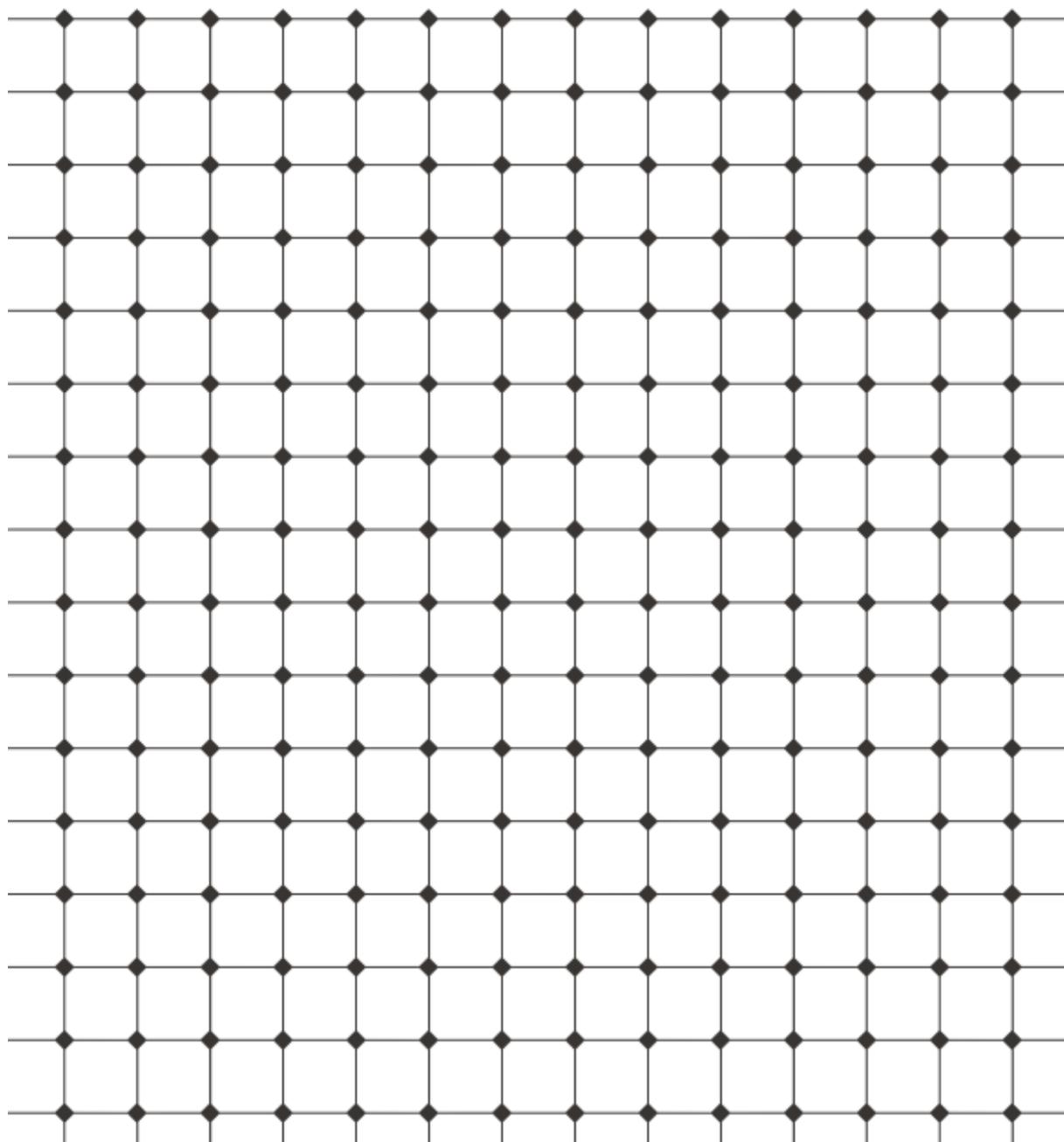


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We would also like to thank all the students for their thought-provoking essay and art submissions. Each piece reflects a sincere effort to grapple with complex ideas and bring fresh perspectives to enduring questions. Philosophy reminds us that knowledge rarely arrives uninvited, it must be sought, questioned, and sometimes reimaged. We hope these essays encourage readers to do just that.

To our readers, thank you for engaging with this year's volume. May the works within inspire you to think more deeply about the world, yourself, and the countless intersections between them.

The *Labyrinth* Vol. 11 team thanks you and wishes you well on your own journey of learning and discovery.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	Page 2
A Conceptual Critique of Marquis	Page 3
Beyond The Flicking of a Wrist: How Response Time Could Save Free Will	Page 8
The Art of Losing Yourself	Page 12
We Are Not All Textualists	Page 17
Interview with Karlee Colby	Page 25
Tip-Based Wages and the Exploitation of Emotional Labor	Page 30
The Mark of the Mental	Page 35
Towards a Non-Meinongian Rethinking of Zalta's Abstract Object Theory: An Exploration in Axiomatic Metaphysics	Page 38
Courage and Wisdom in Plato's <i>Protagoras</i>	Page 47
Interview with Dr. Richard Fumerton	Page 52
Film Review: <i>Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind</i>	Page 61
Film Recommendations	Page 63
Book Recommendations	Page 64
About the Editors	Page 65

A Conceptual Critique of Marquis

VANESSA DEMARCO

Don Marquis's argument for the moral impermissibility of abortion relies on his foundational claim about what makes killing inherently wrong. He claims that it is not the brutality of killing, nor the grief that surrounds death, that underlie why killing is wrong. Rather, that the person killed is deprived of what he calls a "future like ours." With this critique, I argue that it is illogical to draw an arbitrary distinction on when a fetus obtains a future like ours as it is laid out by Marquis, and because of this, his premise necessitates the obviously false conclusion, that it is



Figure 1 - Tanvi Devulapally

immoral to kill gametes (egg and sperm cells). I do not argue that no distinction between personhood is necessary to morally evaluate the permissibility of abortion but rather argue that the line drawn by Marquis is illogical. To accomplish this, I will first argue that if the premises of Marquis's argument are to be believed, it necessarily follows that killing an individual's gametes (sperm and egg cells) would be morally equivalent to the killing Marquis ascribes to abortion. This is because any such act would equivalently deprive gametes of a future like ours. This conclusion, which is universally understood to be false, necessitates his premise must be false, and I demonstrate why with an analogy. Marquis

briefly addresses such an objection in his original writing, so after I have made my affirmative argument, I will then address his response with a counter of my own. In my counter, I will draw attention to the counterintuitive nature of what Marquis defines as a subject of harm. Ultimately, the issue I raise against the logical ramifications of Marquis's argument, and my response to his counter, will support my position: he is wrong to draw an unfounded distinction on when a fetus becomes a person and has a future like ours (FLO).

I will begin by setting forth my principle argument: that because Marquis claims the inherent wrongness of killing lies in the loss of a future like ours, it necessarily follows that the killing of a gamete (an egg or sperm) is also wrong because it similarly deprives them of a future like ours. If my argument of why this necessarily follows is valid, then it must be the case that Marquis's argument also holds that any action that harms a gamete would also be morally impermissible. I will assume that such a conclusion is intuitively incorrect, and thus Marquis's argument is flawed. To reiterate: because the logic that Marquis's argument relies on necessitates the conclusion killing gametes is wrong (a false conclusion), his argument is invalid. This draws on the basic principles of reasoning: a valid argument cannot have a false conclusion unless one

of its premises is false. To apply this principle, I must first prove that Marquis's argument necessitates this false conclusion. Once again, his argument relies on the premise that depriving an individual of a future like ours is wrong. But if this is the case, then it must be true that killing gametes is also wrong. This is because ejaculating during masturbation or ejaculating inside an infertile woman similarly deprives individuals (otherwise viable sperms) of a future like ours. This is the point where Marquis would define only a zygote (a fertilized egg), and not a gamete as having a future like ours. But such a distinction is illogical. This is because for an individual to have a "future like ours," Marquis does not require that future be guaranteed. If such a future had to be guaranteed for an individual to have a future like ours, then Marquis would not be able to give a fully formed infant the quality of having a future like ours, let alone something that is as developmentally immature as a zygote. This is because at no stage in the development of a zygote is a future guaranteed. Fertilization is only the first step of many on the long journey to a developed infant. Once gametes join, the zygote must travel down the fallopian tube to continue developing into a morula. However, 1 in 50 pregnancies become ectopic (the zygote becomes stuck in the fallopian tube). It is inarguable that there is no guarantee a zygote will progress past this stage. If there is no guarantee that it passes this stage, then there is no guarantee that a zygote has a future like ours. But the argument does not stop there. Even if a zygote successfully travels down the fallopian tube and becomes a morula, there is still no guarantee that it successfully reaches the next step of implantation needed to become a blastocyst. If there is no guarantee that it becomes a blastocyst, there is no guarantee that it has a future like ours. To avoid cluttering my argument with unnecessarily cumulative medical jargon, I will end this series here. But it is important to understand that there is an almost innumerable amount of opportunities for cell failure from the period of fertilization to delivery. Even at that, each stage could further be divided into countless processes, each of which must succeed for development to continue. The number of potential failures (and losses of futures like ours) solely depends on how small you divide and examine each stage of development. The argument for a future like ours relies on an unfeasible amount of "ifs": If an egg becomes fertilized, if the egg travels down the fallopian tube, if the egg implants, etc. The sheer amount of potentiality for failure leads to the unavoidable conclusion that at no point during development does the potential infant have a guaranteed future like ours. But if a future like ours does not have to be guaranteed, then the FLO model cannot make any reasonable distinction between a gamete and a zygote, a zygote and a morula, or between a morula and a blastocyst. No stage guarantees a future like ours for a potential infant, and any moral cutoff that claims to designate when a future like ours starts or ends is illogical.

So I will again return to my earlier claim that because Marquis's argument necessitates this false conclusion, the argument is invalid. So far, my argument has achieved half of this goal, as I have just discussed why his claim necessitates the conclusion that killing a gamete is wrong. I will now delve into why this conclusion is false, and therefore why his argument is invalid. Before I can do this, it is necessary to construct a conceptual analysis of how I define killing a gamete. Because of its physical size, it is difficult to view killing it through the lens that we view other organisms. Thus, for the purpose of the argument, I will define killing a gamete as actions that ruin

its fertility or otherwise waste its potential for development. With this definition, any ejaculation that occurs without the intention of impregnation would be morally impermissible as it would deny the ejaculated sperm a future like ours. Examples of such ejaculation could be through masturbation, or in any context where the fetus is deprived of the chance to fertilize an egg. Similarly, a male having intercourse with a woman who is pregnant or infertile would also be morally impermissible as such an action would also deprive that sperm of a future like ours. But the consequences of this conclusion do not end there. Because any damage to the viability of a gamete deprives it of a future like ours, we must also consider it morally impermissible for men to enter a hot tub, wear tight undergarments, or do anything that damages their gametes and reduces their sperm count. Because we have established that these conclusions follow naturally from the premise, and because these conclusions are false, we must determine that Marquis's argument is invalid.

