be morally wrong because I am respecting you as a rational agent; after all, you *chose* to be a taxi driver. Of course, if I get into your car and point a gun at your head and ask to be taken to the airport then I am not treating you as an end but rather solely as a means, which is wrong.

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7.2.8: The Third Formulation of the Categorical Imperative and Summary

The final formulation of the Categorical Imperative is a combination of CI-1 and CI-2. It asks us to imagine a kingdom which consists of only those people who act on CI-1. They never act on a maxim which cannot become a universal law. In such a kingdom people would treat people as ends, because CI-2 passes CI-1. This is why CI-3 is often called the "Kingdom of Ends" formulation:

...*every rational being must so act as if he were through his maxim always a lawmaking member in the universal kingdom of ends*.

In summary, we have seen that Kant thinks that acts have moral worth only if they are carried out for the sake of duty. Agents act for the sake of duty if they act out of respect for the moral law, which they do by following the Categorical Imperative in one of its formulations.

Consequently, Kant thinks that acts are wrong and right universally, irrespective of consequences and desires. If lying is wrong then it is wrong in all instances. From all this, it follows that we cannot be taught a set of moral rules for each and every situation and Kant believes that it is up to us to work it out for ourselves by thinking rationally.

There have been, and continue to be, many books and journal articles written about Kant's ethics. He has a profound and deep insight into the nature of morality and he raises some fundamental questions about what it is to be human. Kant's moral theory is radically *Egalitarian* as his theory is blind to individual personal circumstances, race, gender and ethnicity. Everyone is equal before the moral law!

Related to this, his theory respects the rights of individuals and, relatedly, their dignity. Any theory that is to have a hope of capturing our notion of rights needs to be able to respect the thought that a right is not something that disappears if circumstances change. Jill has a right to life, period; we do not say Jill has a right to life "if..." and then have to fill in the blanks. This is precisely something that Kant's theory can give us. CI-1 generates maxims which do not have exceptions and CI-2 tells us that we should *always* treat everyone as an end in themselves and *never* solely as a means to an end. It tells us, for example, that we ought not to kill Jill, and this holds true in all circumstances.

There are, though, a number of tough questions that Kant's work raises. We consider some of these below. However, as with all the philosophical ideas we discuss in this book, Kant's work is still very much alive and has defenders across the world. Before we turn to these worries, we work through an example that Kant gives regarding suicide.

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7.2.9: Kant on Suicide

Kant is notoriously stingy with examples. One he does mention is suicide. This is an emotive topic and linked to questions about mental health and religion. An attraction of Kant's view is the ability to apply his Categorical Imperatives in a dispassionate way. His framework should allow us to "plug in" the issue and "get out" an answer. Let's see how this might work.

Kant thinks that suicide is always wrong and has very harsh words for someone who attempts suicide

> *He who so behaves, who has no respect for human nature and makes a thing of himself, becomes for everyone an Object of freewill. We are free to treat him as a beast, as a thing, and to use him for our sport as we do a horse or a dog, for he is no longer a human being; he has made a thing of himself, and, having himself discarded his humanity, he cannot expect that others should respect humanity in him.*

But why does he think this? How does this fit with Kant's Categorical Imperatives? We will look at the first two formulations.

Fundamental to remember is that for Kant the motive that drives *all* suicide is "avoid evil". By which he means avoiding suffering, pain, and other negative outcomes in one's life. All suicide attempts are due to the fact that we love ourselves and thus want to "avoid evils" that may befall us.

Imagine then that I decide to commit suicide. Given what we have just said about my motives this means I will be acting on this maxim: "From self-love I make as my principle to shorten my life when its continued duration threatens more evil than it promises satisfaction".

Following CI-1 the question then is whether it is possible to universalise this maxim? Kant thinks not. For him it is unclear how we could will it that all rational agents as the result of *self-love* can *destroy themselves* when their continued existence threatens more evil than it promises satisfaction. For Kant self-love leading to the destruction of the self is a *contradiction*. Thus he thinks that we have a *perfect* (rather than an imperfect) duty to ourselves not to commit suicide. To do so is morally wrong. This is how Kant puts it:

> *One sees at once a contradiction in a system of nature whose law would destroy life [suicide] by means of the very same feeling that acts so as to stimulate the furtherance of life [self-love], and hence there could be no existence as a system of nature. Therefore, such a maxim cannot possibly hold as a universal law of nature and is, consequently, wholly opposed to the supreme principle of all duty.*

Notice a few odd things here in relation to CI-1. The point about universalisation seems irrelevant. Kant could have just said it is a contradiction to will from self-love the destruction of oneself. It seems that there is nothing added by asking us to consider this point universalised. It does not add weight to the claim that it is a contradiction.

Second, it is not really a "contradiction" at all! It is different to the lying promise example. In this it seems that the very concept of a promise relies on trust, which lying would destroy. In contrast in the suicide case the "contradiction" seems more like a by-product of Kant's assumption regarding the motivation of suicidal people. So we can avoid the "contradiction" if we allow for the possibility that suicide need not be driven by self-love. If this were true then there would be no "contradiction". Hence, it seems wrong to call the duty not to kill oneself — if such a duty exists — a "perfect" duty. So the first formulation does not give Kant the conclusion that suicide is morally wrong.

Moving to the second formulation. This helps us understand Kant's harsh assessment of people attempting suicide. Remember he calls such people "objects" or "beasts" or "things". So, what is the difference between beasts or objects or things, and humans? The answer is that we are *rational*. Recall, that for Kant our rationality is of fundamental value. If anyone's actions do not recognize someone else's rationality then they have done something morally wrong. This amounts to treating them as merely means to our own end. Given all this you can see what Kant is getting at. For him committing suicide is treating yourself as a mere means to some end — namely the end of avoiding pain and suffering etc. — and not an end in itself. You are treating yourself as a "beast" a "thing" an "object", not as a human being with the gift of reason. This is morally wrong.

Moreover, if you do this, then others treating you with respect *as a rational person* can conclude that you also want others to treat you in this way. Because if you are rational then you must think that it is OK to universalise the maxim that we can treat others as objects, beast and thing. They can thus treat you as a beast, object, and thing and still be treating you with respect as a rationale agent. With regard to attempting suicide your action is wrong because you have ignored your own rationality. You have treated

yourself as a mere means to an end.

But, like the first formulation this is very weak. It is unclear why in attempting suicide you are treating yourself as a mere means to an end. You might think you are respecting your rationality *by* considering suicide. Recall, Kant says that it is sometimes fine to treat people as a means to an end, e.g. a taxi driver. It is fine where people have given consent for you to treat them that way. In that case, suicide might be like the taxi driver case. We have freely decided to treat ourselves as a means to an end. We are, then, treating ourselves as a rational agent and not doing something morally wrong by committing suicide.

There are some other things that Kant says about the wrongness of suicide that do not link to the Categorical Imperatives. For example, he talks about humans being the property of God and hence our lives not being something we can choose to extinguish. However, we need not discuss this here.

There is a consensus between Kant scholars that, as it stands, Kant's argument against suicide fails. There are some though who use Kant's ideas as a starting point for a more convincing argument against suicide. For example, see **J. David Velleman** (1999) and **Michael Cholbi** (2000).

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7.2.10: Problems and Responses- Conflicting Duties

If moral duties apply in *all* circumstances, then what happens when we have duties which conflict? Imagine that you have hidden some Jewish people in your basement in Nazi Germany. Imagine then that an SS officer knocks at your door and asks if you are hiding Jews? What might Kant's theory tell us to do? Our duty is to refrain from lying so does this mean we are morally required to tell the SS officer our secret? If this is the conclusion then it makes Kant's theory morally repugnant.

However, *there is no requirement in Kant's theory to tell the truth*, there is just a requirement *not to lie*. Lying is about intentional deceit, so maybe in this example there is a way not to lie. For example, if we simply stayed silent.

Even if we respond in this sort of way in this example, presumably we can engineer an example that would not allow for this. For example, perhaps we are in a law court and the SS officer asks us under oath. In that example, silence would not be an option. This certainly would seem to count against Kant's theory for it does seem morally wrong to reveal the location of the Jewish people.

The main point though is that Kant thinks we need to take the features of each individual situation into account. He does not just want us to mindlessly apply generic rules whilst paying no attention to what is before us. So **Peter Rickman** writes regarding these types of cases:

...it should be plain that more than one imperative/moral principle is relevant to the situation. Certainly we should tell the truth; but do we not also have a duty to protect an innocent man from harm? Further, do we not have an obligation to fight evil? We are confronted with a conflict of values here. Unfortunately, as far as I know, there is no explicit discussion of this issue in Kant. One could assume, however, that his general approach of distinguishing the lesser from the greater evil should be applied. I think Kant might say that although lying is never right, it might be the lesser evil in some cases.

So the point is not that these sorts of examples are "knock down" criticisms of Kant's theory but rather that Kant's theory is underspecified and fails to give guidance with these specific sorts of cases. In fact, we might think that this is an advantage of his theory that has given us the supreme principle of morality and the general way of proceeding but has left it up to us to work out what to do in each situation. We will leave the reader to see if this can be done and in particular, whether it can be done in a way consistent with the other aspects of his moral theory.

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7.2.11: Problems and Responses- The Role of Intuitions

One of the most common criticisms levelled at Kant's theory is that it is simply counter intuitive. For example, lying, for him, is morally impermissible in all instances irrespective of the consequences. Yet we seem to be able to generate thought experiments that show that this is a morally repugnant position.

However, in Kant's defence we might ask why we should use our intuitions as any form of test for a moral theory. Intuitions are notoriously fickle and unreliable. Even if you pick the oddest view you can think of, you would probably find some people at some point in time that would find this view "intuitive". So how worried should we be if Kant's theory leads to counter intuitive consequences? This then raises a more general methodological question to keep at the forefront of your mind when reading this book. What role, if any, should intuitions have in the formation and the testing of moral theory?

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7.2.12: Problem and Responses- Categorical Imperatives and Etiquette

Kant argues that what we are morally required to do is a matter of reason. If people reason in the right way then they will recognise, for example, that lying is wrong. However, some philosophers, for example **Philippa Foot** (1920–2010), have worried about this link to reason. The strength of Foot's challenge is that she agrees that morality is a system of Categorical Imperatives but says that this *need not be due to reason*.

Foot uses the example of *etiquette* to motivate her argument. Rules of etiquette seem to be Categorical Imperatives but are *not* grounded in reason. Consider an example. I had a friend at university who was a sportsman. He was in many teams, his degree was in sports and exercise and if there were ever a spare minute he would be running, on his bike or in the pool. Unsurprisingly he wore a tracksuit and trainers all the time!

During our second year at university a mutual friend died. There was a big formal funeral arranged. My friend decided to go to this funeral in his tracksuit and trainers. I asked him about this and his response was that it was what he liked wearing. However, to my mind at least, this reason, which was based on his desire, did not change the fact that he really ought not have worn a tracksuit. Foot would agree and thinks that rules of etiquette are categorical because they are not dependent on any particular desires someone would have.

However, even if they are categorical, Foot thinks that rules of etiquette are not rules of reason. We do not think that if we reasoned correctly we would recognise that we ought not to wear tracksuits to funerals, or (to think of some other rules of etiquette) we ought not to reply to a letter written in the third person in the first person, or we ought not to put our feet on the dinner table during a meal etc. It is not simply a matter of thinking in the right way but rather to recognise these "oughts" as part of a shared cultural practice.

So although this does not show that Kant is wrong, it does throw down a challenge to him. That is, we need independent reasons to think that the *categorical* nature of moral "oughts" are based on *reason* and not just part of a shared cultural practice. To respond to this challenge, the Kantian would have to put forward the argument that in the particular case of moral "oughts", we have a good argument to ground the categorical nature in reason rather than institutional practices.

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7.2.13: Problems and Responses- The Domain of Morality

Kant thinks that the domain of morality is merely the domain of reasons and as far as we are agents who can reason then we have duties and rights and people ought to treat us with dignity. The flip side of this is that non-rational agents, such as non-human animals, do not have rights and we can, according to Kant, treat them as we like!

The challenge to Kant's theory is that the scope of morality seems bigger than the scope of reasons. People do think that we have moral obligations toward non-rational agents. Consider someone kicking a cat. We might think that *morally* they ought not to do this. However, Kant's theory does not back this up because, as far as we know, cats are not rational agents. Despite it not being wrong to treat animals in this way, Kant *still thinks that we should not*, because if we did, then we would be more likely to treat humans in this way.

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7.2.14: Summary

Kant's moral theory is extremely complicated and badly expressed. However, it is hugely influential and profound. As a system builder Kant's work starts with rational reflection from which he attempts to develop a complete moral system.

He starts from the notion of duty. He shows that what allows us to act for the sake of duty is the good will, and that the good will is unconditionally good. If we want to act for the sake of duty we need to act out of respect for the moral law and this amounts to following the Categorical Imperative. Kant argues that in following the Categorical Imperative, agents will converge on what is morally permissible. Hence Kant can talk about absolute and objective moral truths.

COMMON STUDENT MISTAKES

- Confusing acting in *accordance with* duty and acting *for the sake of* duty.
- Thinking that Kant's theory has no room for emotions.
- Thinking that Kant's Categorical Imperative can be summed up in the question: "how would you like it if everyone did that"?
- Thinking that the Categorical Imperative is a form of Utilitarianism.
- Thinking Kant believes you can never treat someone as a means to an end.

ISSUES TO CONSIDER

1. Think about your life. Do you think there are things you "ought to do"?
2. Do you think that there are things you ought to do irrespective of your desires and inclinations?
3. What are Categorical and Hypothetical Imperatives? Do you think that rules of etiquette are categorical or hypothetical?
4. How might Kant respond to the SS officer example?
5. Can you think of some examples where you might be treating someone solely as means-to-an-end?
6. Would capital punishment pass the CI-2 test?
7. How might CI-2 relate to prostitution? Do you think that Kant would say that it is morally permissible?
8. Why might Kant's theory be well placed to respect people's rights?
9. Do you think we have any moral obligations towards animals? What would Kant say?
10. What role do you think intuitions should have in assessing moral theories?

KEY TERMINOLOGY

A priori

Categorical Imperative

Deontological

Duty

Egalitarian

Good will

Hypothetical Imperative

Maxim

Rationalist

Rights

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7.3: ARISTOTELIAN VIRTUE ETHICS

7.3.1: Aristotelian Virtue Ethics Introduction

7.3.2: The Function Argument

7.3.3: Aristotelian Goodness

7.3.4: Eudaimonia and Virtue

7.3.5: Developing the Virtues

7.3.6: Practical Wisdom (Phronesis)

7.3.7: Voluntary Actions, Involuntary Actions and Moral Responsibility

7.3.8: Objection- Unclear Guidance

7.3.9: Objection- Clashing Virtues

7.3.10: Objection- Circularity

7.3.11: Objection- Contribution to Eudaimonia

7.3.12: Moral Good and Individual Good

7.3.13: Summary

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7.3.1: Aristotelian Virtue Ethics Introduction

Aristotle (384–322 BC) was a scholar in disciplines such as ethics, metaphysics, biology and botany, amongst others. It is fitting, therefore, that his moral philosophy is based around assessing the broad characters of human beings rather than assessing singular acts in isolation. Indeed, this is what separates Aristotelian Virtue Ethics from both Utilitarianism and Kantian Ethics.

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7.3.2: The Function Argument

Aristotle was a *teleologist*, a term related to, but not to be confused with, the label "teleological" as applied to normative ethical theories such as Utilitarianism. Aristotle was a teleologist because he believed that every object has what he referred to as a final cause. The Greek term *telos* refers to what we might call a purpose, goal, end or true final function of an object. Indeed, those of you studying Aristotle in units related to the Philosophy of Religion may recognise the link between Aristotle's general teleological worldview and his study of ethics.

Aristotle claims that "...for all things that have a function or activity, the good and the 'well' is thought to reside in the function". Aristotle's claim is essentially that in achieving its function, goal or end, an object achieves its own good. Every object has this type of a true function and so every object has a way of achieving goodness. The *telos* of a chair, for example, may be to provide a seat and a chair is a good chair when it supports the curvature of the human bottom without collapsing under the strain. Equally, says Aristotle, what makes good sculptors, artists and flautists is the successful and appropriate performance of their functions as sculptors, artists and flautists.

This teleological (function and purpose) based worldview is the necessary backdrop to understanding Aristotle's ethical reasoning. For, just as a chair has a true function or end, so *Aristotle believes human beings have a telos*. Aristotle identifies what the good for a human being is in virtue of working out what the function of a human being is, as per his Function Argument.

Function Argument

1. All objects have a *telos*.
2. An object is good when it properly secures its *telos*.

   Given the above, hopefully these steps of the argument are clear so far. At this point, Aristotle directs his thinking towards human beings specifically.

3. The *telos* of a human being is to *reason*.
4. The good for a human being is, therefore, acting in accordance with reason.

In working out our true function, Aristotle looks to that feature that *separates man from other living animals*. According to Aristotle, what separates mankind from the rest of the world is our ability not only to reason but to *act on reasons*. Thus, just as the function of a chair can be derived from its *uniquely differentiating characteristic*, so the function of a human being is related to our uniquely differentiating characteristic and we achieve the good when we act in accordance with this true function or *telos*.

The notion that man has a true function may sound odd, particularly if you do not have a religious worldview of your own. However, to you especially Aristotle wrote that "...as eye, hand, foot and in general each of the parts evidently has a function, may one lay it down that man similarly has a function apart from all these?"

On the basis that we would ascribe a function to our constituent parts — we know what makes a good kidney for example — so too Aristotle thinks it far from unreasonable that we have a function as a whole. Indeed, this may be plausible if we consider other objects. The component parts of a car, for example, have individual functions but a car itself, as a whole, has its own function that determines whether or not it is a good car.