Now that I have established that Marquis's argument is invalid because his premise leads to a false conclusion, I will now take a look at why his premise is false. I disagree with Marquis's assertion that what makes killing wrong is solely that it deprives an individual of a future of value. Instead, I contend that the most compelling reason killing is wrong is that it deprives life/future from one who was already experiencing it. I am not denying that the deprivation of future value is something to consider, but it cannot explain the full wrongness of killing. To illustrate this point, I will draw the analogy of a parent walking with their child. Suppose on their walk, this parent sees a candy shop that is outside the line of the child's vision. If the parent were to recognize the possibility of bringing the child to the candy shop and instead choose to keep walking, no harm has been done. The child, who has never tasted candy before, does not long for it. He does not have the capacity to long for it because he has never tasted it before. The child does not mourn the loss of the candy because the candy was never his to begin with. He does not have the capacity to mourn it because he doesn't know what it's like to experience it. Nor did he know the experience of it was a possibility so he could not have mourned his potential to experience it. He will not be harmed nor suffer because he was deprived of the potential to experience candy and thus the parent has done no harm by continuing to walk. Now I will draw a similar analogy, but this time the parent walking sees the candy shop and decides to take their child in. The parent allows the child to try a piece of candy, but just as the child has their first bite, the candy is ripped away. Now it can be argued that moral wrongdoing has taken place on the part of the parent. The child, having gotten a glimpse of the joy of candy only for it to be taken away has been wronged by the parent. Before the child had no knowledge of candy's existence, so it was impossible for the child to desire candy. Only now that it has tasted candy does it have this capacity, and only now has it been wronged. Through the lens of this analogy, Marquis's argument that the sole wrongness of killing comes from the deprivation of a future like ours cannot hold ground. It cannot be true that the sole reason ripping the candy away is wrong is because it deprives the child of that candy in the future. If this were true, Marquis would have to agree that the first analogy, where the parent simply continues walking, is an equal moral grievance to ripping the candy away from a child you introduced candy to. In both instances, the child is deprived of a future with candy, yet we think

of one as significantly more wrong than the other. It must be true that something makes killing wrong other than, or in addition to, the deprivation of a FLO. I will concede that candy and the wonders of human life are not synonymous. I would be naive to value them with equal moral significance, but it is the best way to introduce my point by providing a concrete basis for my argument. A stronger analogy, although much more abstract, also serves to support my argument. Imagine now that you have found yourself in a completely secular ‘before’ to life on earth. You are surrounded by what can best be described as souls, or non-sentient organisms that represent something with the potential to become a person. You have the choice to throw these beings down to earth, where they will fulfill their potential as human beings. But you don't have to. These beings are non-sentient, they do not gain consciousness until they are brought to their potential on earth. There is no one to grieve them. They have no sensation of pain, nor desire to exist because they aren't aware of the possibility of existence. If you choose not to throw these souls down to earth, you have effectively deprived them of a future like ours. Now again consider a different instance where you threw a soul down to earth, and allowed them to experience life for years, or even a few months, only to rip their existence away. You have deprived the human of a future like ours no more than in the first instance, and yet there is still something that tells us that in the second instance, you have committed a greater moral wrong. Once again, the analogy demonstrates it must be true that there is something else inherent to the act of killing, in addition to the deprivation of future, that makes it wrong. In both the instance of the candy and the souls, there is only one difference between the two that could explain our intuition about the moral difference in the scenarios. That is depriving life / a future of one who was already experiencing it. If we acknowledge the difference between the two instances with the candy and soul analogies, we must agree that the deprivation of a future like ours alone is not the only inherent wrong with killing.

Now that I have presented my argument, I will address an objection already cast by Marquis in his original writing. In a section titled “The Contraception Objection,” Marquis concedes that



Figure 2 - Tanvi Devulapally

the strongest objection to his argument is that the FLO model requires that contraception, too, is thought of as immoral. While he spends a fair amount of time explaining the back and forth of this objection, he ultimately concludes this objection is flawed because "there seems to be no non-arbitrarily determinate subject of harm in the case of successful contraception" and ultimately “no wrong has been done.”¹ But it is not logical to conclude that because you cannot objectively determine the subjects of

harm, no harm exists. Harm does not cease to exist just because it cannot be objectively quantified. To illustrate this point, I will once again utilize an analogy. Imagine that a pool of sperm that would be chemically harmed by contraception are

¹Marquis (1963)

instead replaced by a school of children. Just like the sperm, the children have not reached the maturity or stage needed for reproduction, but also like the sperm, their potential for reproduction could be harmed if their fertility is damaged. Now imagine that you give these children drinking water (analogous to contraception to sperm) that damages these children's future fertility. At this stage in the children's lives, it would be impossible to objectively quantify the harm done to the children. Because they have not reached maturity, we have no way of knowing which ones would have gone on to reproduce, and we will never know as their fertility has been ruined. Thus, there is no non-arbitrary determinate subject of harm. We could say that the subject of harm is all children, but that would not be true as we know that not all of the children would go on to reproduce. If they grow up and do not want children, damage to their fertility is not harm done to them. We could say that the subject of harm is the children who would have gone to have children had their fertility not been damaged, but by doing so Marquis would have to admit that the subject of harm in the case of contraception is the sperm that would have gone on to be fertilized. So, following Marquis's definition of subjects experiencing harm, we must conclude that in the case of damaging the fertility of a school of children, no harm has been done. It is undeniable that this is a false conclusion. Just because we have no objective way of determining which one of the children would be the subject of harm does not mean that "no wrong has been done." Just because harm is not immediately apparent does not mean it does not exist. Thus, Marquis's rebuttal relies on faulty logic.

This essay poses a critique of author Don Marquis's writing on the moral permissibility of abortion. It contends that because Marquis's premise on what makes killing wrong necessitates the false conclusion that killing gametes is wrong, his argument is invalid. The essay first demonstrates why such a conclusion necessarily follows from his premise, then delves into why the conclusion is false. Knowing this, it must be true that his premise of what makes killing inherently wrong is false. This essay does not intend to concretely define what does make killing wrong, but rather to elucidate the inconsistencies with Marquis's contention. Finally, it addresses Marquis's original counter to the "contraception rebuttal" and demonstrates the fault in its reasoning.

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Beyond The Flicking of a Wrist: How Response Time Could Save Free Will

ZOE GREENWOOD

The question of free will is by no means a new one. It appears, on an intuitive level, that we have the ability to control and determine our actions, but is that really the case? Benjamin Libet conducted an experiment that involved tracking electrical impulses in the brain and the conscious will to act.² He found that these impulses preceded the conscious will to act. These findings seem to bring free will into question. However, I don't agree that it is the case. In this essay, I will first introduce Libet's experiment. Then, I will discuss what Libet takes to be the conclusions of his findings, how he thinks this fares for free will in general, and moral responsibility. I will then discuss Libet's argument that free will lives in the ability to veto an action, even after it has been initiated. This claim is then brought into question through a follow-up piece by metaphysician László Bernáth, as well as my personal experience involving experiments which operate on the millisecond level. I argue that Libet's findings aren't the threat to free will that they initially appear to be. Instead, the type of simple motor actions performed in his experiment isn't the type of conception of free will that we are after in general. Instead, free will lies in the form of deliberation and conscious decision-making. I believe that free will goes beyond just the power to veto and instead comes into play even after an action has been initiated.

Benjamin Libet conducted reaction time experiments. This involved recording voluntary movements of the participants, their readiness potentials, and electrical impulses in the brain preceding those actions. In order to ensure that the type of action being measured was a freely made one, Libet had two rules in place. Under Libet's parameters, the act needed to be truly voluntary, that is, there needed to be no outside pressures to perform the act. Secondly, the person did the act because they wanted to. This second criteria is an important distinction to Libet because he notes how acts that are not wanted by the person, for example, seizures of Tourette's Syndrome, are not viewed as voluntary by the individual. Libet put these criteria in place to characterize which actions are considered voluntary so that everyone is on the same page about his findings. Through previous research, it was established that voluntary acts followed a readiness potential (slow electrical impulse). A previous study by Kornhuber and Deecke in 1965 found there was a readiness potential (RP) that, on average, preceded the movement in the muscle by 550 milliseconds. However, the experiment didn't measure the timing of the conscious will to act. This

² Libet (1999), 45-47.

is where Libet decided to start his exploration. In order to measure the conscious will to act into his experiment, Libet incorporated a clock. There is a light circling around the inside rim of the clock, going past the markings which dictate how many seconds have passed (from 0-60). When subjects felt the conscious will to act, they were instructed to denote the time on the clock and report it back to the researcher. The time was then compared to the RPs that preceded the action in order to see if the electrical impulses or the conscious awareness came first. Each participant did the task 40 times to get an average of the data. Based on the common experience of action, it would seem that consciousness precedes an action. However, this wasn't what Libet found in his experiment. According to Libet's experiment, readiness potential consistently, and significantly, preceded the will to act. Even when participants reported that they had planned their action in



Figure 3 - Tanvi Devulapally

advance, the same result was still found. In fact, the time of the RP was almost double that of the unplanned action—the planned one being about 1050 milliseconds before the action and the unplanned one being about 550 milliseconds before the action. The conscious will to act, however, occurred only around 200 milliseconds before the action (even after controlling for delays in participants' reporting). This suggests that there was some sort of preparation, in the form of electrical signals, that occurred before the person felt the conscious will to act. This seems to threaten free will. If our actions are preceded by a readiness potential, it seems as if we do not have control over them. Therefore, if our actions are predetermined, is there no room for free will? Libet argues that free will still exists only in the form of a veto power—the ability to override this initiated action. However, I think this conception of the problem is too limiting. Instead, free will lies in the ability to alter action after the initiation of the action. This doesn't necessarily just need to include not performing the action entirely but rather could be how someone chooses to perform the action and in what ways that manifests.

Libet thinks that although the readiness potential precedes the conscious will to act, all hope for free will is not lost. Instead, he thinks that free will lies in the power to veto. The idea is that even if there is a readiness potential, we still have the ability to override that action from occurring. This is what he thinks the existence of free will is and the way in which it manifests. His findings also bring to light questions about moral responsibility. It would seem intuitive that if an action was predetermined, that an individual wouldn't have moral responsibility for that action. Libet believes that we are not able to control our thoughts and impulses, hence the readiness potential. However, we are responsible for the actions, because under his view, the veto power gives us the opportunity to not perform the action. Therefore, one would be morally responsible for their actions but not their internal thoughts or impulses. Libet thinks these are outside of our control. However, I think the idea of being able to consciously control your actions, even after the initiation of an action, doesn't need to be limited to only the ability to veto or prevent an action from occurring. An article from metaphysicist László Bernáth speaks to this ability to impact

behavior (past just the ability to veto). He notes that, “even if it is true that we do not consciously initiate our actions, this does not necessarily mean that our conscious considerations do not influence our actions...even if it is an illusion that there is such an activity as conscious initiation of action, it is still quite possible that our conscious considerations have a major role in controlling our actions.”³ This idea seems to suggest that the initiation of the action, conscious or not, is not important to free will in general. Instead, it is the conscious choices that come after that initiated action. However, there are more influences on an action rather than just the ability to veto the action.