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7.3.3: Aristotelian Goodness

On the basis of the previous argument, the good life for a human being is achieved when we act in accordance with our *telos*. However, rather than leaving the concept of goodness as general and abstract we can say more specifically what the good for a human involves. Aristotle uses the Greek term *eudaimonia* to capture the state that we experience if we fully *achieve* a good life. According to Aristotle, *eudaimonia* is the state that all humans should aim for as it is the aim and end of human existence. To reach this state, we must ourselves act in accordance with reason. Properly understanding what Aristotle means by *eudaimonia* is crucial to understanding his Virtue Ethical moral position.

Eudaimonia has been variously translated and no perfect translation has yet been identified. While all translations have their own issues, *eudaimonia understood as flourishing* is perhaps the most helpful translation and improves upon a simple translation of happiness. The following example may make this clearer.

Naomi is an extremely talented pianist. Some days, she plays music that simply makes her happy, perhaps the tune from the television soap opera “Neighbours” or a rendition of “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star”. On other days, she plays complex music such as the supremely difficult Chopin-Godowsky *Études*. These performances may also make Naomi happy, but she seems to be flourishing as a pianist only with the latter performances rather than the former. If we use the language of function, both performances make Naomi happy but she fulfils her function as a pianist (and *is* a good pianist) only when she flourishes with the works of greater complexity.

Flourishing in life may make us happy but happiness itself is not necessarily well aligned with acting in accordance with our *telos*. Perhaps, if we prefer the term happiness as a translation for *eudaimonia* we mean really or *truly* happy, but it may be easier to stay with the understanding of *eudaimonia* as flourishing when describing the state of acting in accordance with our true function.

Aristotle concludes that a life is *eudaimon* (adjective of *eudaimonia*) when it involves “...the active exercise of the mind in conformity with perfect goodness or virtue”. *Eudaimonia* is secured not as the result exercising of our physical or animalistic qualities but as the result of the exercise of our distinctly human rational and cognitive aspects.

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7.3.4: Eudaimonia and Virtue

The quotation provided at the end of section three was the first direct reference to virtue in the explanatory sections of this chapter. With Aristotle's theoretical presuppositions now laid out, we can begin to properly explain and evaluate his conception of the virtues and their link to moral thinking.

According to Aristotle, *virtues are character dispositions or personality traits*. This focus on our dispositions and our character, rather than our actions in isolation, is what earns Aristotelian Virtue Ethics the label of being an *agent-centred* moral theory rather than an *act-centred* moral theory.

Act-Centred Moral Theories

Utilitarianism and Kantian Ethics are two different examples of act-centred moral theories due to their focus on actions when it comes to making moral assessments and judgments. Act-centred moral theories may be teleological or deontological, absolutist or relativist, but they share a common worldview in that particular actions are bearers of moral value — either being right or wrong.

Agent-Centred Moral Theories

Aristotelian Virtue Ethics is an agent-centred theory in virtue of a primary focus on people and their characters rather than singular actions. For Aristotle, morality has more to do with the question "how should I *be*?" rather than "what should I *do*?" If we answer the first question then, as we see later in this chapter, the second question may begin to take care of itself. When explaining and evaluating Aristotelian Virtue Ethics you must keep in mind this focus on character rather than specific comments on the morality of actions.

Aristotle refers to virtues as character traits or psychological dispositions. Virtues are those particular dispositions that are appropriately related to the situation and, to link back to our function, encourage actions that are in accordance with reason. Again, a more concrete example will make clear how Aristotle identifies virtues in practice.

All of us, at one time or another, experience feelings of anger. For example, I may become angry when my step-son thoughtlessly eats through the remaining crisps without saving any for others, or he may feel anger when he has to wait an extra minute or two to be picked up at work because his step-father is juggling twenty-six different tasks and momentarily loses track of time (how totally unfair of him...). Anyway, as I was saying, back to Aristotle, "Anyone can become angry — that is easy. But to be angry with the right person, to the right degree, at the right time, for the right purpose, and in the right way — that is not easy".

For Aristotle, *virtue is not a feeling* itself but an appropriate psychological disposition in response to that feeling; the proper response. The correct response to a feeling is described as acting on the basis of the *Golden Mean*, a response that is neither excessive nor deficient. The table below makes this more apparent.

Feeling/Emotion	**Vice of Deficiency**	**Virtuous Disposition (Golden Mean)**	**Vice of Excess**
Anger	Lack of spirit	Patience	Irascibility
Shame	Shyness	Modesty	Shamefulness
Fear	Cowardice	Courage	Rashness

Indignation	Spitefulness	Righteousness	Envy

Anger is a feeling and therefore is neither a virtue nor a vice. However, the correct response to anger — the Golden Mean between two extremes — is patience, rather than a lack of spirit or irascibility. Virtues are not feelings, but characteristic dispositional responses that, when viewed holistically, define our characters and who we are.

The Golden Mean ought not to be viewed as suggesting that a virtuous disposition is always one that gives rise to a "middling" action. If someone puts their life on the line, when unarmed, in an attempt to stop a would-be terrorist attack, then their action may be rash rather than courageous. However, if armed with a heavy, blunt instrument their life-risking action may be courageously virtuous rather than rash. The Golden Mean is not to be understood as suggesting that we always act somewhere between complete inaction and breathless exuberance, but as suggesting that we act between the vices of excess and deficiency; such action may well involve *extreme* courage or *exceptional* patience.

In addition to feelings, Aristotle also suggests that we may virtuously respond to situations. He suggests the following examples.

Situation	**Vice of Deficiency**	**Virtuous Disposition (Golden Mean)**	**Vice of Excess**
Social conduct	Cantankerousness	Friendliness	Self-serving flattery
Conversation	Boorishness	Wittiness	Buffoonery
Giving money	Stinginess	Generosity	Profligacy

We must keep in mind the agent-centred nature of Aristotelian Virtue Ethics when considering these examples. A person does not cease to have a witty disposition in virtue of a single joke that might err on the side of buffoonery, or cease to be generous because they fail to donate to charity on one occasion. Our psychological dispositions, virtuous or not, are only to be assessed by judgment of a person's general character and observation over more than single-act situations. If we act in accordance with reason and fulfill our function as human beings, our behaviour will generally reflect our virtuous personality traits and dispositions.

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7.3.5: Developing the Virtues

In a quote widely attributed to Aristotle, **Will Durrant** (1885–1981) sums up the Aristotelian view by saying that "...we are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit". It is fairly obvious that we cannot become excellent at something overnight. Making progress in any endeavour is always a journey that requires both effort and practice over time. Aristotle holds that the same is true for human beings attempting to develop their virtuous character traits in attempt to live the good life. You may feel yourself coming to an Aristotelian Virtue Ethical view after reading this chapter and therefore be moved to become wittier, more courageous and more generous but you cannot simply acquire these traits by decision; rather, you must *live* these traits in order to develop them.

Cultivating a virtuous character is something that happens by practice. Aristotle compares the development of the skill of virtue to the development of other skills. He says that "...men become builders by building" and "...we become just by doing just acts". We might know that a brick must go into a particular place but we are good builders only when we know how to place that brick properly. Building requires practical skill and not merely intellectual knowledge and the same applies to developing virtuous character traits. Ethical characters are developed by practical learning and habitual action and not merely by intellectual teaching.

In the end, the virtuous individual will become comfortable in responding to feelings/situations virtuously just as the good builder becomes comfortable responding to the sight of various tools and a set of plans. A skilled builder will not need abstract reflection when it comes to knowing how to build a wall properly, and nor will a skilled cyclist need abstract reflection on how to balance his speed correctly as he goes around a corner.

Analogously, a person skilled in the virtues will not need abstract reflection when faced with a situation in which friendliness and generosity are possibilities; they will simply know on a more intuitive level how to act. This is not to say that builders, cyclists and virtuous people will not sometimes need to reflect specifically on what to do in abnormal or difficult situations (e.g. moral dilemmas, in the case of ethics) but in normal situations appropriate responses will be natural for those who are properly skilled.

It is the need to become skilled when developing virtuous character traits that leads Aristotle to suggest that becoming virtuous will require a lifetime of work. Putting up a single bookshelf does not make you a skilled builder any more than a single act of courage makes you a courageous and virtuous person. It is the repetition of skill that determines your status and the development of virtuous characters requires a lifetime of work rather than a single week at a Virtue Ethics Bootcamp.

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7.3.6: Practical Wisdom (Phronesis)

Aristotle does offer some specifics regarding how exactly we might, to use a depressingly modern phrase, “upskill” in order to become more virtuous. Aristotle suggests that the aim of an action will be made clear by the relevant virtuous characteristic as revealed by the Golden Mean; for example, our aim in a situation may be to respond courageously or generously. It is by developing our skill of practical wisdom (translation of “*phronesis*”) that we become better at ascertaining what exactly courage or generosity amounts to in a specific situation and how exactly we might achieve it.

By developing the skill of practical wisdom, we can properly put our virtuous character traits into practice. For the Aristotelian, practical wisdom may actually be the most important virtuous disposition or character trait to develop as without the skill of practical wisdom it may be difficult to actually practice actions that are witty rather than boorish, or courageous rather than cowardly. Imagine trying to be a philosopher without an acute sense of logical reasoning; you would struggle because this seems to be a foundational good on which other philosophical skills rely. So too it may be with the virtues, practical wisdom supports our instinctive knowledge of how to respond virtuously to various feelings, emotions and situations.

If this still seems to be somewhat opaque, then we may develop our sense of practical wisdom by looking at the actions of others who we do take to be virtuous. A child, for example, will most certainly need to learn how to be virtuous by following examples of others. If we are unsure in our own ability to discern what a courageous response in a given situation is, then we may be guided by the behaviour of Socrates, Jesus, Gandhi, Mandela or King, as examples. If we learn from the wisdom and virtue of others, then just as a building apprentice learns from a master so too virtue apprentices can learn from those more skilled than they in practising virtue. Hopefully, such virtue apprentices will eventually reach a point where they can stand on their own two feet, with their personally developed sense of practical wisdom.

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7.3.7: Voluntary Actions, Involuntary Actions and Moral Responsibility

Despite the focus on agents and not actions, Aristotle does have something to contribute when it comes to discussions of potential *moral responsibility* as associated with particular actions. We can separate actions into two obvious categories:

1. Voluntary actions
2. Involuntary actions

Very broadly, an action is voluntary when it is freely chosen and involuntary when it is not — these terms are more precisely defined next, in line with Aristotle's ideas. These distinctions matter in ethics because a person might be held to be morally responsible for their voluntary actions but not for their involuntary actions. According to Aristotle, an action is voluntary unless it is affected by *force* or *ignorance*, as understood in the following ways.

Physical Force

Imagine that Reuben is driving his car on his way home from work. Out of the blue, his passenger grabs his hand and forces him to turn the steering wheel, sending the car into oncoming traffic. Without this physical force, Reuben would not have turned the wheel and he very much regrets the damage that is caused. According to Aristotle, Reuben's action is involuntary because of this external physical force and so he is not morally responsible for the crash.

Psychological Force

Think of David, working at a bank when a group of thieves break in armed with guns. David is told that if he does not open the safe then he will be killed. Under this extreme psychological pressure, Aristotle would accept that David's opening of the safe is involuntary, because David would not have opened the safe otherwise and he very much regrets doing so. On this basis, David is not morally responsible in any way for the theft.

In addition to force, ignorance of a certain type can also support an action being labelled as involuntary.

Action from Ignorance

Rhys, a talented musician, wishes to perform a surprise concert for a friend and has been practicing songs from the Barry Manilow back catalogue for weeks. However, in the days before the surprise concert his friend, unbeknown to Rhys, develops an intense and very personal dislike for Manilow. Thus, when Rhys takes to the stage and blasts out his rendition of the classic tune "Copacabana" his friend storms off in much distress. In this situation, Aristotle would accept that Rhys acted involuntarily when causing offence because he was unaware of the changed circumstances; he acted from ignorance when performing the song rather than from malice. Without this epistemic (or knowledge-related) barrier, Rhys would not have acted as he did and he very much regrets the distress caused. For these reasons, Rhys bears no moral responsibility for the upset resulting from his song choice.

Crucially, Aristotle does not allow that all action that involves ignorance can be classed as involuntary, thereby blocking associated claims of moral responsibility.

Action in Ignorance

Laurence has had too much to drink and chooses to climb a traffic light with a traffic cone on his head. Laurence's alcohol consumption has made him ignorant, at least temporarily, of the consequences of this action in terms of social relationships, employment and police action. However, for Aristotle this would not mean that his action was involuntary because Laurence acts in ignorance rather than from ignorance due to an external epistemic (or knowledge-based) barrier. Laurence does not, therefore, escape moral responsibility as a result of his self-created ignorance.

Finally, Aristotle also identifies a third form of action — non-voluntary action — that is also related to ignorant action.

Action from Ignorance with No Regret

Return to the case of Rhys and his Manilow performance but remove any sense of regret on Rhys' part for the distress caused. If, at the moment that the epistemic gap is bridged and Rhys learns of his friend's newly acquired musical views, he feels no regret for his action, then Aristotle would class it as a non-voluntary rather than involuntary action. The action cannot be voluntary as Rhys acted from ignorance, but it is not obviously involuntary as, without a sense of regret, it may have been that Rhys would have performed the action even if he knew what was going to happen.

The detail above is important and your own examples will help your understanding and explanations. The summary, however, is refreshingly simple. *If an action is voluntary, then it is completed free from force and ignorance and we can hold the actor morally responsible. However, if the action is involuntary then the actor is not morally responsible as they act on the basis of force or from ignorance.*

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7.3.8: Objection- Unclear Guidance

Consider yourself caught in the middle of a moral dilemma. Wanting to know what to do you may consult the guidance offered by Utilitarianism or Kantian Ethics and discover that various specific actions you could undertake are morally right or morally wrong. Moving to seek the advice of Aristotelian Virtue Ethics, you may find cold comfort from suggestions that you act generously, patiently and modestly whilst avoiding self-serving flattery and envy. Rather than knowing how to live in general, you may seek knowledge of what to actually do in this case. Virtue Ethics may therefore be accused of being a theory, not of helpful moral guidance, but of unhelpful and non-specific moral platitudes.

In response, the virtue ethicist may remind us that we can learn how to act from considering how truly virtuous people might respond in this situation, but this response raises its own worry — how can we identify who is virtuous, or apply their actions to a potentially novel situation? Although a defender of Virtue Ethics, **Rosalind Hursthouse** (1943–) gives a voice to this common objection, putting forward the worry directly by saying that "'Virtue Ethics does not, because it cannot, tell us what we should do... It gives us no guidance whatsoever. Who are the virtuous agents [that we should look to for guidance]?" If all the virtue ethicist can offer to a person wondering how to act — perhaps wondering whether or not to report a friend to the police, or whether or not to change careers to work in the charity sector — is "look to the moral exemplars of Socrates and Gandhi and how they would act in this situation", then we might well sympathise with the objector since very often our moral dilemmas are new situations, not merely old ones repeated. Asking "what would Jesus do", if we deem Jesus to be a morally virtuous role model, might not seem very helpful for an MP trying to determine whether or not to vote for an increase in subsidies for renewable energy technologies at huge expense, and potential financial risk, to the tax-payer (to take a deliberately specific example).

Despite her statement of the objection, Hursthouse thinks that this is an unfair characterisation of Virtue Ethics. Hursthouse suggests that Virtue Ethics provides guidance in the form of "v-rules". These are guiding rules of the form "do what is honest" or "avoid what is envious". These rules may not be specific, but they do stand as guidance across lots of different moral situations. Whether or not you believe that this level of guidance is suitable for a normative moral theory is a judgment that you should make yourself and then defend.

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7.3.9: Objection- Clashing Virtues

Related to the general objection from lack of guidance, a developed objection may question how we are supposed to cope with situations in which virtues seem to clash. Courageous behaviour may, in certain cases, mean a lack of friendliness; generosity may threaten modesty. In these situations, the suggestion to “be virtuous” may again seem to be unhelpfully vague.

To this particular objection, the Aristotelian virtue ethicist can invoke the concept of practical wisdom and suggest that the skilled and virtuous person will appropriately respond to complex moral situations. A Formula One car, for example, will be good when it has both raw speed and delicate handling and it is up to the skilled engineer to steer a path between these two virtues. So too a person with practical wisdom can steer a path between apparently clashing virtues in any given situation. Virtue ethicists have no interest in the creation of a codified moral rule book covering all situations and instead put the onus on the skill of the virtuous person when deciding how to act. Again, whether this is a strength or weakness is for you to decide and defend.

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7.3.10: Objection- Circularity

An entirely different objection to Aristotelian Virtue Ethics is based on a concern regarding logical circularity. According to Aristotle, the following statements seem to be correct:

1. An act is virtuous if it is an act that a virtuous person would commit in that circumstance.
2. A person is virtuous when they act in virtuous ways.

This, however, looks to be circular reasoning. If virtuous actions are understood in terms of virtuous people, but virtuous people are understood in terms of virtuous actions, then we have unhelpfully circular reasoning.

Julia Annas (1946–) responds to this apparent problem by arguing that there is nothing dangerously circular in this reasoning because it is simply a reflection of how we learn to develop our virtuous dispositions. Annas suggests the analogy of piano-playing:

1. Great piano playing is what great pianists do.
2. A pianist is great when he "does" great piano playing.

In this case, there does not seem to be any troubling circularity in reasoning. It is not the case that whatever a great pianist plays will be great, but rather that great pianists have the skills to make great music. So too it is with virtues, for virtuous people are not virtuous just because of their actual actions but because of who they are and how their actions are motivated. It is their skills and character traits that mean that, in practice, they provide a clear guide as to which actions are properly aligned with virtues. Thus, if we wish to decide whether or not an act is virtuous we can assess what a virtuous person would do in that circumstance, but this does not mean that what is virtuous is determined by the actions of a specifically virtuous individual. The issue is whether or not a person, with virtuous characteristics in the abstract, would actually carry that action out. Virtuous people are living and breathing concrete guides, helping us to understand the actions associated with abstract virtuous character dispositions.

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7.3.11: Objection- Contribution to Eudaimonia

The final distinct objection to Aristotelian Virtue Ethics considered in this chapter stems from the Aristotelian claim that living virtuously will contribute to our ability to secure a *eudaimon* life. A challenge to this view may be based on the fact that certain dispositions may seem to be virtuous but may not actually seem to contribute to our flourishing or securing the good life.

As an example of this possible objection in practice, consider the following. Shelley is often described as generous to a fault and regularly dedicates large amounts of her time to helping others to solve problems at considerable cost, in terms of both time and effort, to herself. Working beyond the limits that can reasonably be expected of her, we may wish to describe Shelley as virtuous given her generous personality. However, by working herself so hard for others, we may wonder if Shelley is unduly limiting *her own* ability to flourish.

Responses to this initial statement of the objection are not hard to imagine. We may say that Shelley has either succumbed to a vice of excess and is profligate with her time rather than generous, or we may accept that she is generous rather than profligate and accept the uncomfortable conclusion and say that this virtuous character trait is helping her to flourish. This second claim may seem more plausible if we ruled out a description of Shelley wasting her time.

Still, this objection may stand up if you can envisage a situation in which someone could be properly described as rash rather than courageous or wasteful rather than generous and, because of these traits, actually be contributing to their own flourishing. You should consider your own possible cases if you seek to support this general objection.

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7.3.12: Moral Good and Individual Good

For Aristotle, moral goodness and individual goodness may seem to be intimately linked. After all, a virtuous person will be charitable and friendly etc. and as a result of these characteristics and dispositions will both advance their own journey towards *eudaimonia* and make life better for others. Hedonism (which claims that pleasure is the only source of well-being — see Chapter 1.1), as a rival theory attempting to outline what is required for well-being, might be thought to fail because it downplays the importance of acting in accordance with reason, so hedonists do not therefore live according to their *telos* or true function.

Aristotle says of his ideally virtuous person that they will have a unified psychology — that their rational and non-rational psychologies will speak with one voice. On the contrary, the non-virtuous person will have a psychology in conflict between their rational and non-rational elements. In considering who has the better life from their own individual perspectives — the happy Hedonist or the Aristotelian virtuous person — you should again form your own reasoned judgment.

It is important to note, as we conclude this chapter, that Aristotle does not suggest that living a virtuous life is sufficient to guarantee a state of *eudaimonia* for a person. External factors such as poverty, disease or untimely death may scupper a person's advance towards *eudaimonia*. However, for Aristotle, being virtuous is necessary for the achievement of *eudaimonia*; without the development of virtues it is impossible for a person to flourish even if they avoid poverty, disease, loneliness etc.

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7.3.13: Summary

Aristotelian Virtue Ethics is very different in nature to the other act-centred normative moral theories considered in this book. Whether this, in itself, is a virtue or a vice is an issue for your own judgment. The lack of a codified and fixed moral rule book is something many view as a flaw, while others perceive it as the key strength of the theory. Some, meanwhile, will feel uncomfortable with Aristotle's teleological claims, differing from those who are happy to accept that there is an objectively good life that is possible for human beings. Regardless, there is little doubt that Aristotelian Virtue Ethics offers a distinct normative moral picture and that it is a theory worthy of your reflections.

COMMON STUDENT MISTAKES

- Understanding virtues as feelings.
- Misunderstanding the function of a human being (*eudaimonia*).
- Thinking that the Golden Mean always suggests "neutral" or "middling" actions.
- Incorrect differentiation between voluntary, involuntary and non-voluntary actions.
- Claiming that Virtue Ethics offers no guidance whatsoever in moral situations.
- Claiming that Virtue Ethics is uninterested in actions.

ISSUES TO CONSIDER

1. Who has the better life — the happy hedonist or the virtuous individual?
2. Are the virtues fixed and absolute? Or can virtues be relative to culture and time?
3. Is becoming moral a skill? Is morality based on "knowing that" or "knowing how"?
4. Can Virtue Ethics offer useful guidance?
5. Is the Golden Mean a useful way of working out virtuous characteristics?
6. Are some virtues more important than others? Why?
7. Can you think of a virtue that does not contribute to *eudaimonia*?
8. Can you think of something that contributes to *eudaimonia* that is not a virtue?
9. If there is no purpose to life, is there any point in subscribing to Aristotelian Virtue Ethics?
10. What should you do if virtues seem to clash when faced with different possible actions?
11. Who might count as virtuous role models and why?
12. Do human beings have a *telos* or proper function?

KEY TERMINOLOGY

Act-centred

Agent-centred

Dispositions

Eudaimonia

Phronesis

Virtue

Telos

Golden mean

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7.4: AQUINAS'S NSTURAL LAW THEORY

Grace does not destroy nature but perfects it.

They show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts sometimes accusing them and at other times even defending them.

7.4.1: Introduction to Aquinas

7.4.2: Motivating Natural Law Theory- The Euthyphro Dilemma and Divine Command Theory

7.4.3: Natural Law Theory

7.4.4: Summary of Aquinas's Natural Law Theory

7.4.5: Putting this into Practice- The Doctrine of Double Effect (DDE)

7.4.6: Some Thoughts about Natural Law Theory

7.4.7: Summary

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7.4.1: Introduction to Aquinas

Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274) was an intellectual and religious revolutionary, living at a time of great philosophical, theological and scientific development. He was a member of the Dominican Friars, which at that time was considered to be a cult, and was taught by one of the greatest intellects of the age, **Albert the Great** (1208–1280). In a nutshell Aquinas wanted to move away from Plato's thinking, which was hugely influential at the time, and instead introduce Aristotelian ideas to science, nature and theology.

Aquinas wrote an *incredible* amount — in fact one of the miracles accredited to him was the amount he wrote! His most famous work is *Summa Theologica* and this runs to some three and half thousand pages and contains many fascinating and profound insights, such as proofs for God's existence. The book remained a fundamental basis for Catholic thinking right up to the 1960s! But do not worry we will only be focusing on a few key ideas! Specifically *books I–II, questions 93–95*.

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7.4.2: Motivating Natural Law Theory- The Euthyphro Dilemma and Divine Command Theory

The likely answer from a religious person as to *why* we should not steal, or commit adultery is: “because God *forbid*s us”; or if we ask *why* we should love our neighbour or give money to charity then the answer is likely to be “because God *command*s it”. Drawing this link between what is right and wrong and what God commands and forbids is what is called the *Divine Command Theory* (DCT).

There is a powerful and influential challenge to such an account called the *Euthyphro dilemma* after the challenge was first raised in Plato’s *Euthyphro*. The dilemma runs as follows:

Either God commands something is right because it is, *or* it is right because God commands it. If God commands something because it is right, then God’s commands do not make it right, His commands only tell us what is right. This means God simply drops out of the picture in terms of *explaining why* something is right.

If on the other hand something is right *because* God commands it then *anything* at all could be right; killing children or setting fire to churches could be morally acceptable. But if a moral theory says this then that looks as if the theory is wrong.

Most theists reject the first option and opt for this second option — that God’s commands *make* something right. But they then have to face the problem that it make morality haphazard. This “*arbitrariness problem*” as it is sometimes called, is the reason that many, including Aquinas, give up on the Divine Command Theory.

So for Aquinas what role, if any at all, does God have when it comes to morality? For him, God’s commands are there to help us to *come to see* what, as a matter of fact, is right and wrong rather than determine what is right and wrong. That is, Aquinas opts for the first option in the Euthyphro dilemma as stated above. But then this raises the obvious question: if it is not God’s commands that make something right and wrong, then what does? Does not God just fall out of the picture? This is where his Natural Law Theory comes in.

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7.4.3: Natural Law Theory

Aquinas's Natural Law Theory contains four different types of law: *Eternal Law, Natural Law, Human Law and Divine Law*. The way to understand these four laws and how they relate to one another is via the Eternal Law, so we'd better start there...

By "Eternal Law'" Aquinas means God's rational purpose and plan for *all* things. And because the Eternal Law is part of God's mind then it has always, and will always, exist. The Eternal Law is not simply something that God decided at some point to write.

Aquinas thinks that *everything* has a purpose and follows a plan. He, like Aristotle, is a teleologist (the Greek term "*telos*" refers to what we might call a purpose, goal, end/or the true final function of an object) (see Chapter 1.3; not to be confused with a telelogical ethical *theory* such as Utilitarianism) and believes that *every* object has a *telos*; the acorn has the *telos* of growing into an oak; the eye a *telos* of seeing; a rat of eating and reproducing etc. If something fulfils its purpose/plan then it is following the Eternal Law.

Aquinas thinks that something is *good* in as far as it fulfils its purpose/plan. This fits with common sense. A "*good*" eye is one which sees well, an acorn is a good if it grows into a strong oak tree.

But what about humans? Just as a good eye is to see, and a good acorn is to grow then a good human is to...? Is to what? How are we going to finish this sentence? What do you think?

Aquinas thinks that the answer is *reason* and that it is this that makes us distinct from rats and rocks. What is right for me and you as humans is to act according to reason. If we act according to reason then we are partaking in the *Natural Law*.

If we all act according to reason, then we will all agree to some overarching general rules (what Aquinas calls *primary precepts*). These are *absolute* and binding on all rational agents and because of this Aquinas rejects *relativism*.

The first primary precept is that *good is to be pursued and done and evil avoided*. He thinks that this is the guiding principle for all our decision making.

Before unpacking this, it is worth clarifying something about what "law" means. Imagine that we are playing Cluedo and we are trying to work out the identity of the murderer. There are certain rules about how to move around the board, how to deal out cards, how to reveal the murderer etc. These rules are all written down and can be consulted.

However, in playing the game there are other rules that operate which are so obvious that they are neither written down nor spoken. One such rule is that a claim made in the game cannot both be true and false; if it *is* Professor Plum who is the murderer then it cannot be true that it *is not* Professor Plum who is the murderer. These are *internal rules* which *any* rational person can come to recognize by simply thinking and are not external like the other rules — such as you can only have one guess as to the identity of the murderer. When Aquinas talks of Natural Laws, he means internal rules and not external ones.

Natural Law does not generate an external set of rules that are written down for us to consult but rather it generates general rules that any rational agent can come to recognize simply in virtue of being rational. For example, for Aquinas it is not as if we need to check whether we should pursue good and avoid evil, as it is just part of how we already think about things. Aquinas gives some more examples of primary precepts:

1. *Protect and preserve human life.*
2. *Reproduce and educate one's offspring.*
3. *Know and worship God.*
4. *Live in a society.*

These precepts are *primary* because they are true for *all people in all instances* and are consistent with Natural Law.

Aquinas also introduces what he calls the *Human Law* which gives rise to what he calls "*Secondary Precepts*". These might include such things as do not drive above 70mph on a motorway, do not kidnap people, always wear a helmet when riding a bike, do not hack into someone's bank account. Secondary precepts are *not generated by our reason* but rather they are imposed by governments, groups, clubs, societies etc.

It is *not* always morally acceptable to follow secondary precepts. It is only morally acceptable *if* they are consistent with the

Natural Law. If they are, then we ought to follow them, if they are not, then we ought not. To see why think through an example.

Consider the secondary precept that "*if you are a woman and you live in Saudi Arabia then you are not allowed to drive*". Aquinas would argue that this secondary precept is practically *irrational* because it treats people differently based on an arbitrary difference (gender). He would reason that if the men in power in Saudi actually really thought hard then they too would recognize that this law is morally wrong. This in turn means that Aquinas would think that *this* human law *does not* fit with the Natural Law. Hence, it is morally wrong to follow a law that says that men can, and women cannot, drive. So although it is presented as a secondary precept, because it *is not* in accordance with Natural Law, it is what Aquinas calls an *apparent good*. This is in contrast with those secondary precepts which *are* in accordance with the Natural Law and which he calls the *real goods*.

Unlike primary precepts, Aquinas is *not* committed to there being only one set of secondary precepts for all people in all situations. It is consistent with Aquinas's thinking to have a law to drive on the right in the US and on the left in the UK as there is no practical reason to think that there is one correct side of the road on which to drive.

It is clear that on our own we are not very good at discovering primary precepts and consequently Aquinas thinks that what we ought to do is talk and interact with people. To discover our real goods — our secondary precepts which accord with Natural Law — we need to be part of a society. For example, we might think that "treat Christians as secondary citizens" is a good secondary precept until we talk and live with Christians. The more we can think and talk with others in society the better and it is for this reason that "live in society" is itself a primary precept.

But looking at what we have said already about Natural Laws and primary and secondary precepts, we might think that there is no need for God. If we can learn these primary precepts by rational reflection then God simply drops out of the story (recall the Euthyphro dilemma above).

Just to recap as there a lots of moving parts to the story. We now have Eternal Law (God's plans/purpose for all things), Natural Laws (our partaking in the Eternal Law which leads to primary precepts), Human Laws (humans making specific laws to capture the truths of the Natural Laws which lead to secondary precepts) and now finally Aquinas introduces *the Divine Law*.

The Divine Law, which is discovered through *revelation*, should be thought of as the Divine equivalent of the Human Law (those discovered through rational reflection and created by people). Divine laws are those that God has, in His grace, seen fit to give us and are those "mysteries", those rules given by God which we find in scripture; for example, the ten commandments. But why introduce the Divine Law at all? It certainly feels we have enough Laws. Here is a story to illustrate Aquinas's answer.

A number of years ago I was talking to a minister of a church. He told me about an instance where a married man came to ask his advice about whether to finish an affair he was having. The man's reasoning went as follows — "I am having an affair which just feels so right, we are both very much in love and surely God would want what is best for me! How could it be wrong if we are so happy?"

In response, the minister opened the Bible to the Ten Commandments and pointed out the commandment that it says that it is wrong to commit adultery. Case closed. The point of this story is simple. We can be confused and mistaken about what we think we have most reason to do and because of this we need someone who actually knows the mind of God to guide us, and who better to know this than God Himself. This then is precisely what is revealed in the Divine Law.

Or consider another example. We recognize that we find it hard to forgive our friends and nearly always impossible to forgive our enemies. We tell ourselves we have the right to be angry, to bear grudges, etc. Isn't this just human? However, these human reasons are *distortions* of the Eternal Law. We need some guidance when it comes to forgiveness and it is where the Divine Law which tells us that we should forgive others — including our enemies. Following the Human Laws *and* the Divine Laws will help us to fulfil our purposes and plans and be truly happy.

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7.4.4: Summary of Aquinas's Natural Law Theory

For Aquinas everything has a function (a *telos*) and the good thing(s) to do are those acts that fulfil that function. Some things such as acorns, and eyes, just do that naturally. However, humans are free and hence need guidance to find the right path. That right path is found through *reasoning* and generates the "internal" Natural Law. By following the Natural Law we participate in God's purpose for us in the Eternal Law.

However, the primary precepts that derive from the Natural Law are quite general, such as, *pursue good and shun evil*. So we need to create secondary precepts which can actually guide our day-to-day behaviour. But we are fallible so sometimes we get these secondary precepts wrong, sometimes we get them right. When they are wrong they only reflect our apparent goods. When they are right they reflect our real goods.

Finally, however good we are because we are finite and sinful, we can only get so far with rational reflection. We need some *revealed guidance* and this comes in the form of Divine Law. So to return to the Euthyphro dilemma. God's commands through the Divine Law are ways of *illuminating* what is in fact morally acceptable and *not what determine*s what is morally acceptable. Aquinas rejects the Divine Command Theory.

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7.4.5: Putting this into Practice- The Doctrine of Double Effect (DDE)

Let's consider some examples to show that what we have said so far might actually work. Imagine someone considering suicide. Is this morally acceptable or not? Recall, it is part of the Natural Law to preserve and protect human life. Clearly suicide is not preserving and protecting human life. It is therefore irrational to kill oneself and cannot be part of God's plan for our life; hence it is morally unacceptable.

Imagine that someone is considering having an abortion after becoming pregnant due to rape. The same reasoning is going to apply. We ought to preserve and protect human life and hence an abortion in this case is morally wrong.

However, as we will see, Aquinas thinks that there are *some* instances where it *is* morally acceptable to kill an innocent person and therefore there may be occasions when it is morally acceptable to kill a foetus. But how can this be correct? Will this not violate the primary precept about preserving life? The answer is to understand that for Aquinas, *an action is not just about what we do externally but is also about what we do internally* (i.e. our motivations). With this distinction he can show that, for example, killing an innocent *can be* morally acceptable.

To make this clear, Aquinas introduces one of his most famous ideas: the "*Doctrine of Double Effect*". Let's see how this works.

Imagine a child brought up in a physically, sexually and emotionally abusive family. He is frequently scared for his life and is locked in the house for days at a time. One day when his father is drunk and ready to abuse him again he quickly grabs a kitchen knife and slashes his father's artery. His father bleeds out and dies in a matter of minutes. Do you think the son did anything wrong?

Many people would say that he did nothing morally wrong and in fact, some might even go as far as to say that he should get a pat on the back for his actions. What about Aquinas? What would he say?

We might think that given the Natural Law to "preserve and protect life" he would say that this action is morally wrong. But, in fact, he would say the son's action was not morally wrong (Aquinas discusses self-defence in the *Summa Theologica* (II–II, Qu. 64)).

So why is the son killing the father not in direct contradiction with the primary precept? Aquinas asks us to consider the difference between the external act — the fact that the father was killed, and the internal act — the motive.

In our example, the action is one of *self-defence* because of the son's internal action and because of this, Aquinas would think the killing is morally acceptable. This distinction and conclusion is possible because of Aquinas's Doctrine of Double Effect which states that if an act fulfils four conditions then it is morally acceptable. If not, then it is not.

1. The first principle is that the act must be a *good* one.
2. The second principle is that the act must come about before the consequences.
3. The third is that the intention must be good.
4. The fourth, it must be for serious reasons.

This is abstract so let's go back to our example. The act of the son was performed to *save his own life* so that is good — we can tick (1). Moreover, the act to save his life came about first — we can tick (2). The son did not first act to kill his father in order to save his own life. That would be doing evil to bring about good and that is never morally acceptable. The intention of the son was to preserve and protect his life, so the intention was good — tick (3). Finally, the reasons were serious as it was his life or his father's life — tick (4).