On a personal note, I work in a research lab that conducts response time experiments. One of the main worries in research in the psychological field, especially with human subjects, is the possibility of demand characteristics. Demand characteristics are when a participant reacts differently than they normally would to please the researcher (or because of outside influences in general). A real-world example of this is when you get an eye test and feel pressure to choose one of the clarity options when they both look the same because that is the task being asked of you. A similar situation occurs in a research setting as well. This is why internal validity is important, and research assistants have to be conscientious of not influencing the participants. However, in labs such as the one that I work at, this is less of an issue. When conducting experiments on a reaction-time scale, which usually involves milliseconds, there isn't time for the participants to think and alter their behavior to please the researcher. For this reason, because the process of doing a voluntary action on the millisecond scale is so quick, conscious decision making doesn't really come into play. This is why Libet's findings don't generalize well beyond the scale of reaction time experiments. The pushing of a button or flicking of a wrist is very different from decisions in which someone deliberates and has time to think. Demand characteristics usually show up in studies in which the participants are self-reporting. This shows that the internal world and deliberation have a large impact on this effect. Therefore, finding a result on the millisecond, or even second, isn't as applicable as Libet suggests. While his findings may be true on a small, motor scale, this very specific situation doesn't extrapolate to decision making and free will in general. I don't think that the ability to control small motor actions is the epitome of free will in the first place.

Overall, I think that although Libet's studies may track on simple motor tasks, this isn't the conception of free will that we are looking for. His findings wouldn't extrapolate to more complex decision making. Motor actions, by nature, are relatively simple and straightforward. There don't seem to be room for that much deliberation. Take reflexive actions for example. You don't have to think about moving your hand off a hot stove. However, this reflex, or even the flicking of a wrist, doesn't seem to have the same properties as decision making such as which career to pursue, who to marry, etc. First of all, the amount of time required for each situation varies greatly. This

³ Bernáth (2020), 97–119.

is what I spoke to with the example of my work in an eye-tracking lab. When processes are operating on such a small, millisecond, scale there isn't much room for deliberation at all. Everything is mostly unconscious and reflexive. Therefore, I don't think this is the realm in which free will exists in the first place. Therefore, Libet's experiment, although compelling for simple motor situations, doesn't threaten free will in the way that it seems. Although Libet himself argues there is still room for free will in the form of veto, I also refute this idea. I agree that the ability to veto exists, but I don't think that it alone is the form of free will. As mentioned in the Bernáth piece, there seems to be the ability to consciously influence action after it has been initiated. This, I believe, is more representative of the type of free will that we are looking for. This gives us the ability to deliberate, change our actions, and make conscious decisions – which all seem to be more similar to the general conception of free will than merely the ability to veto an action.

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The Art of Losing Yourself

SOPHIA HELLER

Recently, I lost myself. I didn't know who I was supposed to be, nor did I understand who I presently was. I used to fear losing myself and denied I was ever lost. I was not alone in this either, a lot of people both feared losing themselves and pitied those that did by saying, "Oh take it easy on her, she's lost." Instead of pitying or fearing loss of the self, I wondered why I could not embrace what seemed to me as a natural part of "the journey." So, instead of sitting in denial, I decided to embrace the concept of losing yourself and look at its philosophical nature. In this paper, I argue for the inclusion of losing oneself throughout one's journey of autonomy. I first explain what I mean by losing oneself, or losing yourself, then I address skills and tactics one might use in the process of losing themselves and lastly conclude with the importance of losing oneself within a journey of autonomy.

First, I define what I mean by a journey of autonomy and losing yourself. Meyers defines autonomy as the ability to "differentiate one's own desires, values, and goals from the clamor of subordinating discourses and overwhelming social demands."⁴ Using various definitions as reference, I define the self as the first-person knowledge, being, and values one has about themselves that constitutes their individuality.⁵ Meyers defines the autonomous individual as someone who shapes their self-conception "through a process of skillful self-discovery."⁶ Thus, a journey of autonomy is the journey one takes through life to become an autonomous individual and gain a clearer idea of self. While one might think that the journey of autonomy only includes adding values and knowledge to their self-conception, I argue subtracting parts of one's self-conception, or intentionally "losing yourself," is also necessary to one's autonomous journey. Losing yourself is a process of the autonomous journey in which a person may feel lost due to the purposeful or accidental subtraction of an integral part of one's self-conception. While in the process of losing yourself, a person may come across values, knowledge, or ways of being that become integral to their concept of self. A person might not have come across these ideas was it not for the subtraction of other parts of their identity.

I use two cases to exemplify accidental and purposeful loss of self: (1) the academic weapon and (2) the depressive episode. First, the academic weapon example exemplifies losing yourself purposefully and why someone might do so. For the past six years of high school and college, I defined myself by my grades. If I got an A, I thought I was a good person; if I got a B, I would question my self-worth and selfhood. It was to say, "If I do not get As, who am I?"

⁴ Meyers (2002), 20.

⁵ Webster dictionary definition of SELF

⁶ Op. cit., (2002), 21.

Upholding this self-conception worsened my mental and physical health as well as my social life. Once I got a break from school, I decided to purposefully subtract this “academic weapon” identity from my self-conception. By subtracting a piece of selfhood without filling the gap, I felt like I had lost myself. Unlike the academic weapon, the depressive episode case shows how one can lose themselves accidentally. When I was fifteen, I had my first major depressive episode. I had trouble getting out of bed, going to school, communicating with people, and in general just being myself. Before this, I was generally joyful, had multiple after school activities, loved going to school and had lots of friends. So accidentally losing myself in this way was confusing because I did not know who I was anymore and could not explain why it happened.

The two cases show the difference between what losing oneself looks like based on intention. Nevertheless, both cases were important points in my life where, by being lost, I found parts of myself that would not have been found otherwise. Through the depressive episode, I learned how to value my mental health and deepened friendships in a way that would not be possible if I had not experienced the subtraction of parts of my self-conception. When I let go of my academic weapon self-conception, I rediscovered my love for learning and taught myself new hobbies I enjoy taking part in such as cooking and video games. If I had not subtracted these parts of myself, or lost myself, I would never have room in my self-conception for the valuing of my mental health nor my enjoyment of cooking. Thus, the art of losing oneself is an important stage that may happen periodically throughout a person’s life in which subtracting parts of oneself can lead to self-discovery.

Although losing yourself is an important part of a journey of autonomy, worries arise that someone may remain lost or in states of moral paralysis and extreme fragmentation of the self.⁷ To address this concern, I also argue for the importance of grounding oneself after a period of loss. Grounding oneself is a stage where a person may regain their sense of self to combat paralysis or extreme fragmentation. Think of losing yourself as a hot air balloon and grounding yourself the weights used to tether the hot air balloon to earth. If the hot air balloon as no weights, it will continue to float up into space getting lost forever. With the weights, the hot air balloon can control when and how high it flies. If the hot air balloon accidentally takes off due to an unruly wind, then the weights would not allow it to get too far even the balloon is blown off course a bit. Like the example, grounding yourself acts as a weight that will



⁷ O'Neill (1987), 69.

keep a person from getting too lost and control the amount of losing yourself a person might experience.

By acknowledging that losing and grounding oneself can be done purposefully or can be controlled, then I also acknowledge that there are skills one might have or tactics one might use to lose and ground themselves. Meyers defines agentic skills as skills that enable someone to exercise their autonomy and differentiate their wants and desires from that of others.⁸ There are eight agentic skills one may develop: introspection, communication, memory, imagination, analytical, self-nurturing, volitional, and interpersonal skills.⁹ Skills are exercised to decide “about how best to go on.”¹⁰ Losing or grounding yourself requires an individual to develop and exercise agentic skills to choose the best course of action for any situation.

I exemplify two of the eight agentic skills (imagination and self-nurturing) to clarify their importance to choosing the right action when losing or grounding yourself. Meyers defines imagination as a skill that enables a person to seek out different, feasible ways they might conceive of their self-image or life-plan.¹¹ For example, I wanted to be an equestrian for most of my childhood (and still sometimes do). I decorated my life with horses, watched and read about horses, and could clearly imagine myself riding horses. Although my dream was clear, the feasibility of owning and riding horses for my family was not an *Figure 4 - Swetha Narmeta* option, but I had to find a way to make it work. Instead of asking for things I would never get (a horse, permanent riding lessons, a stable), I asked for a summer’s worth of horse-riding lessons which was something my parents could afford. For a summer, I was an equestrian and I got to experience this part of myself in action. The equestrian example demonstrates with robust imagination skill, a person can act out a part of themselves in a feasible manor. Thus, it is easy to see how the imagination skill allows one to choose action that aids in their journey of autonomy whether that is losing or grounding oneself.

The self-nurturing skill is defined as a way for people to secure their physical and psychological equilibrium, appreciate their worth, and the ability to correct or change their self-conceptions.¹² This skill can be best understood under the academic weapon case. When I decided to lose the academic weapon part of myself, I needed to build my self-nurturing skill because I decided I would not value myself based on my grades. I exercised my self-nurturing skill through different actions that aided my process of losing ways of valuation (such as grades) and grounding myself in new ones (positive affirmations). As a skill, self-nurturing guides people towards an action that allows them to lose or ground themselves and evaluate aspects of their self-conception.

⁸ Op. cit., (2002), 20.

⁹ Op, cit., (2002), 20.

¹⁰ Op, cit., (2002), 21.

¹¹ Op, cit., (2002), 20.

¹² Op, cit., (2002), 20.

If skills are the abilities we have, then tactics are the actions we take to exercise those skills to aid the process of grounding or losing oneself. De Certeau defines a tactic as “a calculated action determined by the absence of a proper locus.”¹³ Locus for this essay not only means a specific spatial or temporal point, but also locus as in a specific point of self-conception. Take the equestrian example. The skill used to understand what actions one might take was imagination, while the tactic used was asking for horse-riding lessons. Thus, with an understanding of both skills and tactics, a person can take part in a richer journey of autonomy. Tactics for losing yourself are tactics that you can use to intentionally “get lost” while tactics for grounding yourself are tactics that intentionally regain a sense of self. To understand tactics better, I outline a tactic one might use to lose themselves and one tactic for grounding. Even though I am only outlining two tactics, there are more possible tactics out there. By using these tactics, a person creates room for self-discovery and purposefully adds or subtracts parts of their self-conception.