So given that the act meets all four principles, it is in line with the DDE and hence the action is *morally acceptable*, even though it caused someone to die and hence seems contrary to the primary precept of preserving life.

We can draw a contrasting case. Imagine that instead of slashing his father in self-defence, the son *plans* the killing. He works out the best time, the best day and then sets up a trip wire causing his father to fall from his flat window to his death. Does this action meet the four criteria of the DDE? Well, no, because the son's *intention is to kill the father rather than save his own life* — we must put a cross at (3).

We have already seen that suicide is morally impermissible for Aquinas, so does that mean that *any* action you take that leads knowingly to your own death is morally wrong? No. Because even though the external act of your own death is the same, the internal act — the intention — might be different. *An action is judged via the Natural Law both externally and internally*.

Imagine a case where a soldier sees a grenade thrown into her barracks. Knowing that she does not have time to defuse it or throw it away, she throws herself on the grenade. It blows up, killing her but saving other soldiers in her barracks. Is this wrong or right? Aquinas says this is morally acceptable given DDE. If we judge this act *both* internally and externally we'll see why.

The intention — the internal act — was *not* to kill herself even though she could *foresee* that this was certainly what was going to happen. The act itself is good, to save her fellow soldiers (1). The order is right, she is not doing evil so good will happen (2). The intention is good, it is to save her fellow soldiers (3). The reason is serious, it concerns people's lives (4).

Contrast this with a soldier who decides to kill herself by blowing herself up. The intention is not good and hence the DDE does *not* permit this suicidal action.

Finally, imagine that a woman is pregnant and also has inoperable uterine cancer. The doctors have two choices; to take out the uterus and save the mother, but the foetus will die; or leave the foetus to develop and be born healthy, but the woman will die. What would Aquinas say in this instance? Well using the DDE he would say that it is morally *acceptable* to remove the cancer.

The action is to remove the cancer; it has the foreseeable consequences of the foetus dying but that is not what is intended. The action — to remove the cancer — is good (1). The act of removing the cancer comes before the death of the foetus (2). The intention to save the woman's life is also good (3). Finally, the reasons are serious as they are about the life and death of the woman and the foetus (4).

So even though this is a case where the doctor's actions bring about the death of the foetus it would be acceptable for Aquinas through his Natural Law Theory, as is shown via the DDE.

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7.4.6: Some Thoughts about Natural Law Theory

There are many things we might consider when thinking through Aquinas's Natural Law Theory. There are some obvious problems we could raise, such as the problem about whether or not God exists. If God does not exist then the Eternal Law does not exist and therefore the whole theory comes tumbling down. However, as good philosophers we ought always to operate with a *principle of charity* and grant our opponent is rational and give the strongest possible interpretation of their argument. So, let's assume *for the sake of argument* that God exists. How plausible is Aquinas's theory? There are a number of things that we can pick up on.

Aquinas's theory works on the idea that if something is "natural", that is, if it fulfils its function, then it is morally acceptable, but there are a number of unanswered questions relating to *natural*.

We might ask, why does "natural" matter? We can think of things that are not "natural" but which are perfectly acceptable, and things which *are* natural which are not. For example, wearing clothes, taking medication and body piercing certainly are not natural, but we would not want to say such things are morally wrong.

On the other hand we might consider that violence *is* a natural response to an unfaithful partner, but also think that such violence is morally unacceptable. So it is not true that we can discover what is morally acceptable or not simply by discovering what is natural and what is not.

Put this worry aside. Recall, Aquinas thinks that reproduction is natural and hence reproduction is morally acceptable. This means that sex that *does not* lead to reproduction is morally unacceptable. Notice that Aquinas is not saying that if sex does not lead to pregnancy it is wrong. After all, sometimes the timing is not right. His claim is rather that if there is *no potential* for sex to lead to pregnancy then it is wrong. However, even with this qualification this would mean a whole host of things such as homosexuality and contraception are morally wrong. We might take this as a reason to rethink Aquinas's moral framework.

There is, though, a more fundamental worry at the heart of this approach (and Aristotle's) to ethics. Namely, they think that *everything* has a goal (*telos*). Now, with some things this might be plausible. Things such as the eye or an acorn have a clear function — to grow, to see — but what about humans? This seems a bit less obvious! Do humans (rather than our individual parts) really have a *telos*? There are certainly some philosophers — such as the existentialists, for example **Simone de Beauvoir** (1908–1986) — who think that there is no such thing as human nature and no such thing as a human function or goal. But if we are unconvinced that humans have a goal, then this whole approach to ethics seems flawed.

Next we might raise questions about DDE. Go back to our example about abortion. For Aquinas it *is* morally acceptable to remove the uterus even if we know that in doing so the foetus will die. What is not morally acceptable is to intend to kill the foetus by removing the uterus. On first reading this seems to makes sense; we have an intuitive feel for what DDE is getting at. However, when we consider it in more detail it is far from clear.

Imagine two doctors who (apparently) do exactly the same thing, they both remove the uterus and the foetus dies. The one intends to take out the uterus — in full knowledge that the foetus will die — the other intends to kill the foetus. For the DDE to work in the way that Aquinas understands it, this difference in intention makes the moral difference between the two doctors. However, is there really a moral difference? To put pressure on the answer that there is, ask yourself what you think it means to intend to do something. If the first doctor says "I did not intend to kill the foetus" can we make sense of this? After all, if you asked her "did you know that in taking out the uterus the foetus would die?" she would say "yes, of course". But if she did this and the foetus died, did not she intend (in some sense) to kill the foetus? So this issue raises some complex question about the nature of the mind, and how we might understand intentions.

Finally, we might wonder how easy it is to work out what actually to do using the Natural Law. We would hope our moral theory gives us direction in living our lives. That, we might think, is precisely the role of a moral theory. But how might it work in this case?

For Aquinas, if we rationally reflect then we arrive at the right way of proceeding. If this is in line with the Natural Law and the Divine Law then it is morally acceptable. If it is out of line, then it is not. The assumption is that the more we think, the more rational we become, the more convergence there will be. We'll all start to have similar views on what is right and wrong. But is this too optimistic? Very often, even after extensive reflection and cool deliberation with friends and colleagues, it is not obvious to us what we as rational agents should do. We all know people we take to be rational, but we disagree with them on moral issues. And even in obviously rational areas such as mathematics, the best mathematicians are not able to agree. We might then be sceptical

that as rational agents we will come to be in line with the Natural and Divine Laws.

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7.4.7: Summary

Aquinas is an intellectual giant. He wrote an incredible amount covering a vast array of topics. His influence has been immense. His central idea is that humans are created by God to reason — that is our function. Humans do the morally right thing if we act in accordance with reason, and the morally wrong thing if we don't.

Aquinas is an incredibly subtle and complex thinker. For example, his Doctrine of Double Effect makes us to reflect on what we actually mean by "actions", "intentions" and "consequences". His work remains much discussed and researched and typically still plays a central role in a Christian Ethics that rejects Divine Command Theory.

COMMON STUDENT MISTAKES

- Thinking that Aquinas is a Divine Command Theorist.
- Thinking that Eternal Law is something that God decided to write.
- Thinking that Natural Laws are laws of science — e.g. law of thermodynamics.
- Thinking that all the "laws" are absolute.
- Thinking that it is always morally required of us to follow secondary precepts.
- Thinking that Aquinas is committed to there being only one set of secondary precepts for all people in all situations.

ISSUES TO CONSIDER

1. If God exists then what — if anything — do you think that has to do with what is right and wrong?
2. We might answer the "arbitrariness" dilemma by citing God's nature. Why might this answer be problematic?
3. What is the Eternal Law?
4. What are Natural Laws and primary precepts?
5. What are Human Laws and secondary precepts?
6. What are Divine Laws?
7. Just as a good eye is to see, and a good acorn is to grow then a good human is to...? Is to what? How are we going to finish this sentence?
8. People often talk about what is "natural"? What do you think they mean by this? How useful is the notion of "natural" in a moral theory?
9. Think of a descriptive claim. Think of a prescriptive claim. Why might it be problematic moving from one to the other?
10. If people thought long enough, do you think there would be convergence on what is morally right and wrong?
11. What is the Doctrine of Double Effect?
12. What is the difference — if anything — between intending to bring about some end and acting where you know your action will bring about that end?

KEY TERMINOLOGY

Apparent goods

A priori

A posteriori

Eternal Law

External acts

Natural Law

Primary precepts

Real goods

Secondary precepts

Internal acts

Doctrine of Double Effect

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7.5: ETHICS

Ethics or moral philosophy is a branch of philosophy that involves systematizing, defending, and recommending concepts of right and wrong conduct. The term *ethics* derives from the Ancient Greek word ἠθικός *ethikos*, which is derived from the word ἦθος *ethos* (habit, "custom"). The branch of philosophy axiology comprises the sub-branches of ethics and aesthetics, each concerned with values.

As a branch of philosophy, ethics investigates the questions "What is the best way for people to live?" and "What actions are right or wrong in particular circumstances?" In practice, ethics seeks to resolve questions of human morality, by defining concepts such as good and evil, right and wrong, virtue and vice, justice and crime. As a field of intellectual enquiry, moral philosophy also is related to the fields of moral psychology, descriptive ethics, and value theory.

Three major areas of study within ethics recognised today are:

1. Meta-ethics, concerning the theoretical meaning and reference of moral propositions, and how their truth values (if any) can be determined
2. Normative ethics, concerning the practical means of determining a moral course of action
3. Applied ethics, concerning what a person is obligated (or permitted) to do in a specific situation or a particular domain of action

Defining ethics

Rushworth Kidder states that "standard definitions of *ethics* have typically included such phrases as 'the science of the ideal human character' or 'the science of moral duty'". Richard William Paul and Linda Elder define ethics as "a set of concepts and principles that guide us in determining what behavior helps or harms sentient creatures". The *Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy* states that the word ethics is "commonly used interchangeably with 'morality' ... and sometimes it is used more narrowly to mean the moral principles of a particular tradition, group or individual." Paul and Elder state that most people confuse ethics with behaving in accordance with social conventions, religious beliefs and the law and don't treat ethics as a stand-alone concept.

The word "ethics" in English refers to several things. It can refer to philosophical ethics or moral philosophy—a project that attempts to use reason in order to answer various kinds of ethical questions. As the English philosopher Bernard Williams writes, attempting to explain moral philosophy: "What makes an inquiry a philosophical one is reflective generality and a style of argument that claims to be rationally persuasive." And Williams describes the content of this area of inquiry as addressing the very broad question, "how one should live" Ethics can also refer to a common human ability to think about ethical problems that is not particular to philosophy. As bioethicist Larry Churchill has written: "Ethics, understood as the capacity to think critically about moral values and direct our actions in terms of such values, is a generic human capacity." Ethics can also be used to describe a particular person's own idiosyncratic principles or habits. For example: "Joe has strange ethics."

The English word ethics is derived from an Ancient Greek word *êthikos*, which means "relating to one's character". The Ancient Greek adjective *êthikos* is itself derived from another Greek word, the noun *êthos* meaning "character, disposition".

Meta-ethics

Meta-ethics asks how we understand, know about, and what we mean when we talk about what is right and what is wrong. An ethical question fixed on some particular practical question—such as, "Should I eat this particular piece of chocolate cake?"—cannot be a meta-ethical question. A meta-ethical question is abstract and relates to a wide range of more specific practical questions. For example, "Is it ever possible to have secure knowledge of what is right and wrong?" would be a meta-ethical question.

Meta-ethics has always accompanied philosophical ethics. For example, Aristotle implies that less precise knowledge is possible in ethics than in other spheres of inquiry, and he regards ethical knowledge as depending upon habit and acculturation in a way that makes it distinctive from other kinds of knowledge. Meta-ethics is also important in G.E. Moore's *Principia Ethica* from 1903. In it he first wrote about what he called *the naturalistic fallacy*. Moore was seen to reject naturalism in ethics, in his Open Question Argument. This made thinkers look again at second order questions about ethics. Earlier, the Scottish philosopher David Hume had put forward a similar view on the difference between facts and values.

Studies of how we know in ethics divide into cognitivism and non-cognitivism; this is similar to the contrast between descriptivists and non-descriptivists. Non-cognitivism is the claim that when we judge something as right or wrong, this is neither true nor false. We may for example be only expressing our emotional feelings about these things. Cognitivism can then be seen as the claim that when we talk about right and wrong, we are talking about matters of fact.

The ontology of ethics is about value-bearing things or properties, i.e. the kind of things or stuff referred to by ethical propositions. Non-descriptivists and non-cognitivists believe that ethics does not need a specific ontology, since ethical propositions do not refer. This is known as an anti-realist position. Realists on the other hand must explain what kind of entities, properties or states are relevant for ethics, how they have value, and why they guide and motivate our actions.

Normative Ethics

Normative ethics is the study of ethical action. It is the branch of ethics that investigates the set of questions that arise when considering how one ought to act, morally speaking. Normative ethics is distinct from meta-ethics because it examines standards for the rightness and wrongness of actions, while meta-ethics studies the meaning of moral language and the metaphysics of moral facts. Normative ethics is also distinct from descriptive ethics, as the latter is an empirical investigation of people's moral beliefs. To put it another way, descriptive ethics would be concerned with determining what proportion of people believe that killing is always wrong, while normative ethics is concerned with whether it is correct to hold such a belief. Hence, normative ethics is sometimes called prescriptive, rather than descriptive. However, on certain versions of the meta-ethical view called moral realism, moral facts are both descriptive and prescriptive at the same time.

Traditionally, normative ethics (also known as moral theory) was the study of what makes actions right and wrong. These theories offered an overarching moral principle one could appeal to in resolving difficult moral decisions.

At the turn of the 20th century, moral theories became more complex and are no longer concerned solely with rightness and wrongness, but are interested in many different kinds of moral status. During the middle of the century, the study of normative ethics declined as meta-ethics grew in prominence. This focus on meta-ethics was in part caused by an intense linguistic focus in analytic philosophy and by the popularity of logical positivism.

In 1971 John Rawls published *A Theory of Justice*, noteworthy in its pursuit of moral arguments and eschewing of meta-ethics. This publication set the trend for renewed interest in normative ethics.

7.5.1: Utilitarianism

7.5.2: The Categorical Imperative

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7.5.1: Utilitarianism

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Utilitarianism[41]

Chapter 2

What Utilitarianism Is.

...The creed which accepts as the foundation of morals, Utility, or the Greatest Happiness Principle, holds that actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness. By happiness is intended pleasure, and the absence of pain; by unhappiness, pain, and the privation of pleasure. To give a clear view of the moral standard set up by the theory, much more requires to be said; in particular, what things it includes in the ideas of pain and pleasure; and to what extent this is left an open question. But these supplementary explanations do not affect the theory of life on which this theory of morality is grounded- namely, that pleasure, and freedom from pain, are the only things desirable as ends; and that all desirable things (which are as numerous in the utilitarian as in any other scheme) are desirable either for the pleasure inherent in themselves, or as means to the promotion of pleasure and the prevention of pain.

Now, such a theory of life excites in many minds, and among them in some of the most estimable in feeling and purpose, inveterate dislike. To suppose that life has (as they express it) no higher end than pleasure- no better and nobler object of desire and pursuit- they designate as utterly mean and grovelling; as a doctrine worthy only of swine, to whom the followers of Epicurus were, at a very early period, contemptuously likened; and modern holders of the doctrine are occasionally made the subject of equally polite comparisons by its German, French, and English assailants.

When thus attacked, the Epicureans have always answered, that it is not they, but their accusers, who represent human nature in a degrading light; since the accusation supposes human beings to be capable of no pleasures except those of which swine are capable. If this supposition were true, the charge could not be gainsaid, but would then be no longer an imputation; for if the sources of pleasure were precisely the same to human beings and to swine, the rule of life which is good enough for the one would be good enough for the other. The comparison of the Epicurean life to that of beasts is felt as degrading, precisely because a beast's pleasures do not satisfy a human being's conceptions of happiness. Human beings have faculties more elevated than the animal appetites, and when once made conscious of them, do not regard anything as happiness which does not include their gratification. I do not, indeed, consider the Epicureans to have been by any means faultless in drawing out their scheme of consequences from the utilitarian principle. To do this in any sufficient manner, many Stoic, as well as Christian elements require to be included. But there is no known Epicurean theory of life which does not assign to the pleasures of the intellect, of the feelings and imagination, and of the moral sentiments, a much higher value as pleasures than to those of mere sensation. It must be admitted, however, that utilitarian writers in general have placed the superiority of mental over bodily pleasures chiefly in the greater permanency, safety, uncostliness, etc., of the former- that is, in their circumstantial advantages rather than in their intrinsic nature. And on all these points utilitarians have fully proved their case; but they might have taken the other, and, as it may be called, higher ground, with entire consistency. It is quite compatible with the principle of utility to recognise the fact, that some kinds of pleasure are more desirable and more valuable than others. It would be absurd that while, in estimating all other things, quality is considered as well as quantity, the estimation of pleasures should be supposed to depend on quantity alone.

If I am asked, what I mean by difference of quality in pleasures, or what makes one pleasure more valuable than another, merely as a pleasure, except its being greater in amount, there is but one possible answer. Of two pleasures, if there be one to which all or almost all who have experience of both give a decided preference, irrespective of any feeling of moral obligation to prefer it, that is the more desirable pleasure. If one of the two is, by those who are competently acquainted with both, placed so far above the other that they prefer it, even though knowing it to be attended with a greater amount of discontent, and would not resign it for any quantity of the other pleasure which their nature is capable of, we are justified in ascribing to the preferred enjoyment a superiority in quality, so far outweighing quantity as to render it, in comparison, of small account.

Now it is an unquestionable fact that those who are equally acquainted with, and equally capable of appreciating and enjoying, both, do give a most marked preference to the manner of existence which employs their higher faculties. Few human creatures would consent to be changed into any of the lower animals, for a promise of the fullest allowance of a beast's pleasures; no intelligent human being would consent to be a fool, no instructed person would be an ignoramus, no person of feeling and

conscience would be selfish and base, even though they should be persuaded that the fool, the dunce, or the rascal is better satisfied with his lot than they are with theirs. They would not resign what they possess more than he for the most complete satisfaction of all the desires which they have in common with him. If they ever fancy they would, it is only in cases of unhappiness so extreme, that to escape from it they would exchange their lot for almost any other, however undesirable in their own eyes. A being of higher faculties requires more to make him happy, is capable probably of more acute suffering, and certainly accessible to it at more points, than one of an inferior type; but in spite of these liabilities, he can never really wish to sink into what he feels to be a lower grade of existence. We may give what explanation we please of this unwillingness; we may attribute it to pride, a name which is given indiscriminately to some of the most and to some of the least estimable feelings of which mankind are capable: we may refer it to the love of liberty and personal independence, an appeal to which was with the Stoics one of the most effective means for the inculcation of it; to the love of power, or to the love of excitement, both of which do really enter into and contribute to it: but its most appropriate appellation is a sense of dignity, which all human beings possess in one form or other, and in some, though by no means in exact, proportion to their higher faculties, and which is so essential a part of the happiness of those in whom it is strong, that nothing which conflicts with it could be, otherwise than momentarily, an object of desire to them.

Whoever supposes that this preference takes place at a sacrifice of happiness- that the superior being, in anything like equal circumstances, is not happier than the inferior- confounds the two very different ideas, of happiness, and content. It is indisputable that the being whose capacities of enjoyment are low, has the greatest chance of having them fully satisfied; and a highly endowed being will always feel that any happiness which he can look for, as the world is constituted, is imperfect. But he can learn to bear its imperfections, if they are at all bearable; and they will not make him envy the being who is indeed unconscious of the imperfections, but only because he feels not at all the good which those imperfections qualify. It is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied; better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied. And if the fool, or the pig, are a different opinion, it is because they only know their own side of the question. The other party to the comparison knows both sides.

It may be objected, that many who are capable of the higher pleasures, occasionally, under the influence of temptation, postpone them to the lower. But this is quite compatible with a full appreciation of the intrinsic superiority of the higher. Men often, from infirmity of character, make their election for the nearer good, though they know it to be the less valuable; and this no less when the choice is between two bodily pleasures, than when it is between bodily and mental. They pursue sensual indulgences to the injury of health, though perfectly aware that health is the greater good.

It may be further objected, that many who begin with youthful enthusiasm for everything noble, as they advance in years sink into indolence and selfishness. But I do not believe that those who undergo this very common change, voluntarily choose the lower description of pleasures in preference to the higher. I believe that before they devote themselves exclusively to the one, they have already become incapable of the other. Capacity for the nobler feelings is in most natures a very tender plant, easily killed, not only by hostile influences, but by mere want of sustenance; and in the majority of young persons it speedily dies away if the occupations to which their position in life has devoted them, and the society into which it has thrown them, are not favourable to keeping that higher capacity in exercise. Men lose their high aspirations as they lose their intellectual tastes, because they have not time or opportunity for indulging them; and they addict themselves to inferior pleasures, not because they deliberately prefer them, but because they are either the only ones to which they have access, or the only ones which they are any longer capable of enjoying. It may be questioned whether any one who has remained equally susceptible to both classes of pleasures, ever knowingly and calmly preferred the lower; though many, in all ages, have broken down in an ineffectual attempt to combine both.

From this verdict of the only competent judges, I apprehend there can be no appeal. On a question which is the best worth having of two pleasures, or which of two modes of existence is the most grateful to the feelings, apart from its moral attributes and from its consequences, the judgment of those who are qualified by knowledge of both, or, if they differ, that of the majority among them, must be admitted as final. And there needs be the less hesitation to accept this judgment respecting the quality of pleasures, since there is no other tribunal to be referred to even on the question of quantity. What means are there of determining which is the acutest of two pains, or the intensest of two pleasurable sensations, except the general suffrage of those who are familiar with both? Neither pains nor pleasures are homogeneous, and pain is always heterogeneous with pleasure. What is there to decide whether a particular pleasure is worth purchasing at the cost of a particular pain, except the feelings and judgment of the experienced? When, therefore, those feelings and judgment declare the pleasures derived from the higher faculties to be preferable in kind, apart from the question of intensity, to those of which the animal nature, disjoined from the higher faculties, is suspectible, they are entitled on this subject to the same regard.

I have dwelt on this point, as being a necessary part of a perfectly just conception of Utility or Happiness, considered as the directive rule of human conduct. But it is by no means an indispensable condition to the acceptance of the utilitarian standard; for that standard is not the agent's own greatest happiness, but the greatest amount of happiness altogether; and if it may possibly be doubted whether a noble character is always the happier for its nobleness, there can be no doubt that it makes other people

happier, and that the world in general is immensely a gainer by it. Utilitarianism, therefore, could only attain its end by the general cultivation of nobleness of character, even if each individual were only benefited by the nobleness of others, and his own, so far as happiness is concerned, were a sheer deduction from the benefit. But the bare enunciation of such an absurdity as this last, renders refutation superfluous.

According to the Greatest Happiness Principle, as above explained, the ultimate end, with reference to and for the sake of which all other things are desirable (whether we are considering our own good or that of other people), is an existence exempt as far as possible from pain, and as rich as possible in enjoyments, both in point of quantity and quality; the test of quality, and the rule for measuring it against quantity, being the preference felt by those who in their opportunities of experience, to which must be added their habits of self-consciousness and self-observation, are best furnished with the means of comparison. This, being, according to the utilitarian opinion, the end of human action, is necessarily also the standard of morality; which may accordingly be defined, the rules and precepts for human conduct, by the observance of which an existence such as has been described might be, to the greatest extent possible, secured to all mankind; and not to them only, but, so far as the nature of things admits, to the whole sentient creation...

...I must again repeat, what the assailants of utilitarianism seldom have the justice to acknowledge, that the happiness which forms the utilitarian standard of what is right in conduct, is not the agent's own happiness, but that of all concerned. As between his own happiness and that of others, utilitarianism requires him to be as strictly impartial as a disinterested and benevolent spectator. In the golden rule of Jesus of Nazareth, we read the complete spirit of the ethics of utility. To do as you would be done by, and to love your neighbour as yourself, constitute the ideal perfection of utilitarian morality. As the means of making the nearest approach to this ideal, utility would enjoin, first, that laws and social arrangements should place the happiness, or (as speaking practically it may be called) the interest, of every individual, as nearly as possible in harmony with the interest of the whole; and secondly, that education and opinion, which have so vast a power over human character, should so use that power as to establish in the mind of every individual an indissoluble association between his own happiness and the good of the whole; especially between his own happiness and the practice of such modes of conduct, negative and positive, as regard for the universal happiness prescribes; so that not only he may be unable to conceive the possibility of happiness to himself, consistently with conduct opposed to the general good, but also that a direct impulse to promote the general good may be in every individual one of the habitual motives of action, and the sentiments connected therewith may fill a large and prominent place in every human being's sentient existence. If the, impugners of the utilitarian morality represented it to their own minds in this its, true character, I know not what recommendation possessed by any other morality they could possibly affirm to be wanting to it; what more beautiful or more exalted developments of human nature any other ethical system can be supposed to foster, or what springs of action, not accessible to the utilitarian, such systems rely on for giving effect to their mandates...

Chapter 4

Of what sort of Proof the Principle of Utility is Susceptible.

IT HAS already been remarked, that questions of ultimate ends do not admit of proof, in the ordinary acceptation of the term. To be incapable of proof by reasoning is common to all first principles; to the first premises of our knowledge, as well as to those of our conduct. But the former, being matters of fact, may be the subject of a direct appeal to the faculties which judge of fact- namely, our senses, and our internal consciousness. Can an appeal be made to the same faculties on questions of practical ends? Or by what other faculty is cognisance taken of them?

Questions about ends are, in other words, questions what things are desirable. The utilitarian doctrine is, that happiness is desirable, and the only thing desirable, as an end; all other things being only desirable as means to that end. What ought to be required of this doctrine- what conditions is it requisite that the doctrine should fulfil- to make good its claim to be believed?

The only proof capable of being given that an object is visible, is that people actually see it. The only proof that a sound is audible, is that people hear it: and so of the other sources of our experience. In like manner, I apprehend, the sole evidence it is possible to produce that anything is desirable, is that people do actually desire it. If the end which the utilitarian doctrine proposes to itself were not, in theory and in practice, acknowledged to be an end, nothing could ever convince any person that it was so. No reason can be given why the general happiness is desirable, except that each person, so far as he believes it to be attainable, desires his own happiness. This, however, being a fact, we have not only all the proof which the case admits of, but all which it is possible to require, that happiness is a good: that each person's happiness is a good to that person, and the general happiness, therefore, a good to the aggregate of all persons. Happiness has made out its title as one of the ends of conduct, and consequently one of the criteria of morality.

But it has not, by this alone, proved itself to be the sole criterion. To do that, it would seem, by the same rule, necessary to show, not only that people desire happiness, but that they never desire anything else. Now it is palpable that they do desire things which,

in common language, are decidedly distinguished from happiness. They desire, for example, virtue, and the absence of vice, no less really than pleasure and the absence of pain. The desire of virtue is not as universal, but it is as authentic a fact, as the desire of happiness. And hence the opponents of the utilitarian standard deem that they have a right to infer that there are other ends of human action besides happiness, and that happiness is not the standard of approbation and disapprobation.

But does the utilitarian doctrine deny that people desire virtue, or maintain that virtue is not a thing to be desired? The very reverse. It maintains not only that virtue is to be desired, but that it is to be desired disinterestedly, for itself. Whatever may be the opinion of utilitarian moralists as to the original conditions by which virtue is made virtue; however they may believe (as they do) that actions and dispositions are only virtuous because they promote another end than virtue; yet this being granted, and it having been decided, from considerations of this description, what is virtuous, they not only place virtue at the very head of the things which are good as means to the ultimate end, but they also recognise as a psychological fact the possibility of its being, to the individual, a good in itself, without looking to any end beyond it; and hold, that the mind is not in a right state, not in a state conformable to Utility, not in the state most conducive to the general happiness, unless it does love virtue in this manner- as a thing desirable in itself, even although, in the individual instance, it should not produce those other desirable consequences which it tends to produce, and on account of which it is held to be virtue. This opinion is not, in the smallest degree, a departure from the Happiness principle. The ingredients of happiness are very various, and each of them is desirable in itself, and not merely when considered as swelling an aggregate. The principle of utility does not mean that any given pleasure, as music, for instance, or any given exemption from pain, as for example health, is to be looked upon as means to a collective something termed happiness, and to be desired on that account. They are desired and desirable in and for themselves; besides being means, they are a part of the end. Virtue, according to the utilitarian doctrine, is not naturally and originally part of the end, but it is capable of becoming so; and in those who love it disinterestedly it has become so, and is desired and cherished, not as a means to happiness, but as a part of their happiness.

To illustrate this farther, we may remember that virtue is not the only thing, originally a means, and which if it were not a means to anything else, would be and remain indifferent, but which by association with what it is a means to, comes to be desired for itself, and that too with the utmost intensity. What, for example, shall we say of the love of money? There is nothing originally more desirable about money than about any heap of glittering pebbles. Its worth is solely that of the things which it will buy; the desires for other things than itself, which it is a means of gratifying. Yet the love of money is not only one of the strongest moving forces of human life, but money is, in many cases, desired in and for itself; the desire to possess it is often stronger than the desire to use it, and goes on increasing when all the desires which point to ends beyond it, to be compassed by it, are falling off. It may, then, be said truly, that money is desired not for the sake of an end, but as part of the end. From being a means to happiness, it has come to be itself a principal ingredient of the individual's conception of happiness. The same may be said of the majority of the great objects of human life- power, for example, or fame; except that to each of these there is a certain amount of immediate pleasure annexed, which has at least the semblance of being naturally inherent in them; a thing which cannot be said of money. Still, however, the strongest natural attraction, both of power and of fame, is the immense aid they give to the attainment of our other wishes; and it is the strong association thus generated between them and all our objects of desire, which gives to the direct desire of them the intensity it often assumes, so as in some characters to surpass in strength all other desires. In these cases the means have become a part of the end, and a more important part of it than any of the things which they are means to. What was once desired as an instrument for the attainment of happiness, has come to be desired for its own sake. In being desired for its own sake it is, however, desired as part of happiness. The person is made, or thinks he would be made, happy by its mere possession; and is made unhappy by failure to obtain it. The desire of it is not a different thing from the desire of happiness, any more than the love of music, or the desire of health. They are included in happiness. They are some of the elements of which the desire of happiness is made up. Happiness is not an abstract idea, but a concrete whole; and these are some of its parts. And the utilitarian standard sanctions and approves their being so. Life would be a poor thing, very ill provided with sources of happiness, if there were not this provision of nature, by which things originally indifferent, but conducive to, or otherwise associated with, the satisfaction of our primitive desires, become in themselves sources of pleasure more valuable than the primitive pleasures, both in permanency, in the space of human existence that they are capable of covering, and even in intensity.

Virtue, according to the utilitarian conception, is a good of this description. There was no original desire of it, or motive to it, save its conduciveness to pleasure, and especially to protection from pain. But through the association thus formed, it may be felt a good in itself, and desired as such with as great intensity as any other good; and with this difference between it and the love of money, of power, or of fame, that all of these may, and often do, render the individual noxious to the other members of the society to which he belongs, whereas there is nothing which makes him so much a blessing to them as the cultivation of the disinterested love of virtue. And consequently, the utilitarian standard, while it tolerates and approves those other acquired desires, up to the point beyond which they would be more injurious to the general happiness than promotive of it, enjoins and requires the cultivation of the love of virtue up to the greatest strength possible, as being above all things important to the general happiness.

It results from the preceding considerations, that there is in reality nothing desired except happiness.

Whatever is desired otherwise than as a means to some end beyond itself, and ultimately to happiness, is desired as itself a part of happiness, and is not desired for itself until it has become so.

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7.5.2: The Categorical Imperative

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The Categorical Imperative[42]

...Now all imperatives command either hypothetically or categorically. The former represent the practical necessity of a possible action as means to something else that is willed (or at least which one might possibly will). The categorical imperative would be that which represented an action as necessary of itself without reference to another end, i. e., as objectively necessary...

Finally, there is an imperative which commands a certain conduct immediately, without having as its condition any other purpose to be attained by it. This imperative is categorical. It concerns not the matter of the action, or its intended result, but its form and the principle of which it is itself a result; and what is essentially good in it consists in the mental disposition, let the consequence be what it may. This imperative may be called that of morality. There is a marked distinction also between the volitions on these three sorts of principles in the dissimilarity of the obligation of the will. In order to mark this difference more clearly, I think they would be most suitably named in their order if we said they are either rules of skill, or counsels of prudence, or commands (laws) of morality. For it is law only that involves the conception of an unconditional and objective necessity, which is consequently universally valid; and commands are laws which must be obeyed, that is, must be followed, even in opposition to inclination...

There is therefore but one categorical imperative, namely, this: Act only on that maxim whereby thou canst at the same time will that it should become a universal law. Now if all imperatives of duty can be deduced from this one imperative as from their principle, then, although it should remain undecided what is called duty is not merely a vain notion, yet at least we shall be able to show what we understand by it and what this notion means. Since the universality of the law according to which effects are produced constitutes what is properly called nature in the most general sense (as to form), that is the existence of things so far as it is determined by general laws, the imperative of duty may be expressed thus: Act as if the maxim of thy action were to become by thy will a universal law of nature. We will now enumerate a few duties, adopting the usual division of them into duties to ourselves and ourselves and to others, and into perfect and imperfect duties...

1. A man reduced to despair by a series of misfortunes feels wearied of life, but is still so far in possession of his reason that he can ask himself whether it would not be contrary to his duty to himself to take his own life. Now he inquires whether the maxim of his action could become a universal law of nature. His maxim is: “From self-love I adopt it as a principle to shorten my life when its longer duration is likely to bring more evil than satisfaction.” It is asked then simply whether this principle founded on self-love can become a universal law of nature. Now we see at once that a system of nature of which it should be a law to destroy life by means of the very feeling whose special nature it is to impel to the improvement of life would contradict itself and, therefore, could not exist as a system of nature; hence that maxim cannot possibly exist as a universal law of nature and, consequently, would be wholly inconsistent with the supreme principle of all duty.

2. Another finds himself forced by necessity to borrow money. He knows that he will not be able to repay it, but sees also that nothing will be lent to him unless he promises stoutly to repay it in a definite time. He desires to make this promise, but he has still so much conscience as to ask himself: “Is it not unlawful and inconsistent with duty to get out of a difficulty in this way?” Suppose however that he resolves to do so: then the maxim of his action would be expressed thus: “When I think myself in want of money, I will borrow money and promise to repay it, although I know that I never can do so.” Now this principle of self-love or of one’s own advantage may perhaps be consistent with my whole future welfare; but the question now is, “Is it right?” I change then the suggestion of self-love into a universal law, and state the question thus: “How would it be if my maxim were a universal law?” Then I see at once that it could never hold as a universal law of nature, but would necessarily contradict itself. For supposing it to be a universal law that everyone when he thinks himself in a difficulty should be able to promise whatever he pleases, with the purpose of not keeping his promise, the promise itself would become impossible, as well as the end that one might have in view in it, since no one would consider that anything was promised to him, but would ridicule all such statements as vain pretences.

3. A third finds in himself a talent which with the help of some culture might make him a useful man in many respects. But he finds himself in comfortable circumstances and prefers to indulge in pleasure rather than to take pains in enlarging and improving his happy natural capacities. He asks, however, whether his maxim of neglect of his natural gifts, besides agreeing with his inclination to indulgence, agrees also with what is called duty. He sees then that a system of nature could indeed subsist with such a universal law although men (like the South Sea islanders) should let their talents rest and resolve to devote their lives merely to idleness, amusement, and propagation of their species- in a word, to enjoyment; but he cannot possibly will that this should be a universal

law of nature, or be implanted in us as such by a natural instinct. For, as a rational being, he necessarily wills that his faculties be developed, since they serve him and have been given him, for all sorts of possible purposes.