The tactic for losing yourself is world-travelling. World-travelling is the shifting of one person into another, willfully or not.¹⁴ Unlike Lugones, I think the shift is between one persona into another with an underlying self-conception that encapsulates all personas or personalities of a person. The underlying self-conception is the most fundamental part of a person’s self-conception that remain unchanging in no matter the world travelled to. A world traveler is someone open to being a fool, is not worried about competence nor scared of norms, and through letting go of these worries, a person can discover options that would have been blocked by worry of foolishness, competence, or norms.¹⁵ A world is a construction that inhabits “flesh and blood people.”¹⁶ For example, Iowa City or queer subculture may be considered a world, but Neverland is not. World-travelling is a helpful tactic for people who want to discover new parts of themselves without worrying about having a clear self-conception. For example, by switching from personality A to personality B, personality A is lost but the underlying self-conception is not. Loss does not mean that personality A is gone forever but gone for a period of time in another world or time. By losing one personality and inhabiting another personality, the underlying self-conception may discover qualities of themselves within personality B that they appreciate and wish to add to the underlying self-conception. Thus, world-traveling is a useful tactic when losing one part of your self-conception and attempting self-discoveries within that stage of loss.

I will discuss how horizons are a grounding tactic and help avoid moral paralysis and extreme fragmentation of the self. Horizons are the perspectives and values we hold as well as the outer limits of our knowledge.¹⁷ Horizons can act as boundaries or weights that ground people to their underlying self-conception so that they do not get too lost. To use the hot air balloon example, a horizon may be a weight added to the balloon so that it does not float to high or the farthest

¹³ Ortega (2012), 181.

¹⁴ Lugones (1987), 11.

¹⁵ *ibid.*, 17.

¹⁶ *ibid.*, 9.

¹⁷ *Op. cit.*, (1987), 68-69.

distance the balloon is willing to travel. The hot air balloon can still discover things and get a little lost but not so much that it cannot land. To use another example, my relationship with my partner is a horizon for me because it is something I value deeply. When I lost the academic weapon part of myself, I lost myself but not so much that I hurt my relationship with my partner. If it ever got to that point, it would be an indication that I need to ground myself. Not only does a horizon act as a boundary, it is also a way to ground your self-conception. If the self does experience extreme fragmentation, then a horizon is to say, “these are the things that are essential to my self-conception.” Horizons, and more generally, grounding tactics, are essential to the grounding of oneself and may compel someone to lose themselves if they know that they can “come back to earth” and have a way to do so.

Therefore, losing and grounding yourself are natural aspects of the journey of autonomy and ought to be embraced instead of feared or pitied. Losing and grounding yourself is a process in which one can strengthen agentic skills and use tactics to guide one’s personal process of losing oneself, ground oneself, and more generally guide their autonomous journey.

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We Are Not All Textualists

CLAIRE GATES

INTRO

Justice Kagan’s famous claim that “we are all textualists now” took place in a speech honoring Justice Scalia, who led a wave of textualism to the Supreme Court. Since then, many Supreme Court Justices pride themselves on being textualists, and some even shame those who fail to be. But later, Justice Kagan correctly rescinded her claim, and instead stated that we are not all textualists now. The debate between whether we are textualists, and the related question of whether we ought to be textualists, is lively in law today. In this paper, I will argue that we are not all textualists now, and that a meaningful definition of textualism is one Supreme Court Justices do not abide by. First, I will explain why this question matters. Then, I will propose definitions of textualism and textualists. Finally, I will explain why Supreme Court Justices do not align with these definitions and consider objections to my argument.

WHY THIS QUESTION MATTERS

Justices need to be impartial and honest about how they decide. Claims regarding whether we are all textualists now are indicative of this idea. Saying we are all textualists when we are not, as Tobias explains, causes public doubt regarding Justices’ impartiality and honesty: “The public’s confidence in the Court has hit historic depths. Concerns about the politicization and legitimacy of the Court grow. These worries stem...from the disconnect between (i) the Court’s statement of (textualist) judicial method and values...and (ii) the Court’s (non-textualist) practice,” further, “However American jurisprudence develops, there is value in calling attention to these realities, especially the connection between what judges do and what they say they do. If we’re not all textualists..., we should say so.”¹⁸ Simply, important claims of impartiality and honesty are directly linked to this question of whether we are all textualists.

WHAT IS TEXTUALISM?

According to Congress.gov, textualism is defined as “a mode of legal interpretation that focuses on the plain meaning of the text of a legal document.”¹⁹ While I think this definition is generally accurate, the assertion that we are not all textualists now requires a specific definition of textualism so as to avoid vacuously true statements; “textualism” that can be interpreted to include any number of unrelated instances isn’t really textualism. So, what really is textualism? I will now expand on its definition.

¹⁸ Tobias (2023), 259-261.

¹⁹ Intro.8.2, Constitution Annotated

Textualism Can Be Independent of “Text is Law”

Textualism is not dependent on the claim that “text is law,” even though textualists often assert that it is. What they really mean by textualism is “the context-sensitive meaning that [the] texts express count as, or constrain, the legal norms that judges should apply in discharging their obligations as judges.”²⁰ Textualism is about the plain meaning of the text (“what [it] conveyed to reasonable people at the time [it was] written”), not the text itself: text and law are two different kinds of things that need not be conflated.²¹

Textualism is Not Purposivism or Intentionalism

Textualism is very far from purposivism and intentionalism. Purposivism dictates that judges should follow the legislative process and take Congress’s intended goals into account. Intentionalism says that judges should consider the intent of the lawmakers. For these reasons, purposivists and intentionalists take legislative history into account. (Because legislatures’ intents and purposes are often linked, because the distinction between purposivism and intentionalism is irrelevant for our purposes, and because textualism and purposivism are the main major theories of statutory interpretation, I will only refer to purposivism from now on). Contrarily, the intent/purpose of the legislature is irrelevant in textualism. Textualism rejects purposivism because it encourages judges to act like legislators. An example illustrating the difference between purposivism and textualism is *Arlington Central School District Board of Education v. Murphy*, where the relevant question was whether an Act that “may award reasonable attorneys’ fees” could “authorize the compensation of expert fees.”²² Justice Alito, in a textualist majority opinion, said no: that the text did not “even hint that the award should also include expert fees,” Justice Breyer, in his purposivist dissenting opinion, said yes: that 1.²³ Congress intended to include expert fees and 2. Doing so would further the goal of the Act. This example demonstrates the stark difference between textualism and purposivism.

Textualism is Not Literalism

²⁰ Encarnacion (2022), 2044.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 2042.

²² Brannon (2018).

²³ *Ibid.*

While textualism and literalism both seek meanings of the text, the definition of “meaning” greatly differs between the two approaches. For literalists, the meaning of the text is the literal, dictionary definition. As mentioned, textualism consults the plain meaning of the text. Encarnacion explains how this distinction differentiates literalism and textualism: “Textualism purports to reject literalism. After all, literalism’s sins include failing to read statutory language in context, and relatedly, deriving a statute’s linguistic meaning word-by-word rather than phrase-by-phrase.”²⁴



An example of textualism differing from literalism can be found in the landmark case of *Bostock v. Clayton County*.²⁵ The relevant question there was whether discrimination “because of” sex included sexual orientation and gender identity. According to Justice Kavanaugh’s textualist opinion, the plain meaning of “because of” did not include sexual orientation or gender identity. But according to Justice Gorsuch’s literalist majority opinion,

Figure 5 - Tanvi Devulapally “[o]nly the written word is the law,” and thus “because of” included sexual orientation and gender identity. This case, where Kavanaugh went on to critique Gorsuch’s literalism, shows the difference and tension between the two approaches.

It is worth briefly noting that sometimes, reasonable people may determine that the ordinary/plain meaning of a text is the same as a literal one. In obvious, simple cases, differentiating between statutory interpretation methods is not necessary.

Textualism Uses Narrowly Tailored Context

Since textualism’s rejection of literalism is partly based on its use of context, it must be that textualism uses context/extratextual resources. Examples of extratextual resources include “canons of construction, dictionaries, legislative history (for some textualists, at least), prior interpretive precedent, other statutory provisions, linguistic databases, and contestable and usually empirically unsubstantiated appeals to what “most” readers of the English language would understand, and so on.”²⁶ Which of these can be used in textualism? As few as possible, specific resources depending on the specific case, as determined by rational judges. This is because the nature of textualism’s “plain meaning” presupposes a judge’s ability to rationally identify a plain meaning, and that rationality extends to the ability to determine which extratextual resources are applicable in each case. But certain methods of extratextual research, like dictionaries and legislative history, are characteristic of literalism and purposivism (respectively). How could textualism include resources that are characteristic of interpretation methods it purports to reject?

²⁴ Op. cit., (2022), 2057.

²⁵ *Bostock v. Clayton County* (2020).

²⁶ Op. cit., (2022), 2059.

If textualism were to include such resources, then perhaps we would all be textualists. But a valuable claim regarding whether we are or are not textualists ought to be based on a version of textualism that does not contradict its fundamental elements.

Based on these considerations, the "context" textualism can use to still be textualism is narrow. Using context such as legislative intent is purposivism (as illustrated in *Arlington*), and disregarding context altogether (except being aware of dictionary definitions) is literalism (as illustrated in *Bostock*).²⁷

WHO IS A TEXTUALIST?

The claim that textualism is narrowly defined is different from the claim that one must always align with textualism to qualify as a textualist. It is reasonable to expect that subscribers to any method of statutory interpretation will not align with it in 100% of cases. Consequently, this section will explain the extent to which a textualist must meet this definition to call themselves a textualist.

Textualists consistently decide like textualists, except in genuinely ambiguous or extraordinary cases.

Textualists can deviate from the definition of textualism I have laid out, but only in limited cases. Tobias proposes that other methods of interpretation may be necessary when the text is genuinely ambiguous: "Perhaps Justice Kagan meant that judges today start and end with the text, eschewing all other interpretive criteria (e.g., purpose, legislative intent, consequences) unless the text is ambiguous or otherwise unclear."²⁸ Further, textualists may stray from textualism in cases of Scrivener's Error (obvious typos in the statute, whose plain meaning would lead to ridiculous outcomes). But there is a big difference between cases like these and simply being inconsistent in the application of statutory interpretation. True textualists do not employ literalist or purposivist approaches in cases where textualist reasoning is just as logical a contender. Picking and choosing between these approaches with no sufficient reason is not behavior a textualist would engage in. As Justice Kagan put it, a Court is not textualist if it is "textualist only when being so suits it."²⁹

To demonstrate this point, imagine if we made the claim that "we are all active." While it is true that most people are active in the sense that they walk around throughout the day, such a claim would not really mean anything valuable. When we say someone is "active," we are referring to those who consistently choose to exercise.

Textualists do not just align with textualism, they believe we ought to be textualists (and act accordingly)

²⁷ *Bostock v. Clayton County* (2020).

²⁸ Tobias (2023), 250.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 253.

The claim that “we are all textualists” holds implicitly the claim that we all ought to be textualists—after all, why would Supreme Court justices proudly proclaim their textualism if they did not believe it was the best method? While it seems obvious, it is worth stating that being a textualist involves believing that textualism is the right way to go about making decisions. Thus, textualism should be the driving force behind a textualist’s decision, not an incidental path to a desired outcome. This means that judges who align with textualism only when/because it benefits their political/personal convictions about the right outcome are not textualists. In broad, insufficient definitions of textualism, textualist judges can choose literalism and purposivism depending on what ideological factors drive them to choose in that particular case. But to be a textualist in a meaningful way requires choosing textualism because it is the right interpretation method, not because it is a way to achieve a goal that has nothing to do with textualism’s values.