4. A fourth, who is in prosperity, while he sees that others have to contend with great wretchedness and that he could help them, thinks: “What concern is it of mine? Let everyone be as happy as Heaven pleases, or as be can make himself; I will take nothing from him nor even envy him, only I do not wish to contribute anything to his welfare or to his assistance in distress!” Now no doubt if such a mode of thinking were a universal law, the human race might very well subsist and doubtless even better than in a state in which everyone talks of sympathy and good-will, or even takes care occasionally to put it into practice, but, on the other side, also cheats when he can, betrays the rights of men, or otherwise violates them. But although it is possible that a universal law of nature might exist in accordance with that maxim, it is impossible to will that such a principle should have the universal validity of a law of nature. For a will which resolved this would contradict itself, inasmuch as many cases might occur in which one would have need of the love and sympathy of others, and in which, by such a law of nature, sprung from his own will, he would deprive himself of all hope of the aid he desires. These are a few of the many actual duties, or at least what we regard as such, which obviously fall into two classes on the one principle that we have laid down.

We must be able to will that a maxim of our action should be a universal law. This is the canon of the moral appreciation of the action generally. Some actions are of such a character that their maxim cannot without contradiction be even conceived as a universal law of nature, far from it being possible that we should will that it should be so. In others this intrinsic impossibility is not found, but still it is impossible to will that their maxim should be raised to the universality of a law of nature, since such a will would contradict itself It is easily seen that the former violate strict or rigorous (inflexible) duty; the latter only laxer (meritorious) duty. Thus it has been completely shown how all duties depend as regards the nature of the obligation (not the object of the action) on the same principle. If now we attend to ourselves on occasion of any transgression of duty, we shall find that we in fact do not will that our maxim should be a universal law, for that is impossible for us; on the contrary, we will that the opposite should remain a universal law, only we assume the liberty of making an exception in our own favour or (just for this time only) in favour of our inclination.

Consequently if we considered all cases from one and the same point of view, namely, that of reason, we should find a contradiction in our own will, namely, that a certain principle should be objectively necessary as a universal law, and yet subjectively should not be universal, but admit of exceptions. As however we at one moment regard our action from the point of view of a will wholly conformed to reason, and then again look at the same action from the point of view of a will affected by inclination, there is not really any contradiction, but an antagonism of inclination to the precept of reason, whereby the universality of the principle is changed into a mere generality, so that the practical principle of reason shall meet the maxim half way. Now, although this cannot be justified in our own impartial judgement, yet it proves that we do really recognise the validity of the categorical imperative and (with all respect for it) only allow ourselves a few exceptions, which we think unimportant and forced from us. We have thus established at least this much, that if duty is a conception which is to have any import and real legislative authority for our actions, it can only be expressed in categorical and not at all in hypothetical imperatives. We have also, which is of great importance, exhibited clearly and definitely for every practical application the content of the categorical imperative, which must contain the principle of all duty if there is such a thing at all.

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7.6: ETHICAL THEORIES

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7.6.1: Ethical Theories

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If Normative Ethical Relativism is flawed and cannot provide for a basis for moral society for humans on planet earth, then what is to provide that basis?

What would provide a basis for universal moral codes?

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On Morality by **Lowell Kleiman**

If by "morality" we mean a code of conduct that is universally valid, then the basic issue in the study of ethics is, is there a universally valid code of conduct? Are there rules of behavior that prescribe how a person should conduct him or herself in all places and all times? For example, when anybody adds 2 + 2 the result should be 4. If any other answer is obtained, the person made a mistake. 2 + 2 does not equal 5, or 3 or anything other than 4. To say otherwise reveals an ignorance of addition, not an alternative but equally valid code of mathematics.

The rules of mathematics are universally valid. The same rule, for example, 12 + 19 = 31, tells us how to add, whether we are living on Long Island or Timbuktoo, in the late 20th century or the 4th century B. C. An Izbekustany peasant who counts 12 goats on this side of the pasture and 19 goats on that side of the pasture, concluding that there are 32 goats in the pasture, makes the same mathematical error as an instructor at Suffolk Community College who counts 12 students on this side of the room, 19 students on that side of the room, concluding that there are 32 students in the room. That the peasant and instructor live several thousand miles apart, are brought up in different cultures, are of different ethnic backgrounds, subscribe to different religious and political traditions, is irrelevant in determining the rights and wrongs of their behavior. The only relevant considerations are whether they are using the correct rule and whether they are applying that rule in the correct way. For example, if either instructor or peasant thinks that 12 + 19 = 32, then one of them does not know arithmetic, and the other does not know how to count.

The same is true of morality. Just as any proposed rule of addition that is not universally valid cannot be a rule of mathematics, so any proposed rule of conduct that is not universally valid cannot be a rule of morality. For example, cultures that have practiced incest, ritual human sacrifice, matricide, patricide, slavery or female sexual mutilation are immoral since their creeds are not universally valid. Clearly, mutilation, slavery or any of these other modes of conduct are not valid here, certainly not at Suffolk Community College, certainly not on Long Island, New York State, California, the mid-west, Canada, Mexico, or any part of any country or state that comprises the civilized world. Just as 2 + 2 does not = 5, so sexual mutilation does not = morality.

It may be objected that the argument above makes us, students and teachers of Suffolk Community College, residents of Long Island, citizens of New York State, of the United States, followers and proponents of Western Civilization, arbiters of right and wrong. We are imposing our values on the rest of the world, or at least on those few countries, such as Libya and the Sudan where slavery and mutilation are practiced. We are judging people by standards that are not their own; we are committing the "ethnocentric fallacy."

Perhaps we are. Perhaps we have no right to condemn killing, maiming, brutalizing and destroying when other people do these things. Perhaps our beliefs about right and wrong are limited, provincial, naive, uninformed. Maybe slavery for others is not so bad after all; perhaps child abuse for other people's children should be encouraged; murder in other societies condoned, rape in foreign countries commended. Perhaps we must rethink our beliefs about right and wrong. Maybe we don't know the difference.

But if we don't know what we think we know, how can we be certain, how can anyone be sure, that aside from mathematics, there is no universally valid code of conduct? If we don't know that incest was wrong among the ancients, then we don't know that it is wrong today. Aside from the fact that the Egyptians who practiced incest lived many years ago, the act itself has not changed since then. Nor has rape, enslavement, mutilation or murder. If we cannot condemn the acts of others, then neither can we condemn the same acts when performed by those among us. And if we cannot condemn our own rapists and murderers, then rape and murder, and all the rest, are not just to be condoned for others, but condoned for everyone. So there is a universally valid code of conduct, although it seems very different from what we naively take it to be. The question is, which code is correct, the one that condemns ritual mutilation, or the one that condones it? To answer that question we must turn away from the theory of normative ethical relativism.

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If the theory of Normative Ethical Relativism is flawed then what is the alternative. Can there be an ethics? Can there be a basis for moral rule making? Since Socrates Philosophers have sought that basis in REASON. All humans have reason and if through the use of reason certain principles of ethics, the principle of the GOOD, can be discerned or discovered, then all humans would have contact with the basis for the moral life that all cultures and societies need. Plato believed he had found those principles. After him several others in the West have reached similar conclusions concerning the existence of principles that might have universal application. Unfortunately, they have not all agreed as to what those principles are.

There are some fundamental distinctions to be made in the approaches taken to thinking about the GOOD. What makes something, an action, GOOD? Is it something in the act or in the intention behind the act? Is it the result of the act or what is in the act itself?

Consider:

There is a terrorist with a gun pointed at a group of innocent hostages being held by the terrorists. There is the declaration that he will kill them. Someone nearby has a gun and points it at the terrorist and shots. The would-be hero misses the target and kills one of the innocent hostages. No is the act of the would-be hero good or bad. Is it the intention behind the act or the result of the act that makes it good or bad?

If something is good is it good because of what it is or because of what it results in?

Intrinsic vs. instrumental value

Something is said to have intrinsic value if it is good ``in and of itself,'' i.e., not merely as a means for acquiring something else.

Something is said to have instrumental value if it is good because it provides the means for acquiring something else of value.

Consequentialist vs. non-consequentialist theories of ethics

There are two broad categories of ethical theories concerning the source of value: consquentialist and non-consequentialist.

A consequentialist theory of value judges the rightness or wrongness of an action based on the consequences that action has. The most familiar example would be utilitarianism--``that action is best that produces the greatest good for the greatest number'' (Jeremy Bentham).

A non-consequentialist theory of value judges the rightness or wrongness of an action based on properties intrinsic to the action, not on its consequences.

Libertarianism--People should be free to do as they like as long as they respect the freedom of others to do the same.

Contractarianism--No policy that causes uncompensated harm on anyone is permitted (Pareto safety).

Consider these Definitions:

READ: **Teleological Theories :Consequentialist Approach**

READ: **Deontological Theories: Non-Consequentialist Approach**

Philosophical Theories Based Upon **Principles and Utilizing Reason**	
Teleological Theories	Deontological Theories

Consequential	Non-Consequential
Egoism	Kantian- Categorical Imperative
Act Utilitarianism	Rawl's Theory of Justice
Rule Utilitarianism	Divine Command Theory
Situation Ethics	Natural Law Theory A theistic B. non- theistic
Post Modernism-Relativism **Existentialism** **Pragmatism** **Feminism**	

In the next few sections we shall cover these theories and their advantages and disadvantages or their weaknesses and problems.

There is a third approach that originates with the Greeks and can be found in the East as well. It is Virtue Ethics

VIRTUE ETHICS== eudaimonia

Neither Teleological nor a Deontological approach

Not based on principles at all but on virtues

VIEW: Aristotle & Virtue Theory: Crash Course Philosophy #38 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PrvtOWEXDIQ 9:20

VIEW: Ethics Defined: Virtue Ethics 1:42 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NMblKpkKYao

VIEW: What is Virtue Ethics? (Philosophical Definition)4:56 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JPV2KsWMRfc

READ: Virtue ethics - - Character-based ethics

http://www.bbc.co.uk/ethics/introduction/virtue.shtml

Suggested Reference Works:

https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ethics-virtue/

https://www.iep.utm.edu/virtue/

https://en.Wikipedia.org/wiki/Virtue_ethics

https://www.philosophybasics.com/branch_virtue_ethics.html

READ Dallas Roark On VALUES and ETHICS

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7.6.2: Teleological Theories

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In this approach to ethics it is the consequence of the act that is the basis for determining its worth.

READ: **Teleological Theories: Consequentialist Approach**

One of the most basic of consequences is the impact on people and one of the most basic of all values for determining whether something is good or not is the pleasure that it brings to someone. Some think that emotional and physical PLEASURE is the ONLY basis for determining what is GOOD

Theories of the GOOD based on pleasure are termed HEDONISM

There are two popular theories of the GOOD based on pleasure. One is based on pleasure to one self. EGOISM

The other is based on the pleasure that results for all humans in the world. UTILITARIANISM.

This section will focus on EGOISM.

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There are five types of Egoism the focus here is on the last:

ETHICAL EGOISM

1. **Common-sense Egoism:** According to this view, egoism is a vice. It involves putting one's own concerns over those of others. One's behavior is egoistic if it involves putting one's own interests over those of others to an immoderate degree.
2. **Psychological Egoism**
    1. **Argument For:** Human agents always, at least on a deep-down level, are all egoists insofar as our behavior, explainable in terms of our beliefs and desires, is always aimed at what we believe is our greatest good (Baier, 1991, p. 203).
    2. **Objection:** The psychological egoist confuses egoistic desires with motivation. An agent may act contrary to his desires and what is in his own best interest. People often act in ways that they know are detrimental to their well being. Moreover, what one most wants may not be in their own self-interest (e.g., giving money to Amnesty International rather than buying a new CD). MacKinnon adds that, "Even if it were shown that we *often* act for the sake of our own interest, this is not enough to prove that psychological egoism is true. According to this theory, we must show that people *always* act to promote their own interests" (p. 23). If we can find only one counterexample to psychological egoism, then it is not true.
3. **Egoism as a Means to the Common Good**
    1. **Argument For:** According to the economist, Adam Smith, when entrepreneurs are unimpeded by legal or self-imposed moral constraint to protect the good of others, they are able to promote their own good and, as a result, provide the most efficient means of promoting the good of others (Baier, 1991, p. 201; see MacKinnon, p. 24). Such a view leads to the doctrine that, "if each pursues her own interest as she conceives of it, then the interest of everyone is promoted" (Baier, 1991, p. 200).
    2. **Objection:** Apart from positing an "invisible hand" guiding the market processes, the common-good egoist makes the fallacy, ascribed to J.S. Mill, that if each person promotes her own interest, then everyone else's interests are thereby promoted. "Clearly, this is a fallacy, for the interests of different individuals or classes may, and under certain conditions (of which the scarcity of necessities is the most obvious), do conflict. Then the interest of one is the detriment of the other" (Baier, 1991, p. 200).
4. **Rational Egoism:** Rational egoism is concerned with reasonable action.
    1. **Strong Rational Egoism:** It is always rational to aim at one's own greatest good, and never rational not to do so (Baier, 1991, p. 201).
    2. **Weak Rational Egoism:** It is always rational to aim at one's own greatest good, but not necessarily never rational not to do so (Baier, 1991, p. 201).
    3. **Argument For:** When doing something does not prima facie appear to be in our interest, our doing said act requires that we justify our action by showing that it is in our interest, thereby justifying our action.
    4. **Objection:** Such an approach to justifying actions in our own interest may be abused if we do not have criteria established to determine what the interests of agents amount to. If such criteria are established, such actions may be reasonable so long as they do not result in conflicts between agents. In such cases, creative middle ways are called for.
5. **Ethical Egoism:** Coupled with ethical rationalism—"the doctrine that if a moral requirement or recommendation is to be

sound or acceptable, complying with it must be in accordance with reason"—rational egoism implies ethical egoism (Baier, 1991, p. 201).

1. **Strong Ethical Egoism:** It is always right to aim at one's own greatest good, and never right not to do so (Baier, 1991, p. 201).
2. **Weak Ethical Egoism:** It is always right to aim at one's own greatest good, but not necessarily never right not to do so (Baier, 1991, p. 201).
3. **Argument For:** If we accept rational egoism, and if we accept ethical rationalism, then we must accept ethical egoism. This is the case because if acting in one's own self-interest is reasonable, then it is a moral requirement that one acts in one's own self-interest.
4. **Objection:** Ethical egoism is incompatible with ethical conflict-regulation. Consider the following example from Kurt Baier, regarding the problem over whether it would be morally wrong for me to kill my grandfather so that he will be unable to change his will and disinherit me (1991, p. 202):

Assuming that my killing him will be in my best interest but detrimental to my grandfather, while refraining from killing him will be to my detriment but in my grandfather's interest, then if ethical conflict-regulation is sound, there can be a sound moral guideline regulating this conflict (presumably by forbidding this killing). But then ethical egoism cannot be sound, for it precludes the interpersonally authoritative regulation of interpersonal conflicts of interest, since such a regulation implies that conduct contrary to one's interest is sometimes *morally required* of one, and conduct in one's best interest is sometimes morally forbidden to one. Thus, ethical egoism is incompatible with ethical conflict-regulation.

References: Baier, Kurt. 1991 "Egoism" in a Companion to Ethics. (ed. P. Singer) Oxford: Blackwell, 197-204.

READ: Internet Encyclopedia on Egoism



Figure 7.6.2.1: A famous Egoist was Thomas Hobbes

READ: Ethical Egoism and EGOISTS

READ: http://caae.phil.cmu.edu/Cavalier/80130/part2/Routledge/R_Egoism.html

READ: Catholic Encyclopedia

Ethical EGOISM Powerpoint presentation

Literature on Egoism-links to sites

ETHICAL EGOISM

View: Dr. Richard Brown on Ethical Egoism

An action is morally right if and only if it is to the advantage of the person doing it.

ARGUMENTS FOR ETHICAL EGOISM

1. An altruistic moral theory that demands total self-sacrifice is degrading to the moral agent.

Objection: This is a false dilemma: there are many non-egoistic moral theories that do not demand total self-sacrifice.

2. Everyone is better off if each pursues his or her self-interest.

Objection: (a) This probably is not true in practice; and (b) True egoism isn't concerned with what will make everyone better off.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST ETHICAL EGOISM

1. Provides no moral basis for solving conflicts between people.
2. Obligates each person to prevent others from doing the right thing.
3. Has the same logical basis as racism.
4. The egoist cannot advise others to be egoists because it works against the first egoists interest.
5. No one person can expect the entire world's population to act in such a way as to produce the most benefit (pleasure) for that one person.

The Truth in Psychological Egosim by Hugh LaFollette

So although we all know people who attempt to live their lives as egoists, they are not generally well liked. Being so totally focused on the self is not likely to make someone many friends. Egoists can but friends but most people avoid egoists as they are thought to be untrustworthy.

EGOISM is not the basis for the moral foundation needed for social life.

There are other options.

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7.6.3: Utilitarianism

(NOTE: You must read only those linked materials that are preceded by the capitalized word **READ**.)

The Basic Idea

To overcome the obvious defects of using Egoism as a moral guide Utilitarianism approaches the question of the GOOD from an opposing point of view. Instead of that being the GOOD which serves one's own interest and provides for one's own pleasure, the utilitarians take **that which produces the greatest amount of pleasure (Hedonism) (Physical and emotional) for the greatest number of people** to be the GOOD. This is the principle of UTILITY. Expand beyond the idea of pleasure to that of satisfying the interests of people and you have the more complete development of the idea of what consequences of human action will determine the moral correctness of that act.

Utility is a principle of the GOOD which locates moral goodness in the feelings of humans and that makes it a form of HEDONISM. However Utility looks to the aim of increasing the total amount of satisfaction or happiness for the greatest number of people and not just oneself. The morally good thing to do is whatever promotes the greatest utility even if the individual acting will not prosper or be satisfied. It would be nice if the actor benefits as well but it is the interests of the many and the most over the one that is what Utility is about.