A simple but illustrative analogy to this concept is that of someone who claims to help others. You can claim to care about donating to charity and volunteering, but if you are only participating in those activities to supplement your resumé, can you really categorize yourself as a “helper?” Claiming to be helpful in such a case feels disingenuous. Not only would you be going about the practice for the wrong reasons, but failing to mention your true intentions would constitute dishonesty to the extent that any claim of helpfulness would be tainted. Even if this person could be categorized as a helpful person, it would not be true in a meaningful way. Just because we all help does not mean we are all helpers. And just because we all engage in textualism does not mean we are all textualists.

Even if the claim “we’re all textualists” does not include implications regarding whether we ought to be textualists, the main claim of this paper (we’re not all textualists) holds. If Justice Kagan’s statement was purely descriptive, the first point in this section (that textualists must consistently decide like textualists) is sufficient in proving that we do not meet the mark.

Now that the definitions of textualism and textualists have been laid out, I will expand on why we do not meet them.

WHY WE ARE NOT TEXTUALISTS

It is inarguable that judges employ textualism. But to expand that assertion to the claim that we are all textualists is a mistake. Justice Kagan was correct in rescinding her original claim and saying “Are self-professed textualists really textualists? No.”³⁰

Justices are too inconsistent in their application of textualism.

When Justices Kavanaugh and Gorsuch disagreed in *Bostock*, it was not a textualist v. literalist debate.³¹ In fact, both Kavanaugh and Gorsuch are self-proclaimed textualists. But there are multiple examples proving the inconsistency of both Justices’ textualism. In Justice

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 260.

³¹ *Bostock v. Clayton County* (2020).

Kavanaugh’s dissent in *June Medical Services L.L.C. v. Russo*, he stated that “additional factfinding [was] necessary to properly evaluate Louisiana’s law”³² This is a stark example of non-textualist reasoning: the majority decided extratextual resources were not necessary in determining plain meaning in this case, and Kavanaugh disagreed.

Justice Gorsuch has engaged in non-textualist reasoning beyond *Bostock*.³³ In *Sessions v. Dimaya*, for which he wrote the majority opinion, Gorsuch included considerations of adequate notice—policy implications that involve the purpose and outcome of the statute. These are just examples, but there are more cases of any self-proclaimed textualist Justice betraying textualism in cases where the textualist interpretation is just as logical.

Justices often make decisions based on personal and political intuitions, not textualism.

Not only is there sufficient evidence suggesting Supreme Court justices are too inconsistent to be textualists, but there is also sufficient reason to believe that their decisions aligning with textualism too often reflect their political agendas. As mentioned, when discussing why this question matters, the public has little confidence in the Supreme Court’s impartiality and honesty. In textualist decisions (and all decisions, more generally), it is often not textualist intuitions that drive outcomes. For example, take *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization*.³⁴ It is no coincidence that the conservative Justices were all a part of the majority or concurrences, and the liberal Justices were all a part of the dissent. This is clearly not a result of any of their statutory interpretation methods; the conservative Justices did not want abortion to be a Constitutional right, and the liberal Justices did. This decision was purely the result of ideological agendas, and any statutory interpretation method was merely a steppingstone used to uphold the facade of impartiality.

The general intuition of the public, alongside examples like this one, prove that self-proclaimed textualist Justices’ decisions do not reflect the implicit textualist belief that we ought to be textualists.

OBJECTIONS

Too narrow a definition

One could argue that with such a narrow definition of textualism/textualists, any claim that we are not all textualists holds no grounds—of course we are not all textualists if being a textualist is unattainable. I would respond that there is no room for definitions of textualism that allow judges to encompass their political views inside them. In cases like this where clarity and honesty are of the utmost importance, a narrow definition is a way to ensure the accuracy of a claim. If textualism

³² *June Medical Services L.L.C. v. Russo* (2020).

³³ *Bostock v. Clayton County* (2020).

³⁴ *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* (2022).

is broad, then Justices can continue deciding however they see fit and hiding behind the prideful assertion that they are textualists.

Post-Scalia, textualism is prevalent in a way it was not before

Justice Kagan’s praise of Justice Scalia was largely due to the textualist wave he caused. This is apparent in her statement: “I think we’re all textualists now in a way that just was not remotely true when Justice Scalia joined the bench.”³⁵

Thus, one could object that Scalia changed the way we view statutory interpretation to the extent that we really are all textualists now. And relatedly, a worry could arise regarding the fact that people really do lean toward textualism. In fact, “[a]cademics who write about statutory interpretation . . . agree that attempting to find the best reading of the text of statutes is the dominant method of statutory interpretation,” and Justice Kagan said in her original speech “Does anyone now decline to focus first,



Figure 6 - Tanvi Devulapally

in reading a statute, on its text in context? . . . If the answer is no (and the answer is no).”³⁶ My response to this objection is to argue that these people do not practice what they preach. Believing that we ought to be textualists is a step closer to being a textualist, but again, being a textualist also involves consistently making decisions based in and driven by textualist reasoning.

This only applies to the Supreme Court

It is possible that this framework is only relevant for/applicable to the Supreme Court and not judges of lower courts. I am unsure whether this is true. This paper has been focused on the Supreme Court because I think that is primarily, if not entirely, the “we” Justice Kagan referred to in her original statement that we are all textualists. But even if that were not the case, I can at least assert that this framework does apply for the Supreme Court and that it does matter, regardless of whether it applies to lower courts.

CONCLUSION

Textualism must be clearly distinguished from purposivism and literalism. It must use narrowly tailored context, and it need not conflate text with law. Textualists must abide by this definition (save for special cases), and they must believe and act on the notion that textualism is the correct statutory interpretation method. These considerations bring to light the fact that we are not all textualists now and admitting that is the first step to a more honest, impartial, and trustworthy Supreme Court.

³⁵ Op. cit., (2023), 251.

³⁶ Ibid., 247-252.

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Interview with Karlee Colby

JESSICA ILOGHO STORM

Jessica:

What brought you to the University of Iowa?

Karlee Colby:

So, I did my undergrad at UNI in Cedar Falls, and I loved that campus. I really fell in love with philosophy, and I knew that I wanted to do philosophy. One of my biggest concerns was that my siblings lived close, and I really wanted to stay close to family. So that made Iowa a top contender because there's not another philosophy PhD program in Iowa. I would have had to go to Illinois. So that was like the top thing. I was like, I really need this to work out because I need to stay in Iowa. But then, the thing that really sold me on it was the diversity of the staff - the fact that we had, I don't remember the exact statistic, but it was like one of the best ratios of like female to male instructors; we also have many professors that were born in different places so we're able to have different perspectives which I think is really valuable especially with philosophy. Having that kind of diverse staff was important to me. The third thing is that it was a teaching heavy program as opposed to research heavy. With some programs you don't even get to start teaching or start being a TA until like your third or fourth year, and here, you get to start right away. I want to be a professor, that's my top goal, as opposed to a researcher, so I wanted to get as much teaching experience as I could.

Jessica:

What field of philosophy are you pursuing and what about it is of great importance to you?

Karlee Colby:

I am hoping to specialize in political philosophy, feminist ethics, and things in that area. I'm somebody who really enjoys the application of philosophy, so some of the other questions that are a bit more open and broader don't always interest me as much. I really love the practical application, so political philosophy really drew me in because I think [that] politics impacts every individual.

And then [the] feminist ethics portion comes in well because it provides us a [way] to look at every situation through like the lens of oppression, and the lens of groups that are not being heard or valued. That's where my two main interests lie. I'm also very interested in reproductive justice. With political philosophy specifically, I'm really trying to gear towards Hannah Arendt's work, Totalitarianism, and Fascism

Jessica:

What do you hope to do when you're done with your program?

Karlee Colby:

My ultimate goal is to be a professor. I enjoy the teaching part. I love working with students. I love working with people that have never dealt with philosophy. My dream job would be to be a professor at a liberal arts college or even a Community College. I would love to teach grad students, but I really love teaching the students that are not going to be in philosophy or that have not yet experienced philosophy. I think one of the best applications of philosophy is when individuals take philosophy into their own career, so I like the idea that when a doctor is making a decision, they may be critically thinking through something we talked about or a lawyer or a teacher or just any sort of job. That's kind of my end goal, and I think teaching political philosophy to students and themes in feminist ethics like oppression, switching the lens and valuing, are things that impact everybody daily. So, it feels like it'd be nice to educate on that early on so that individuals can be informed citizens in the way that they move forward inside and outside of the classroom, and inside and outside of a job.

Jessica:

Can you talk about the student club that you run?

Karlee Colby:

The club is MAP. It's minorities and philosophy, and it is a national organization, and this is the University of Iowa chapter. There are chapters all over; it might be international - I'd have to look it up I don't remember. But basically, it's a club that allows student philosophers to come together and highlight and investigate some works that don't always get highlighted in the classroom. I

think philosophy is doing a better job of trying to diversify the voices, but it's no secret its foundation is built off of the same demographic of voice which is usually the older white male or even the younger white male. But we miss out on a lot of other voices and so MAP gives us that chance to dive deeper into that and be able to see what we've missed and what we can add into, and hopefully that helps inform the overall philosophizing you do in the classroom. Again, I think philosophy's best place is outside of the classroom. I will also say that I think MAP is a really great opportunity not only to expand academic knowledge, but also to come together and have a very safe fun environment. In the classroom you're not always sure if you should ask a question or if this is the right crowd to ask the question; I think the club offers a good environment in a time that can feel very like tumultuous.

Jessica:

What made you decide to take over the leadership of MAP and what do you hope the club would accomplish at the University of Iowa?

Karlee Colby:

I think that and this kind of goes back to my previous comment that we are in a time I mean when aren't we then feel like the world is always on fire but we are in a time where there seems to be a lot of divide and a lot of conflict and just a lot of everything and restrictions and all of that stuff and I think it's so important to highlight those multiple voices whenever we can and so if that is just you know with one university club that still means something . I think it's good to expand and show people, especially undergraduates or even undergraduate freshmen early on, that everything [they] learn in the classroom is not all that there is. I think sometimes it's really hard to be teaching somebody something and they're only reading works from a person that is nothing like them. And then to tell them to be that, that's difficult, because it's like [we've] only had [them] read this there's nobody like [them in it]. So, I think a goal that MAP can accomplish is to say, actually, there's so many voices out there and you absolutely could be one of them. [Secondly,] I think it's the responsible thing to do - to be able to add in to your studies, whatever that study may be, a diversified set of knowledge. If they stay on one path and it's very narrow minded, there's so much that we're going to be missing out on. MAP is really focused on looking at those different diverse topics, so I hope that it fuels a very well-rounded education. [Thirdly], I think creating a safe space

is so important for so many people. It's hard to find a safe space. It's hard to know when a space is safe both academically and personally. I think [we have] a deep goal of needing to create connection, because when we feel safe and when we feel connected that's when a lot of great things can happen.