VIDEO on Utility

The theory developed from an attempt to direct the lawmakers of England to consider the common good rather than the welfare of their social class when they made laws. The GOOD is that which provides for the happiness of the greatest number of people even if it results in no happiness to the agent at all. In this approach each human being has exactly the same worth as all other human beings. In this view the benefit of the action must be maximized:

When confronted by some situation and facing a choice or dilemma and when considering what would be the correct thing to do, what would be right, what would be good, the utilitarian would :

1. consider the options available, however many there are.
2. calculate how much happiness would be produced were each of the options to be acted upon or how many interests of how many people would be satisfied
3. determine which option produces the greatest resulting happiness or the greatest number of interests being satisfied for greatest number of people
4. choose that option which does produce the greatest amount of happiness for the greatest number of peopleor the greatest number of interests being satisfied for greatest number of people, the greatest utility

Note: it is not a matter of making the majority (>50%) happy but the greatest possible number of people. So if there are three options, (a),(b), and (c) and (a) makes 87% happy, (b) makes 76% happy and (c) makes 89% happy the utilitarian must choose to do (c). Choice (c) is the GOOD or the morally correct choice while the others (a) and (b) are not good or would be morally incorrect choices.

Suggested Reading John Stuart Mill **Utilitarianism** ch 2 and ch 4

ACT and RULE Utilitarianism

There is a difference between rule and act utilitarianism. The act utilitarian considers only the results or consequences of the single act while the rule utilitarian considers the consequences that result of following a rule of conduct .

VIEW: VIDEO on ACT and RULE UTILITY

Why the two approaches? Consider the following case:

Someone goes to the doctor. The person is ill, experiences pain and dysfunction. The doctor performs a series of test and examinations. The person returns to the doctor's office to learn of the results, the diagnosis and prognosis. The doctor is aware that the tests all show that the person has a disease that is incurable and life threatening. In fact even under the most aggressive treatment option there is a survival rate of less than 15% for two years. The doctor is considering what would be GOOD to tell the

person. Should the person know the truth or should the person be told something other than the truth? Which is better? Which is the right thing to do? What would be GOOD to do? The act utilitarian might calculate that in telling the truth there will be a great deal of pain and hardly any pleasure at all The person will be upset, their family will be upset, the doctor will be upset in informing the ill person that there is nothing that the doctor can do to alter their condition. The doctor's staff will be upset seeing the person come in for whatever treatment there may be. On the other hand if the doctor makes up a story concerning the diagnosis and prognosis that is not true but that gives the ill person more time to enjoy life before the illness makes it obvious that the end is near, well then the results are different. The doctor is not so upset in seeing the person, the doctor's staff is not upset . The family and friends of the person have some more time with that person to enjoy things instead of being morose and depressed. So the ACT utilitarian might calculate that the GOOD is to lie.

The rule utilitarian would need to consider what would the long term consequences be if doctors were to lie to those who come to them and have life threatening, incurable illnesses. The rule utilitarian might calculate that people would no longer be able to trust their doctors and this would break down the confidence they need for their therapies to be effective. The RULE utilitarian might calculate that there is far more harm in lying and so the GOOD is to tell the truth.

The same result might obtain were there to be a consideration of cheating on an examination. The single act might produce a great deal of happiness for the cheater, teacher, family and friends. The rule of cheating might produce quite the opposite result as society could no longer trust that the doctors, lawyers, engineers, repair people etc.. really know what they are doing and deserve their position.

Rule Utilitarianism (RU) has no rule other than UTILITY. Every act is evaluated according to the utility. Does it or doesn't it produce HAPPINESS. Utilitarians must maximize HAPPINESS. They must never accept unhappiness if they can minimize it .

Both ACT and RULE utilitarians must ASSUME NOTHING. They must actually poll or measure what act will produce the greatest utility.

The difference is that the ACT UTILITARIAN measures the consequences of a SINGLE ACT.

The RULE UTILITARIAN measures the consequences of the act repeated over and over again through time as if it were to be followed as a RULE whenever similar circumstances arise.

NOTHING is right or wrong in itself for a utilitarian. NOTHING! It all depends on the consequences of the act, the results are what matters not the act.

The idea behind Rule Utilitarianism is that whenever you are in a situation and have alternatives you calculate the utility to be produced by adopting a course of action (rule) which would produce the greatest utility in the long run if it were followed every time that situation arose.

Let's consider the rule that states you must stop your vehicle at a red traffic light.

Situation: Pregnant woman in back seat. About to deliver. Water has broken. Contractions are 2 minutes apart. It is 4am. The vehicle is 2 miles from the hospital. There are no other cars around. The RU would think if you were as a rule to break the law and go through that red light it would produce more utility than not doing so and therefore would be the morally GOOD thing to do. So the RU RULE would be to go through red lights whenever it is 4am and there is a pregnant woman in the back seat who is about to deliver and you are heading to the hospital.

Another presentation on the distinction:

Another good video on Utilitarianism from Crash Course

RESOURCES:

Rule Utilitarianism

Catholic Encyclopedia Entry

Literature on Utilitarianism

Links to all the original texts of the Utilitarians

Tremendous Central Site for utilitarianism

Glossary of Terms

Original Text by John Stuart Mill On Utilitarianism

Organization promoting utilitarianism

PROBLEMS with the Theory:

1. It is difficult if not impossible to do the calculations required. How do you measure the happiness (pleasure) produced?

    a. Not everyone will be able to measure their happiness.

    b. One persons' maximum happiness may not be the equal of another person's maximum.

    c. Do the calculations range over 1 year, ten years, century,etc..? How long?

    d. Do the calculations measure the happiness for a small group, entire country, the whole world?

    e. Do they consider only humans or non-humans who are sentient beings (have awareness and feelings). Peter Singer is a Utilitarian who includes all sentient beings.

2. The theory can support opposing actions on different occasions as the correct or the good thing to do.

3. The theory can't really resolve conflicts in views, e.g.. Sometimes it supports lying, cheating, killing, stealing, etc... and sometimes not.

4. The theory can support doing horrible, heinous acts, as long as they produce the greatest amount of pleasure for the greatest number of people. There is no act that is wrong in and of itself! Murder, lies, rape, child molestation, ..whatever can be the GOOD thing to do!

5. The theory treats all people as being equal. It does not take into consideration special relationships that exist between people, for example the relationships of family members.

Now to examine approaches to determining right from wrong that does not consider the consequences of the acts but the acts themselves and the intentions of the actors.

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7.6.4: Deontological Theories

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These theories of the GOOD hold that actions are intrinsically right or wrong. They are right or wrong in themselves and irrespective of their consequences. They are traditionally associated with Kantian duty but can also be linked to ethical systems, which uphold absolute moral norms and human rights. Deontologists hold that one cannot undertake immoral acts like torture of spies even if the outcome is morally preferable, such as the early ending of a war. It is contrasted with Teleological/ consequentialist ethical theories. From the Greek *deon* meaning right or obligation: The rationality of moral obligation. A Normative Ethical theory most often associated with the German Philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) which maintains normative evaluations are rooted in some intrinsic feature of an action which gives rise to an obligation or duty**.**

In a 'Deontological' system of ethics the consequences of an action are generally irrelevant to moral assessment.

Rather, morality comes about from a **rational agent's recognition of its duties toward others**. These duties can be grounded in different ways, from divine revelation to objective rational principles.

While each type of Deontological theory finds the locus of our moral obligations in different places, they all contend that 'goodness' resides in our ability to recognize and keep moral obligations; the consequences of our actions are of only secondary concern, if at all.

READ: **Deontological Theories: Non-Consequentialist Approach**

In the next section several deontological theories will be examined.

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7.6.5: Natural Law Theory

(NOTE: You must read only those linked materials that are preceded by the capitalized word **READ**.)

There are ethical theories that make reference to or depend upon the existence of a deity. Two are presented here in this section. THEY ARE NOT THE SAME. The first is Divine Command theory that is not used anywhere in the world by the major organized religions. It is mistaken for the foundation of the moral theory of Judaism and Christianity and Islam but it is not so. The Divine Command theory has too many problems with it to be used by large organized religions. It is used by small cults and by those who are uneducated about what their own religion holds.

DIVINE COMMAND THEORY and Criticisms of it

The first is one that equates the GOOD with whatever the god or deity commands.

VIEW: **VIDEO**

Socrates (469-399 BCE)was one of the first to question this theory. He asked whether we call the GOOD good because the gods have done it or whether they have done it because it is GOOD. His question implies the possibility of the existence of a standard for the GOOD separate from the divine.

> *Religions often base their notion of morality on the character of their **God** claiming that (1) What is 'good' is good because God commands it and (2) people cannot live moral lives unless they follow God's moral teachings. In Christianity (2) is often believed to be impossible until a person has had their sin dealt with by God. Only then will they be in a position to want to do what God wills and be able to do it ('The sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so' (Romans 8:7)). However, this raises questions concerning the relationship between morality and God. If what is 'good' is good only because God wills it is it not possible that one day God might say that what was previously known as 'bad' is now 'good'? Some might say that this would not happen because we would know God was making something 'bad' good but this means we have an independent criteria by which we can assess God's morality. If this is the case then we know what is right and wrong without God's intervention - so why bother with God (for more on this see* The Euthyphro Dilemma)?- - - Stephen Richards

READ: Tim Holt on the Dilemma See also **Wikipedia on the Dilemma**

Plato(,427-347 BCE) presented this matter in the dialogue titled the Euthyphro.

> Many people claim that morality is impossible without the belief in a supernatural entity (god),, from which our sense of right and wrong ultimately derives. And yet, Plato put a huge hole in this argument, back in the 4th century BCE. Think about this excerpt from Plato's *Euthyphro* (Socrates is speaking):
>
> "Consider this: is what is pious loved by the gods because it is pious, or is it pious because it is loved by the gods? (Euthyphro, 10a)"
>
> Euthyphro's dilemma, as it has come to be known, is this:
>
> **Horn 1** - If the good is such because God says it is, then morality is arbitrary (e.g., God condoning all sorts of immoral acts in the Old Testament, including: Genesis 34:13-29, Exodus 17:13, 32:27, Leviticus 26:29, Numbers 16:27-33, 21:3, 21:35, 31:17-18,Deuteronomy 2:33-34, 3:6, Joshua 6:21-27, Judges 3:29, etc., etc.).
>
> **Horn 2** - If the good is absolute, and God cannot do evil, then we don't need the middle Man to figure out what is good and what is not (e.g., we *know* that killing innocent children and women, ethnic cleansing, etc. are wrong, period).
>
> Notice that this is *not* an argument against the existence of God, only about gods' irrelevance to morality. Yet, if one cannot avoid either horn of the dilemma, it is difficult to see what the point of religion ultimately is... by Massimo Pigliucci, at www.rationallyspeaking.org

READ: CHRISTIAN DIVINE COMMAND THEORY

There are many people brought up to accept the Ten Commandments as guides for a moral life and they think that following those commandments would make them adherents to the DIVINE COMMAND Theory . This is NOT the case at all. In DIVINE COMMAND THEORY the GOOD is whatever the "god" or deity commands. This means whatever and whenever and wherever. DIVINE COMMAND THEORY does not rest on scriptures. DIVINE COMMAND is DIVINE COMMAND. DIVINE COMMAND does not stop with the Ten Commandments. No not at all. The theory holds that the deity did not go out of existence after issuing those commandments but continues to exist and issues new commandments. The deity can even issue commandments that change the previous commandments and even in contradiction to them. In fact it is often the case that someone claiming to have received a direct command from the deity or god will do something quite inconsistent with or a violation of one of the ten commandments, for example killing innocent children because the deity told them to do so.

How does anyone know what the "god" or deity commands? The "god" or deity tells them either directly or through some intermediary or through signs or omens or some experience that those who receive the command claim has been the transmitter of the message or the command. How exactly do people get the command ? Well again it is either directly or indirectly through some intermediary like a person or a written work. Can the deity continue to issue commands after previous recordings? Yes, the deity can update and change commands as the deity wishes.

There are many problems with this theory.

The religions of the West have rejected DIVINE COMMAND THEORY and instead hold for Natural Law Theory. The rejection may be based on the fear of some charismatic person receiving a divine command to change the religion or to kill the leaders of that religion.

DIVINE COMMAND THEORY does not rest on scriptures. DIVINE COMMAND is DIVINE COMMAND.

People claim that GOD has COMMANDED them to do X

Therefore doing X is a morally good act.

X can be ANY ACT AT ALL.

ANY ACT AT ALL can be good if GOD COMMANDS it!!!

In DIVINE COMMAND THEORY there is NO GOOD or BAD by itself at all. There is only what GOD COMMANDS

GOD commands= GOOD

GOD forbids= BAD

GOD gives a NEW COMMAND, then NEW COMMAND= GOOD

No one who accepts DIVINE COMMAND THEORY can question the commands of the deity or make a statement such as "I do not believe God would command the things you stated here at all." because a person who accepts the DIVINE COMMAND THEORY accepts NO ACT as being GOOD or BAD except according to what the deity commands.

According to DIVINE COMMAND THEORY

rape can be good
child molesting can be good
lies can be good
theft can be good
slaughter of thousands of innocent people can be good

All that matters is that the "god" commands it.

Scriptures can record what some people at some time thought god commanded them to do. Some people can follow what is

written in those scriptures. That is not DIVINE COMMAND THEORY. Why not? Because for those who believe in a deity or a god then GOD lives forever. GOD is alive. GOD keeps issuing COMMANDS.

People hear the DIVINE COMMAND in 1205 and 1776 and 1848 and on May 10, 2003 and on December 23, 2005 and so on and they follow it thinking the command makes the act that is commanded the morally correct thing to do. Here are some recent cases of Divine Commands.

DIVINE COMMAND THEORY has so many problems that there are very few people on earth that use it and they tend to be fanatics, and mentally unstable people. No organized religion actually supports DIVINE COMMAND THEORY because of all the problems with it and the threat it poses to organized religions. Judaism and Christianity and Islam support NATURAL LAW THEORY and not DIVINE COMMAND.

Problems:

1. Is there a god or any deity?
2. Who knows what the commands of the deity are? Can anyone claim to have heard the command and respond to it? Here are some recent cases of Divine Commands.
3. The commands may need to be interpreted, but by whom?
4. If there are a few who claim to be designated by the deity or who are designated by some group to be the official recipients of the divine commands are humans prepared to follow the commands of these designated recipients as if they were the commands of the deity?
5. If the deity commands or the designated recipients of the deity's commands do command that every human sacrifice the second born child on its third birthday on an altar would that make human sacrifice a morally GOOD act?

So there are several and severe problems with the Divine Command Theory. They account for the reasons why no major organized religion would use this theory as the basis for morality.

Here is another theory that in one of its forms involves belief in the existence of a deity, god. It is the ethical principle employed by the major religious traditions of the West: Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

NATURAL LAW THEORY

With this theory actions in conformity and support of natural laws are morally correct. A simple summary would be :

VIEW VIDEO at Natural Law Theory

What Is Consistent with the Natural Law Is Right and What Is not in keeping with the Natural Law Is Wrong .

NOTE: *This is NOT what is natural is morally correct and what is unnatural is morally wrong. The focus is on the natural LAWS and not simply natural acts.*

In this view humans have reasoning and the Laws of Nature are discernable by human reason. Thus, humans are morally obliged to use their reasoning to discern what the laws are and then to act inconformity with them.

Humans have a natural drive to eat, drink, sleep and procreate. These actions are in accord with a natural law for species to survive and procreate. Thus activities in conformity with such a law are morally good. Activities that work against that law are morally wrong. As an example consider that to eat too much or too little and place life in jeopardy is morally wrong. NLT derives from a rational deduction of what would be consistent with what appear to reason to be the laws of nature governing human behavior. Humans are animals and as such are governed by certain natural drives and instincts, e.g., to eat, drink, sleep, procreate, survive.. Thus ,there would be according to NLT a RIGHT to life and health needed for life. Thus, any action that harms human life and health would be morally incorrect, i.e., morally wrong. An operation that harms human flesh is morally correct if it is intended to produce benefits such as removing threats to life (cancer), correcting malfunctioning organs etc... Medicine and surgery intended to further health and life are morally good.

This theory has two major variations on it. For the theists there is a deity that created all of nature and created the laws as well and so obedience to those laws and the supplement to those laws provided by the deity is the morally correct thing to do. For atheists there is still the belief that humans have reasoning ability and with it the laws of nature are discernable. For atheists who accept this approach to act in keeping with the laws of nature is the morally correct thing to do.

What are the laws of nature that provide guidance for human actions? These would include: the law of survival, the natural action for living things to maintain themselves and to reproduce, etc..

It is a major problem for this theory to determine what exactly those laws are and how they apply to human circumstances.

READ about this theory here>

READ THE ETHICS OF NATURAL LAW by C. E. Harris

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This is from Wikipedia

The Roman Catholic Church understands natural law to be immanent in nature; this understanding is in large part due to the influence of Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274 A.D.), often as filtered through the School of Salamanca.

It understands human beings to consist of body and mind, the physical and the non-physical (or soul perhaps) and that the two are inextricably linked. It describes human persons as being inclined toward the good. There are many manifestations of the good that we can pursue, some, like procreation, are common to other animals, while others, like the pursuit of truth, are inclinations peculiar to the capacities of human beings.

Drunkness is wrong because it injures the health and worse, destroys one's ability to reason, which is fundamental to man as a rational animal.
Theft is wrong because it destroys social relations, and man is by nature a social animal.

Martin Luther King, Jr. invoked the natural law in his "Letter from Birmingham Jail", stating that the man-made (positive) laws that he broke were not in accord with the moral law or the Law of God (natural law).

Hugo Grotius based his philosophy of international law on natural law. In particular, his writings on freedom of the seas and just war theory directly appealed to natural law. About natural law itself, he wrote that "even the will of an omnipotent being cannot change or abrogate" natural law, which "would maintain its objective validity even if we should assume the impossible, that there is no God or that he does not care for human affairs." (*De iure belli ac pacis*, Prolegomeni XI). This the famous argument *etiamsi daremus* (*non esse Deum*), that made natural law no longer dependent on theology.