Jessica:

Can you tell us a bit about your teaching experience?

Karlee Colby:

I've been a TA for "Meaning of Life" with two different professors. Meaning of Life can be catered to the professor's specialty, so those [classes] were a little different in the content. I've also taught "Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness," which I loved because I love political philosophy. And [the class] was a lot of discussion on how societies are created and how governments are created. It [goes] into Mills freedom of speech and expression, what does it mean. So, I really enjoyed that class. I will say getting to teach my own class this semester has been so lovely. This semester, I'm teaching "Intro to Philosophy," and the way that the University structures the class is that it gives you snippets of a bunch of subfields of philosophy. So, we do a few weeks of ethics; we do a few weeks on political philosophy; a few on metaphysics, philosophy of mind and epistemology. It's a bunch of mini units and I think that's really beneficial for me. One, I'm able to make sure that I have a solid foundational understanding; two, it's really fun because I actually get to pick my own content. Also, I did my undergrad not too long ago, so I still have a pretty fresh perspective of what is going to make an undergrad want to fall asleep and what is going to make them feel engaged. And so, I think it's nice to be able to look through the readings and actually decide if this is [a reading] they're going to actually get something out of or if it is [a reading] that they're going to pass through. It's really fun to be able to put that much thought into each material and to have a goal for each material – that hopefully they get something out of it. I'm thankful. There is not a single semester that I haven't had just a wonderful class with students that I adore completely. I think everybody's brains are just so magical in all of the thoughts and perspectives that they have. At this point I've gotten to work with many students, and I've also learned from them, and that's such an honor.

Jessica:

How had your experience been in the PhD program, and what do you hope the rest of your time here would be like?

Karlee Colby:

It's been hard. it's been really hard. I mean it's difficult. I have a really great community surrounding me. I love my colleagues, I love the instructors, but there are a few difficulties. The first one is definitely imposter syndrome or just like having to fight the feeling that everybody's smarter than you. I think that this can be really hard in philosophy because so many wonderful people will say so many wonderful comments. I could never say a comment like; I just don't even know where to start. So, I think that makes it difficult. I am also somebody who can be very reflective at first and then talk. Not everybody's like that and so there's definitely a lot of insecurity that can come out of being like, I'm not talking fast enough, I'm not raising my hand fast enough, or I'm not thinking fast enough. Also, I think that it can be hard at this point in the journey because it's a little difficult to reconcile still needing to take a class that you really don't want to specialize in. I want to be doing work in something I'm going to specialize in, so then it can be hard to keep your attention and focus sometimes and also keep reminding yourself that the foundations are also very important. It's a lot it's a lot of individual struggles, but I want to keep increasing and improving my teaching skills. As I get more into philosophy of education, that's another specialty that I would like to add, there's a responsibility to study education and make sure that I'm educating in a productive way, in a way that's actually connecting with students. Overall, I want to sharp tune my research skills as well because research is still very important. I want to keep making those new connections and coming up with new ideas. I want to be able to accurately and adequately draw on the readings that I've read so I can keep sharpening those foundational skills.

Tip-Based Wages and the Exploitation of Emotional Labor

GRACE DENNER

The service industry is a line of work that many people have relied on at some point as a source of income. I have been in this industry for about five years now, which is more than enough time to understand the unique difficulties that women face in a workplace where tips make up the majority of one's take-home pay. The tip-based wage in the United States, most commonly seen in the food service industry, creates grounds for the exploitation of emotional labor, especially along gendered lines. In this essay, I will first highlight the unjust conditions that created our unique tipping culture and their effects today, then I will describe how performing emotional labor is a significant component of one's job expectations. Additionally, I will describe ways in which it is exploited, and finally, I will offer some steps that could foreseeably be taken to rectify this exploitation.

Background

The unique tip-based wage system used in the United States has roots in a grave injustice, and the effects of this origin have long-standing repercussions in the modern world³⁷. During the Reconstruction period after the Civil War, newly freed slaves had relatively limited options for employment. As a result, a significant portion found themselves working as waitstaff in restaurants. White restaurant owners in the South did not want to pay their Black employees, so they set their wages at zero dollars an hour and let the customers decide whether the employees should be paid. Despite initial pushback from those who found the practice to be racist, classist, and not a feasible option for poorer diners, tipping became a widespread custom across the United States when restaurant owners realized the financial gain in subsidizing the majority of their workers' pay with their customers' extra money.³⁸

Today, the system is not much better. Tipped wages, defined as the pay of those who make over \$30 per month in tips, are set at a federal minimum of \$2.13 per hour.³⁹ If hourly wages and tips do not add up to the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour, it is the employers'

³⁷ The practice of tipping is argued to have originated in medieval Europe, where servants who had performed their duties exceptionally well would receive small bonuses from their masters. This was brought to the States by a few wealthy Americans who observed the feudal practice during their travels to Europe and wished to seem aristocratic by continuing the practice at home (Greenspan, 2019). For the purposes of this paper, however, I am focusing on how tipping became a widespread and normalized practice in the United States.

³⁸ Greenspan (2019).

³⁹ Division of Fair Labor Standards Act and Child Labor (2024).

responsibility to compensate for the difference. (Working in the industry as long as I have, however, I have doubts that this step is always taken by employers.) Tips for servers are customarily 20% of the total bill, ideally making one's compensation proportional to the amount of labor that is performed: if a table orders more food and drinks causing the server to perform more labor, then their bill, and therefore the server's tip, is higher. It is evident that, in the current system, tips are necessary to provide a living wage for those within the service industry.

There is a charitable explanation, though not a very strong one, for why this antiquated practice persists in the modern world. A common myth for the origin of tipping encapsulates this explanation nicely: small dishes for coins with the phrase "To Insure Promptness" were placed on tables when this practice was still relatively new, and the acronym is believed by some to be the birth of tipping culture.⁴⁰ What this means is that tips are an effective way to guarantee that one receives the best service possible while keeping labor costs relatively low. Indeed, many who visit the United States are amazed by the friendliness and swiftness of those serving their food. However, this is not a sufficient justification for setting tip-based wages at less than 1/3 of the federal minimum wage.

Emotional Labor as a Factor

In her article, "Care as Work: The Exploitation of Caring Attitudes and Emotional Labor," Elizabeth Brake defines attitudinal care as "subjectively experienced benevolent attention and concern."⁴¹ Emotional labor⁴² can be performed without reciprocation and without this attitudinal care and is seen as a "part of the job" in a number of professions, regardless of whether it is proportionally compensated. In addition to serving and bartending, therapists, flight attendants,



and teachers are also expected to regulate others' emotions as well as their own. As a general rule, those in the service industry are expected to be friendly and accommodating, but the implicit expectations of the provision of emotional care go much deeper than this. Specific ways in which servers and bartenders engage in this non-attitudinal emotional care include, but are not limited to: 'reading' people and situations, dealing with unruly or drunk

patrons and the uncomfortable situations that ensue (even when the right to refuse service has been

⁴⁰ Greenspan (2019).

⁴¹ Brake (2019).

⁴² When using the term "emotional labor" in this paper, I specifically mean unreciprocated non-attitudinal emotional care as defined by Brake.

exercised), placating unsatisfied patrons by taking accountability for misdeeds, even (and especially!) if they are not one's own, and providing advice and sympathy when needed. A colloquial saying relating to the last example is, 'Bartenders are the poor man's therapists,' indicating just how common this emotional labor can be. For example, one of my best friends recently dealt with a situation in which the first thing a patron said when he sat down at her bar was that he had just returned from his infant son's funeral⁴³. What a heavy statement to lay on someone you just met, for the main reason that they are the one pouring your drinks! Furthermore, service industry workers are expected to forego their own emotional needs to provide for the patrons'. In saying this, I mean that servers are implicitly not allowed to have bad days—no matter what personal hardships they are going through, they are expected to 'put on a happy face' for the customers, for fear of being tipped poorly.

Service industry jobs are unique in the sense that the vast majority of one's take-home pay is dependent on the perceived experiences of the care recipients. As tipping is an entirely voluntary practice, it does not matter whether the patrons have actually received some level of emotional care—what matters is that they feel that they have. This phenomenon creates the double ontological shock that Sandra Lee Bartky describes in her groundbreaking work, "Toward a *Figure 7 - Tanvi Devulapally* Phenomenology of Feminist Consciousness": what appears to be happening, the financially transactional exchange of emotional labor, is not actually happening here, leading to questions about the true nature of the provision of this care and its (financial or otherwise) benefits.⁴⁴

How Emotional Labor Is Exploited

There are two distinct spheres of the exploitation of emotional labor in the service industry: financial exploitation, or unpaid emotional labor, and interpersonal exploitation, where the patrons' direct compensation to employees creates false assumptions of accessibility, leading to a blurring of boundaries between the two parties. In this section, I will describe both of these spheres, and the harm they cause, in detail.

As mentioned above, serving and bartending are not the only jobs where the provision of emotional labor is not directly compensated for by employers, but are the most egregious examples of being underpaid. The optional nature of tipping in the United States all but guarantees that some labor, material or emotional, goes financially unreciprocated. Regardless of how excellent or poor their service is, many patrons tip well below the customary rate of 20%, and some refuse to tip at all as a matter of principle. Voluntary compensation by patrons creates an inequitable power dynamic in which the patron may feel entitled to a level of care that they have no intention of proportionally reimbursing.

⁴³ My friend has given me permission to share this experience as an obvious example of excess emotional labor.

⁴⁴ Bartky (1975).

Where financial exploitation is likely relatively consistent for all service workers, interpersonal exploitation is seen at a much greater rate along gendered lines. There is a greater expectation, explicitly or implicitly, for female servers and bartenders to have a more overt gender presentation to make better tips: this “yes-encoded” presentation serves to reinforce harmful stereotypes of deference and servitude.⁴⁵ In saying this, I mean that female service workers are expected to come to work with our hair and makeup done, and (in the absence of work uniforms) are expected to wear nicer, or even more provocative, outfits when working. There are entire establishments based around this concept, such as Hooters and its similar competitors. To illustrate this point, I will share a personal example. When I was 19 and taking a gap year from college, I worked at a local pizza restaurant most weekday afternoons. I showed up to work without makeup one time, and the first thing that one of my regulars (a man in his late 50s) that I saw almost every day said to me was, “Dude, you look like shit!” I received less of a tip from him than I usually did, and the implication in doing so was clear: a significant portion of my tip from him was contingent on my appearance, and it did not meet his expectations that day. I did not come to work without makeup again. Going along with this “yes-encoded” notion, many female servers have to engage in the ethical lean that Bartky describes in her article *Feeding Egos and Tending Wounds*: we may laugh at jokes that we may find to not be funny or even offensive and may brush off sexually charged comments that we would otherwise not tolerate. Failure to do so, along with a clear drawing of boundaries, may be construed as being rude, which is thereby reflected in our tips. Similarly, service workers who are transgender may be asked extremely personal questions about their gender identity and may receive less of a tip if they express their discomfort in answering. As a general principle, the direct and conditional payment from patron to employee creates a false and one-sided sense of comfortability that is often abused, especially along gendered lines.

Two Potential Solutions for Rectification⁴⁶

The first possible remedy for this problem is the abolition of the tipped wage altogether, in favor of a higher hourly wage. This solution has been touted by many anti-tipping advocates but is not exactly a feasible option for many: a common objection from restaurant owners is that doing so raises labor costs, leading to higher food prices. Doing so would potentially discourage patronage, harming restaurants whose profit margins may make or break the business.

The second, and my preferred, solution is to replace optional tips altogether with a mandatory service charge, preferably a flat rate of 20% added onto each bill. Doing so would both keep labor costs consistent with current expenditures, while ensuring that labor is adequately compensated, thereby relieving workers from feeling the need to perform excess material or

⁴⁵ Bettcher (2014).

⁴⁶ It is important to note here that I am only talking about the solution to *financial* exploitation: the conditions of interpersonal exploitation may still exist, but at least service workers will be compensated at a greater rate for having to endure it. These societal conditions are part of a larger discussion worth exploring, and may improve over time given the solutions mentioned, but for the purposes of this paper, I will curtail the scope of solutions to financial ones that are both guaranteed and readily available.

emotional labor. This concept is not a new one, both on a domestic and a global scale: in the United States, gratuity charges are commonly added to large parties for reasons listed above. Service charges are commonplace in dining cultures around the world, such as in the Netherlands or France, and have proven to be a sustainable business model.⁴⁷

Having said this, I find it important to point out that the abolition of tipping culture in the United States should not mean the abolition of hospitality: the emotional labor performed in the service industry serves an important “social smoothing” function in society (most evident in its absence, as was seen during the pandemic when it was unavailable and many became more abrasive towards service workers as a result), and should not be done away with altogether. Doing so has adverse effects on all involved: many patrons who have a limited amount of social interactions may feel lonelier or more isolated, and employees may miss out on honing the “soft skills” that are developed through the provision of this emotional labor. I therefore believe that, in addition to service charges, there ought to be a subjectively demarcated minimum and maximum threshold of appropriate emotional labor provided to optimize the experience of all parties involved.

Some do not view service industry professions as being ‘real jobs.’ To the grievances listed in this essay, they may suggest leaving the industry to find a profession with higher pay. If everyone who has experienced the types of exploitation I have described were to do this, however, we would all be worse off. It is entirely possible for one to make a career that they enjoy in the service industry, while doing so in a more humane manner. It is time for the United States to step into the 21st Century and make this a possibility for all.

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⁴⁷ Horowitz (2017).

The Mark of the Mental

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This paper will focus on the philosophical argument regarding the “Main Mark of the Mental.” Arguably, there are five main marks that philosophers widely recognize. I will briefly outline what those five are but will expand on one that I feel is the most important. Starting with intentionality, argued by Tim Crane, explores the mind's directedness at objects outside of itself, meaning mental states are about or of something outside of themselves.⁴⁸ Michael Tye argues that the most significant mark of the mental is Qualia, which is the subjective character / intrinsic quality of conscious experiences.⁴⁹ Tumoas Pernu provides the last three possible marks; free will, teleology, and normativity. My argument for this paper will focus on the concept of Qualia as the most important characteristic of mental states, and in doing so, I will also engage in an objection against the view, namely intentionality, and then offer my rebuttal.

At the heart of Qualia, is the ability to have subjective conscious experiences. What it feels like to experience something. It is the phenomenological properties of experiences - the richness of the world, how it appears to us through sensations and perception. It is responsible for the fact that seeing blue feels different than seeing red. Only something with Qualia (human or animal) would be able to have and consciously understand the feeling of these experiences. It proves that something inanimate, a chair for instance, could not possess a mental state because it cannot have nor understand the subjective quality of conscious experiences. This subjective quality, which cannot be entirely captured or explained in objective terms, is what distinguishes mental states from physical phenomena.

A reason I argue that Qualia is the most important facet of the mental is that it is directly tied to our ability to perceive and process sensory data. For humans and animals with mental states, there is a dynamic interaction between the outside world and our senses. This sensory information is processed and internalized, while Qualia acts as the picture-like representation of the sensory data. For instance, a person who sees an orange, sees the color orange, experiences the texture and taste of the fruit, and perceives the shape of it. This ability to consciously have and interpret these subjective experiences provides a framework for understanding the world as a multi-dimensional and rich phenomenon. The existence of Qualia proves that something has a conscious mental state. Going back to the chair example, it cannot “see” or “feel” the experience of looking at or eating an orange in a way a human or animal might. The absence of Qualia in an inanimate object suggests

⁴⁸ Crane (1998).

⁴⁹ Tye (2021).

they do not possess mental states. Therefore, Qualia is integral to the existence of mental states, and only beings capable of experiencing Qualia can be said to possess mental states.

One argument against Qualia as the most important mark of the mental is Tim Crane's perspective of intentionality. According to Crane, mental states are defined by their aboutness—they are always directed at something, external or internal. He claims that emotions and sensations are intentional, even when it comes to undirected anxiety or depression. Anxiety can still exhibit directedness, such as being anxious about one's position in the world, or explaining the aboutness of depression to the complex of emotions about the world being uninviting. Crane would argue that intentionality can exist independently of Qualia. For example, he would suggest that one could have a mental state that is solely cognitive or abstract, like a mathematical concept. Crane would say that if intentionality does not need Qualia to exist, then Qualia cannot be seen as the defining feature of the mental. He would argue that we can have mental states, thoughts, beliefs, desires—that are directed at something without the subjective experience of having them.

My rebuttal to the previous objection is this: how can one have any other marks of the mental without possessing Qualia? I would argue that Qualia is almost the mere baseline for all of the other potential candidates fighting for the top spot as the most important mark of the mental. Specifically, I believe that intentionality cannot be fully understood nor exist without the foundation of Qualia. To intentionally direct one's thoughts to be about something, one must consciously understand what it feels like to experience that. How can one have an aboutness about their thoughts, feelings, or sensations if they do not know what it feels like to experience them? It would be impossible to think about a concept or object you have never been made aware of or even known existed. Intentionality requires a level of conscious awareness directed towards the aboutness of something that would not be possible without Qualia. To consider a flower, for instance, one must have the sensory experience of seeing the flower, feeling its texture, and understanding it as an object. Without the subjective experience of perceiving the flower (Qualia), how can one



Figure 8 - Alika Cho

sform thoughts or mental states about it? In other words, Qualia allows us to understand and relate to the world around us in subjective and conscious ways, which makes intentionality possible. With the absence of Qualia, mental states would be devoid of richness from the way one perceives the world, leaving them as mere representations or logical constructs without any true directedness towards the world. For intentionality to have any meaning, there must first be an experience of the world, and Qualia is what provides that. Given the above, it seems that Qualia is a fundamental piece of what it means to have mental states. To have a mental state is to have a subjective experience of the world, whether that be a sensory experience, an

emotional reaction, or a cognitive reflection. Qualia provides the material for all other mental phenomena - intentionality, teleology, and normativity. All rely on the existence of a previous conscious experience.

In conclusion, I argue that Qualia is the most important mark of the mental as it provides the foundational experience necessary for all other aspects of mental life. While intentionality, teleology, and normativity each contribute to the richness of our mental states, they are all contingent upon the existence of Qualia. Without the ability to experience the world around us subjectively, we are unable to form meaningful mental states about it. Therefore, Qualia does not only define mental states but also makes it possible for us to engage with and understand the world in a way that goes beyond mere mechanical processes. It is through Qualia that the mental comes alive.

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Towards a Non-Meinongian Rethinking of Zalta's Abstract Object Theory: An Exploration in Axiomatic Metaphysics

ATTICUS OJILE

Introduction

Perhaps the most notorious attempt to explain our relationship to nonexistent intentional objects is that of Alexius Meinong. According to Meinong, nonexistent objects like the golden mountain (his go-to example) are in fact capable of possessing properties; he holds that the nonexistent golden mountain is gold and is a mountain. Meinong distinguished between an intentional object's 'Sein' (its 'being', or existence) and its 'Sosein' (its 'way of being' or character). Thus, nonexistent objects like the golden mountain would, under a Meinongian view, possess a 'Sosein' (i.e. being gold, being a mountain) despite lacking a 'Sein' (i.e., lacking 'being').

In *On Denoting*, Bertrand Russell famously found Meinong's notion of nonexistent objects as "apt to infringe the law of noncontradiction."⁵⁰ Consider nonexistent objects that could never possibly exist, such as a round square. In Meinong's view, this object would have the properties of being round and being square but would not exist. But what if one considers an object such as 'the existing round square'? According to Meinong, this object is round, is a square, and exists; yet, it does not have existence (Sein). Russell finds this view nonsensical — and, if one does not have a means of clearly parsing the difference between an object's 'having' the property of existence and an object's Sein, it is. Given this difficulty, coupled with the immense explanatory power of the theory of definite descriptions Russell introduced alongside his critique of Meinong, Russell's denial of Meinongian objects became the orthodox view. However, a resurgence of Neo-Meinongian theories beginning in the 1970's and 80's challenged this orthodoxy.

Among the most prominent of the neo-Meinongian theories of the 70's and 80's is Edward Zalta's theory of Abstract Objects.⁵¹ Inspired by the work of Meinong's student Ernest Mally, Zalta takes a 'dual-copula' approach to Meinongian objects, distinguishing between two modes of predication. Zalta introduces a new mode of predication called encoding, in contrast to the more traditional form of predication wherein an object is asserted to exemplify a property. That an object encodes a property does not entail or imply that said object exemplifies that property; for example,

⁵⁰ Russell (1905), 483.

⁵¹ All in text citations of 'Zalta' are of Zalta.

the existing round square encodes being round, being a square, and existing, but does not exemplify those properties (most importantly, it does not exemplify existence).

However, were Zalta not to place restrictions on the sort of properties abstract objects can encode, his theory of abstract objects would be susceptible to a pair of devastating paradoxes.

Zalta places restrictions on the sorts of properties that can appear in his RELATIONS comprehension schema in order to avoid a pair of paradoxes developed by Romane Clark and Alan McMichael respectively. To avoid these paradoxes, Zalta forbids certain properties and relations from being articulated within his theory. Yet, although this restriction renders the paradoxes inarticulable, this restriction contradicts the very purpose for which Zalta's theory of Abstract Objects was developed. Since Zalta wishes for his theory of abstract objects to account for impossible and paradoxical objects (i.e., Russell's 'set of all set's that are not members of themselves', which Zalta cites as a piece of data his theory seeks to explain⁵², it seems there should be some way of accounting for the sort of impossible object Clark and McMichael characterize in their paradoxes. Furthermore, in order to fully account for our ability to believe in states of affairs involving things that do not exist, as well as our ability to think about and express propositions about nonexistent, fictional, or even contradictory entities, it seems preferable to do away with any such restriction whenever possible. In this paper, I seek to demonstrate that by modifying Zalta's theory to make nonexistent objects mind-dependent, one can develop a less restricted account of intentionality.