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The theory also utilizes the Principle of the DOUBLE EFFECT:

Explanation and illustration from WIKIPEDIA

READ: https://en.Wikipedia.org/wiki/Principle_of_double_effect

> DOUBLE EFFECT This set of criteria states that an action having foreseen harmful effects practically inseparable from the good effect is justifiable if the following are true:
>
> | |
> |---|
> | the nature of the act is itself good, or at least morally neutral; |
> | the agent intends the good effect and does not intend the bad effect either as a means to the good or as an end in itself; |
> | the good effect outweighs the bad effect in circumstances sufficiently grave to justify causing the bad effect and the agent exercises due diligence to minimize the harm.[2] |
>
> **Examples In Medicine**
>
> · The principle of double effect is frequently cited in cases of pregnancy and abortion. A doctor who believes abortion is always morally wrong may still remove the uterus or fallopian tubes of a pregnant woman, knowing the procedure will cause the death of the embryo or fetus, in cases in which the woman is certain to die without the procedure (examples cited include aggressive uterine cancer and ectopic pregnancy). In

these cases, the intended effect is to save the woman's life, not to terminate the pregnancy, and the effect of not performing the procedure would result in the greater evil of the death of both the mother and the fetus.[4][5][6]

· In cases of terminally ill patients who would hasten their deaths because of unbearable pain, or whose caregivers would do so for them (euthanasia, medical aid in dying, etc.), a principle of "double effect death" could be applied to justify the deliberate administration of a pain-killer in potentially unsafe doses—not in an attempt to end life but to relieve the pain suffered as it is considered harmful to the patient. The U.S. Supreme Court has voiced support for this principle in its deliberations over the constitutionality of medical aid in dying.[7]

See also INTERNET ENCYCLOPEDIA OF PHILOSOPHY

READ: http://www.utm.edu/research/iep/n/natlaw.htm

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Application of the theories to one behavior: HOMOSEXUALITY

Under the Natural Law Theory two people of the same sex interacting to produce orgasms will be morally good or bad depending on whether or not such actions are in accordance with natural laws or not.

Atheistic Natural Law Theory:

If there are species on earth in which members of the same sex physically interact to produce physical pleasure then homosexual couplings amongst humans would be morally good. The purpose of orgasms would be more than to produce offspring.

PROBLEM: the physical record may not be all that clear and open to interpretation. There is evidence of same sex couplings in species other than human. How many cases or species are needed to conclude that such behavior is natural among mammals and fulfilling a basic physical drive in a non-harmful manner to the species is what is debatable.

Theistic Natural Law Theory:

God made Nature. God made the Natural Laws. God made humans. God gave humans reason by which they are to learn of the natural laws. God also provides revelation concerning god's will and wishes. In the scriptures there are passages dealing with human matters and they are interpreted to have been given as a guide for the moral life. So in addition to the physical universe which is provided for the study of humans there is also the word of god.

There is a passage in the bible where Onan is condemned because he did not go into the tent of his dead brother's wife and have sex with her so as to produce more children. (see two accounts below) . At that time it was the custom in the tribe that when a man died his brother would be responsible for his wife and take her as another wife in order to continue the tribe. Onan went into the tent had sex with the dead brother's wife but pulled out of her and spilled his semen on the ground.

He was condemned for doing so.

PROBLEM:

A. Was Onan condemned for entering into sex for a purpose other than having children? If so then all sexual acts other than intercourse between a man and a woman who are married and preparing to have children would be immoral. These acts would include: Premarital sex, extra marital sex, masturbation, homosexuality, oral sex, anal sex, use of birth control.

B. Was Onan condemned for not being willing to father children by his dead brother's wife? If so, then sexual acts entered into for a purpose other than procreation would be morally acceptable.

There are many people who take each of these possible interpretations of the passage.

Genesis 38:6-9 -- The sin of Onan:

This passage describes how Tamar's first husband Er was killed by God because he was wicked. Under ancient Jewish tradition,

Er's brother Onan was required to marry and engage in sexual intercourse with Tamar. Widows were not asked whether they wanted to remarry. In many cases, the woman would have experienced the sexual activity as a form of rape -- something required by tribal tradition which they had to endure. Similarly, nobody consulted the widow's brother-in-law about his wishes in the matter.

Their first son would be attributed to Er. Because any offspring would not be considered his child, Onan decided to use a common and relatively ineffective contraceptive technique to prevent conception. He employed "coitus interruptus". That is, he disengaged from Tamar just before he ejaculated, and "*spilled his semen on the ground*." (NIV) God was displeased at this action and killed Onan also -- presumably because he refused to follow Jewish tradition.

This passage was used until recent decades by some Christian groups who maintained that Onan's sin was actually masturbation. The term "*Onanism*" was coined as a synonym of masturbation. This interpretation is no longer in common use.

==========

Onan was the middle of the three children of Judah, son of Jacob and father of the tribe which eventually produced both Kind David and Jesus. His older brother died without producing an heir. In those days, it was customary for the younger brother to take his deceased brother's wife and provide that brother with an offspring. So, Judah, Onan's father, ordered him to do such.

According to the account, Onan realized that his biological son, produced in this manner, would not be considered his own. If Onan provided his older dead brother with a son, that child would inherit both the seat of chief of the tribe as well as the oldest's portion of the estate. It meant that Onan would be inferior to his own biological child. It also meant that Onan would lose "financially."

The laws of inheritance in those days required that the older brother receive a double portion. This meant that if Onan provided his brother with an heir, Judah's holdings would be divided four ways, with two fourths (or one half) going to this child while Onan would only receive one fourth. However, if Onan retained his status as oldest surviving son, the inheritance would be divided three ways, with Onan receiving two of those thirds or about one and a half times more.

According to the scriptural account, Onan insured his failure by practicing the most ancient form of birth control known, premature withdrawal. For this, God struck him dead.

The account says that Tamar was the name of the wife and her dead husband committed some sin so grave that God killed him, although it doesn't specify the sin. Now, her husband's younger brother commits a sin, with her, and he is struck down by God. This man sent to her to provide her dead husband with an heir, has sexual relations with her. He pulls out before ejaculation, spills his seed on the ground and dies on the spot.

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Historical Course of Natural Theory from Theistic to Atheistic by Andrew Sandlin



Figure 7.6.5.1

Thomas Aquinas on Natural Law

READ THE ETHICS OF NATURAL LAW by C. E. Harris

A Christian Reformed Critique

PROBLEMS FOR NATURAL LAW THEORY

1. One of the difficulties for natural law theory is that people have interpreted nature differently? Should this be the case if as asserted by natural law theory, the moral law of human nature is knowable by natural human reason?
2. How do we determine the essential or morally praiseworthy traits of human nature? Traditional natural law theory has picked out very positive traits, such as "the desire to know the truth, to choose the good, and to develop as healthy mature human beings". But some philosophers, such as Hobbes, have found human beings to be essentially selfish. It is questionable that behavior in accordance with human nature is morally right and behavior not in accord with human nature is morally wrong. For instance, if it turns out that human beings (at least the males) are naturally aggressive, should we infer that war and fighting are morally right?
3. Even if we have certain natural propensities, are we justified in claiming that those propensities or tendencies should be developed? On what grounds do we justify, for example, that we ought to choose the good?
4. For Aquinas, the reason why nature had the order it did was because God had put it there. Other thinkers, such as Aristotle, did not believe that this order was divinely inspired. Does this alleged natural moral order require that we believe that there is a God that has produced this natural moral order? Evolutionary theory has challenged much of the basis of thinking that there is a moral natural order, since on evolutionary theory species has developed they way they have out of survival needs.
5. It is doubtful that one can infer moral principles forbidding adultery, rape, homosexuality, and so forth, either from biological facts about human nature or from facts about the inherent nature of Homo sapiens.
6. Critics of natural law theory say that it is doubtful, however, that the inherent nature of Homo sapiens establishes laws of behavior for human beings in the same way as it may establish laws of behavior for cats, lions, and polar bears. It is especially difficult because so much of human behavior is shaped by the environment, that is, by deliberate and non-deliberate conditioning, training, and education.
7. Two philosophers (Aquinas and Aristotle) integral to the theory have different views about god's role in nature, which confuses the issue, especially when trying to decipher if the theory relies on the existence of god.
8. The intrinsic nature of humans as it pertains to establishing laws of behavior may not be the same for animals, which presents difficulties within the theory.
9. Human behavior may be solely reliant upon the environment that one is exposed to, which includes social classes, education and upbringing, this opposes the theory.

OTHER SOURCES:

Encylopedia of Philosophy - Natural Law - http://www.utm.edu/research/iep/n/natlaw.htm Definition and explanation of natural law theory with bibliography.
Natural Law and Natural Rights http://jim.com/rights.html Paper by James Donald about history, theory, and prediction for natural rights and natural law with bibliography.
Jurisdictionary - Search for Natural Law - Examination of American jurisprudence through natural law theory.
The Natural Law by Heinrich A. Rommen - history and philosophy.

The Case For and Against Natural Law - Lecture by Russell Kirk for the Heritage Foundation presenting conflicting views of natural law.
Haines: The Revival of Natural Law Concepts - Study of the establishment and interpretation of the limits on legislatures.
Natural Law: A Reformed Critique Examiniation of natural law by Peter J. Leithart found in Premise.

Huig de Groot (Hugo Grotius) - Hugo Grotius 1583-1645, founder of natural law theory.

The Non-Absurdity of Natural Law - Defense of natural law theory and natural rights against egoist attacks by Wendy McElroy from The Freemason.
Aquinas on Natural Law -Summary of Thomistic view of natural law.
Natural Law Frigate - Discussion forum and live chat devoted to natural law.
Natural Born Lawyers - Article by J. Budziszewski on natural law with links to purchase related books.
Darwin and Natural Law - Search for a darwinian science of ethics.

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7.6.6: Categorical Imperative

(NOTE: You must read only those linked materials that are preceded by the capitalized word **READ**.)

Immanuel Kant		
The Categorical Imperative		**An Ethics of Duty**

For Kant the basis for a Theory of the Good lies in the intention or the will. Those acts are morally praiseworthy that are done out of a sense of duty rather than for the consequences that are expected, particularly the consequences to self. The only thing GOOD about the act is the WILL, the GOOD WILL. That will is to do our DUTY. What is our duty? It is our duty to act in such a manner that we would want everyone else to act in a similar manner in similar circumstances towards all other people.

Kant expressed this as the Categorical Imperative.

Act according to the maxim that you would wish all other rational people to follow, as if it were a universal law.

For Kant the GOOD involves the Principle of Universalizability!

Kant argues that there can be four formulations of this principle:

The Formula of the Law of Nature: "Act as if the maxim of your action were to become through your will a universal law of nature."

The Formula of the End Itself: "Act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end."

The Formula of Autonomy: "So act that your will can regard itself at the same time as making universal law through its maxims."

The Formula of the Kingdom of Ends: "So act as if you were through your maxims a law-making member of a kingdom of ends."

Never treat a person as a means to an end.

Persons are always ends in themselves. We must never use or exploit anyone for whatever purpose.

Video: Beginner's Guide to Kant's Moral Philosophy

The Categorical Imperative is NOT the Golden Rule

Kant's Deontology is presented in his Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals

Kant in his ***Critique of Practical Reason*** wanted to find a basis for ethics that would be based on reason and not on a faith in a god or in some cold calculation of utility that might permit people to be used for the benefit of the majority. Kant thought carefully about what it is that all humans would find reasonable as a guide for human conduct. People think it wrong to kill, lie, steal, and break promises. Why is this so. Kant arrives at the idea that humans think these acts wrong because they cannot will that others

would do these things because it would mean the end of civilized life, perhaps even the life of the actor contemplating the right way to behave. One can not will that people lie all the time for that would mean the end to human communications if we could not trust what was said to be true most, if not all, of the time. Kant thought that there would be perfect and imperfect duties.

Perfect Duty is that which we are all obliged to do all of the time.

e.g., no killing, no physically harming others, no lies, no theft, no breaking promises

Imperfect Duties are those which we should do as often as possible but can not be expected to do always. (e.g., be charitable, loving)

COMPLETE OVERVIEW of KANT and the ETHICS of DUTY in READ: Wikipedia on Kant

Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy on Kant's Ethics

Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy on Kant's Metaphysics

Philosophy Pages on Kant

The Categorical Imperative in the Twentieth Century

Catholic Encyclopedia

The Categorical Imperative is NOT the Golden Rule

With the Golden rule you are to: ***Act as you would have others act towards you.***

The Golden Rule Around the World

The same essential golden rule has been taught by all the major religions (and philosophies) of the world going back approximately 3500 years. Here are just some examples.

HINDUISM (Vedic religion from c. 13th century BC) Do not to others what ye do not wish done to yourself... --This is the whole Dharma, heed it well. The Mahabarata, -Brihaspati (Anusasana Parva-Section CXIII Verse 8	ZOROASTRIANISM (c. 12th century BC) Human nature is good only when it does not do unto another whatever is not good for its own self. Dadistan-i-Dinik, 94:5;
BUDDHISM (c. 6th century BC) Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful. Udanavargu, 5:18, Tibetan Dhammapada, .	JUDAISM (c. 10th? century BC) Torah verse (Hebrew: "ואהבת לרעך כמוך"): You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against your kinsfolk. Love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD. Leviticus 19:18 That which is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow. That is the whole Torah; the rest is the explanation; go and learn it.------Hillel in Talmud, Shabbat 31a

JAINISM (c. 6th century BC) In happiness and suffering, in joy and grief, regard all creatures as you would regard your own self. Yoga-Sastra,	CHRISTIANITY (c. 1st century AD) Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Luke 6:13 So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you. Matthew 7:12 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.--Paul -Galatians 5:14
CONFUCIANISM (c. 6th century BC) Do not do to others what you do not want done to yourself. Confucius, Analects, 15:23, 6:28; Mahabharara, 5:1517, in Confucius, The Analects,	ISLAM (c. 7th century AD) No one of you is a believer until you desire for another that which you desire for yourself. The Sunnah (from the Hadith),
SIKHISM (c. 15th century AD) Be not estranged from another for, in every heart, Pervades the Lord. Sri Guru Granth Sahib, in Singh	BAHÁ'Í (c. 19th century AD) Ascribe not to any soul that which thou wouldst not have ascribed to thee, and say not that which thou doest not. This is my command unto thee, do thou observe it. Bahá'u'lláh, The Hidden Words, Arabic 29
For more references and appearances of variations see Wikipedia on the Golden Rule See also:	

Why should willingness to be on the receiving end of like action make it permissible? If masochists are willing to suffer others' sadism, would that make sadism right? More generally, can acceptance of being on the receiving end of like action legitimate anything?

Kant's improvement on the golden rule, the Categorical Imperative:

Act as you would want all other people to act towards all other people.

Act according to the maxim that you would wish all other rational people to follow, as if it were a universal law.

The difference is this. With the Golden rule a masochist or a sadist would be justified in causing or receiving pain. This is not what the Kantian Principle would support.

From Don Berkich:

" Some make the mistake of thinking that the First Formulation of the Categorical Imperative is but a badly worded version of the Biblical "Golden Rule"--*Do unto others as you would have them do unto you*. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The Golden Rule, as Kant well knew, is a deeply misguided ethical principle. To see this, consider the following somewhat salacious example.

The Horny Martin Example

	Suppose that Martin is 20 year-old college student. Suppose further that Martin has never been out on a date. The woman of his dreams finally agrees to go out with him. So Martin gets all dressed up and takes her out to a nice dinner, after which they drive up to Lookout Point. And...	
		Martin does unto others as he would have done unto himself,
	with disastrous consequences.	

Because the same result cannot be obtained by application of the Categorical Imperative, it follows that the Golden Rule and the Categorical Imperative are *not* extensionally equivalent. "

The Categorical Imperative is NOT the Golden Rule

PROBLEMS WITH KANT"S THEORY

1. The theory applies only to rational agents. It would not apply to non-humans or to humans who are not rational, e.g., humans with brain malfunctioning, illness or persistent vegetative coma.

2. The theory cannot resolve conflicts between duties:

a. between two perfect duties

b. between a perfect duty and an imperfect duty

How would a person resolve a conflict between two perfect duties such as never tell a lie and avoid harming someone? What if telling the truth were to harm someone?

How would you resolve the conflict between the perfect duty, say to keep a promise to pick your friend up with you auto at a certain time, and an imperfect duty, say to stop on the way to pick up your friend in order to give CPR to someone, a stranger, and save that stranger's life?

3. A clever person could phrase the maxim to be universalized in such a manner as to permit almost anything. By placing qualifiers on the maxim or peculiar definitions on terms a clever actor could satisfy the categorical imperative and yet be acting in a manner otherwise not consistent with it.

What if someone were to promise to be faithful to his mate and not have sex with another woman. Then that person engages in oral and anal forms of physical interaction leading to orgasm and yet thinks that the promise was not broken because the meaning of "sex" did not include those forms of interaction.

RESOURCES and SUGGESTED READINGS on KANT:

Glossary of Kant's terms

Kant links

- **Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals**
- **GrGroundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals**
- **Kant at Faith.net**
- **The Ethics of Duty**
- **What is the best way to live? Kant**
- **A Critique of the Kantian Ethics**
- **Critique of Kant**
- **Kant, Immanuel: The Critique of Practical Reason**
- **Kant, Immanuel: The Critique of Pure Reason**
- **Kant, Immanuel: Fundamental Principles**

Internet Encyclopedia of Philsoophy (IEP) on Duties and Deontology -

Categorical Imperative -

German Idealism -

Kant, Immanuel -- Metaphysics -

On the A Priori

A Critique of the Kantian Ethics by Michael Huemer Spring, 1993 -

Critique of Kant in Schopenhauer's Thesis: On the Basis of Morality Andreas Wißmiller

Kant in History of Ethics by Darwall, -

There are other theories. We shall move on to examine them.

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