In section 1, I will briefly summarize relevant aspects of Zalta's elementary and modal theory, as well as the inherent problems with Zalta's theory. In section 2, I will develop an account of how the Clark and McMichael paradoxes can be captured rather than merely circumvented, thereby avoiding contradiction without recourse to Zalta's unappealing 'no encoding subformulas' solution.⁵³ Finally, in section 3, I will discuss the potential problems and possible inroads for future exploration of a non-Meinongian adaptation of Zalta's theory. Yet, because Zalta's method of metaphysical investigation is highly technical and is grounded in the use of formal logic, I will first briefly explain how to interpret expressions in quantificational logic and λ -calculus so that readers less familiar with the notation may better understand Zalta's theory and my reinterpretation of it. Those already familiar with formal logic and λ -calculus may still wish to read the last paragraph of the following section, as it briefly explains the notation that is novel to Zalta's theory of abstract objects and to my modifications of his theory.

⁵² Zalta (1983), 3.

⁵³ Note that I will be dealing largely with the version of Zalta's theory laid out in his 1983 book *Abstract Objects*; although Zalta has continued to develop his theory in the several decades since its initial publication, these developments have not, so far as I am aware, resolved the inherent issues brought on by Zalta's 'no encoding subformulas' restriction.

How to Read the Notation of Quantificational Logic and λ -Calculus

A few things are crucial to quantificational logic: the lowercase variables (x, y, z, \dots) stand for objects, and the uppercase variables (F, G, H, \dots) are used to represent properties. So, a phrase like ' Fx ' could be understood as saying ' x is F '. For example, suppose the property ' D ' stands for 'is a dog', — ' Dx ' could then be read as ' x is a dog'. Uppercase variables can also be used to express a relation between two or more objects — for example, if the variable ' R ' stands for the relation 'is the father of', then ' Rxy ' could be read as ' x is the father of y '. Quantificational logic also contains the following logical connectives:

'&' (called a conjunction, which can be read as 'and').

' \vee ' (called a disjunction, read as an inclusive 'or').

' \rightarrow ' (called a material conditional, so that ' $x \rightarrow y$ ' can be read as 'if x then y ' or ' x implies y ').

' \equiv ' (called a biconditional, so that ' $x \equiv y$ ' can be read as ' x if and only if y ').

' \sim ' (called negation, so that ' $\sim Fx$ ' can be read as 'it is not the case that x is F ').

Another crucial component of quantificational logic is the titular quantifiers. The symbols ' \forall ' and ' \exists ' stand for quantifiers, which can be read as 'all' and 'some' respectively. Quantifiers are used to 'bind' the variable immediately following them, so that something like ' $\forall x$ ' could be read as 'all x ', and something like ' $\exists y$ ' could be read as 'some (or at least one) y '. Therefore, a formula like ' $(\forall x)(Dx)$ ' could be read as 'every x is a dog'. So, putting all this together, we could write something like the formula ' $(\forall x)(Dx \rightarrow (\exists y)(Fy \ \& \ Hxy))$ ', where the predicate ' F ' stands for the property 'is a day' and the predicate ' H ' stands for the relation 'has'. Thus, the formula could be read as saying 'every dog has its day', (or, speaking a bit more technically, 'Every x is such that if it is a dog, then there is some y that is a day, and x has y '). The 'scope' of each quantifier is indicated by the pair of brackets immediately following it — quantifiers can only 'bind' or quantify variables within their scope. In addition to the quantifiers for 'all' and 'some', occasional use will be made of the modal operators ' \diamond ' and ' \square '. ' $\square P$ ' could be read as 'it is necessary that P ', whilst ' $\diamond P$ ' could be read as 'it is possible that P '— so, for example, ' $\square Fx$ ' could be read as ' x is necessarily F ', whilst something like ' $\diamond(\exists x)(Fx)$ ' could be read as 'it is possible that there is some x that is F '.

There are some further unique aspects to the logical notation used by Zalta in developing his theory of abstract objects; Zalta makes frequent use of what is called λ -calculus in order to efficiently describe logically complex properties. For the purposes of this paper, one need not be familiar with the theoretical underpinnings of λ -calculus (I most certainly am not), yet it will be important to know how to read the notation. A ' λ -abstraction' is written as $[\lambda x Fx]$, which Zalta uses as properties. If an object exemplifies a λ -abstraction, it can be plugged in for any occurrence of the variable immediately following the ' λ ' character in the abstraction. So, supposing that some

object ‘y’ exemplifies the above λ -abstract (written ‘ $[\lambda xFx]y$ ’), it would follow that ‘Fy’ (or, that y is F). This is useful when characterizing logically complex properties. For example, if ‘y’ were to exemplify the λ -abstract $[\lambda x (Billy)x \rightarrow (Silly)x]$, then y would have the property of ‘being such that it is silly if it is Billy’.

Lastly, as was stated above, Zalta introduces a new mode of predication called ‘encoding’, which is distinguished from the more conventional mode of predication called ‘exemplifying’.

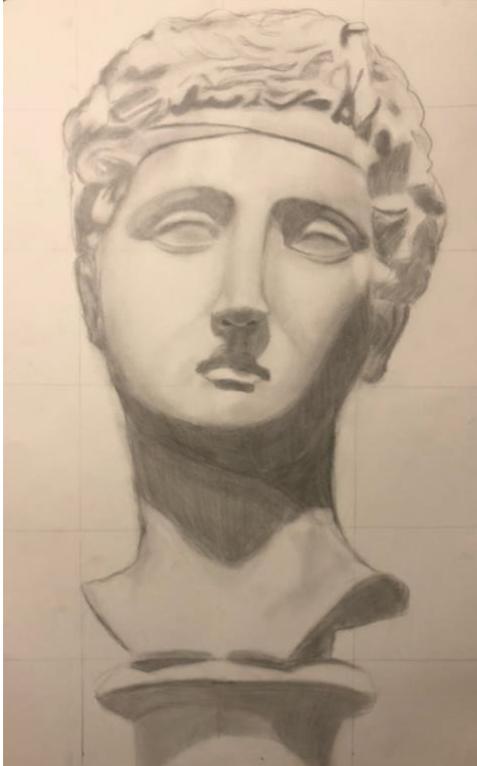


Figure 9 - Swetha Narmeta

While something like ‘x is (exemplifies) F’ would be written as ‘Fx’, the term ‘x encodes F’ would be written as ‘xF’. Additionally, in my modifications to Zalta, I will be using what I call ‘T-brackets’. Each instance of T-brackets is indexed to some specific mind, and are written in the following way, so that for some term or formula Φ : $TM(\Phi)$. This would indicate that the term or formula ‘ Φ ’ obtains strictly within the domain of some mind ‘M’. Here, M is a variable ranging over a domain restricted to minds, which can be instantiated to any particular mind within that domain. The ‘T’ is meant to indicate some form of mind-dependence in ‘thinking about’ something, which is not to be thought of as synonymous with ‘believes’ — in this regard, ‘ $TM(\Phi)$ ’ could be loosely interpreted as ‘M thinks about Φ ’. Admittedly, a more precise account of what T-brackets indicate needs to be worked out further so as to not risk begging the question when it comes to intentionality. However, for the time being, the purpose of T-brackets is simply to index various terms and formulas

to specific minds so as to quarantine ensuing contradictions, in accordance with the broad metaphysical intuition that abstract objects are mind-dependent. At times, it will be more efficient to use the following alternative notation for T-brackets: $[\Phi]M =df TM(\Phi)$.

The Basics of Zalta’s Abstract Objects Theory

Zalta’s theory of abstract objects treats ‘existence’ as a primitive theoretical (one-place) relation⁵⁴ indicated by the constant ‘E!’⁵⁵. That is to say, Zalta considers ‘existence’ to be a foundational theoretical notion, meaning that it cannot be In the context of Zalta’s theory, ‘exists’

⁵⁴ Zalta treats ‘relations’ as a primitive or foundational metaphysical concept— as such, properties are defined as one-place relations (Zalta 1983 pp. 7).

⁵⁵ Ibid., 12, 32.

can be thought of as being synonymous with the phrase ‘is concrete’, or, ‘is located in space’.⁵⁶ Zalta then appeals to this notion of existence in order to provide the following definition of ‘being abstract’: “ x is abstract (“ $A!x$ ”) =df $[\lambda y \sim E!y]x$ ”, or, in other words, an object’s being abstract is defined by its failing to exemplify existence⁵⁷⁵⁸ Thus, any object that is not concrete is abstract. Zalta also posits a “NO-CODER” axiom, which states that if any object exists, it cannot encode any properties.⁵⁹

Having distinguished between abstract objects and existing objects, Zalta then goes on to posit different requirements for identity between the two sorts of objects. Zalta establishes identity criteria for existing objects through the following “E-IDENTITY” axiom:

‘ $x =_E y$ =df $(E!x \ \& \ E!y \ \& \ (F)(Fx \equiv Fy))$ ’, which could be understood in plain English as saying ‘ x and y ’s being E-identical (‘ $=_E$ ’) means that both x and y exist, and both exemplify the exact same properties’⁶⁰. Zalta then uses the E-IDENTITY axiom to create a disjunctive definition of identity in general, so that: ‘ $x = y$ =df $x =_E y \vee (A!x \ \& \ A!y \ \& \ (F)(xF \equiv yF))$ ’, or, ‘that x and y are identical means they are either E-identical or are abstract and encode all the same properties’.

Zalta’s theory also contains an axiom schema called “A-OBJECTS”, which allows for the comprehension of abstract objects; what this essentially means is that Zalta is able to postulate an infinite number of axioms of the general form “ $(\exists x)(A!x \ \& \ (\forall F)(xF \equiv \Phi))$ ”, where Φ is a variable that can stand for any formula in which x is not free.⁶¹ In other words, for any formula Φ , there is an abstract object that encodes a specific set of properties in accordance with Φ . This is more easily understood through the example Zalta provides. Suppose the formula “ $F = R \vee F = S$ ” is plugged in for Φ , where ‘ R ’ stands for the property of being round and ‘ S ’ stands for the property of being a square, which could be paraphrased as “ F is identical to ‘being round’ or F is identical to ‘being square’”. The resulting formula is “ $(\exists x)(A!x \ \& \ (\forall F)(xF \equiv F = R \vee F = S))$ ”, which could be paraphrased as saying “There is some abstract object that encodes every property F if and only if F is either the property of being round or the property of being square”; or, more simply put, there

⁵⁶ Zalta indicates this synonymy when suggesting an alternative reading of his theory for those who are uncomfortable with the premise that abstract objects do not exist. He indicates that the existence predicate (‘ $E!$ ’) could be replaced with the concreteness predicate ‘ $C!$ ’ without changing his overall theory (Zalta 1983 pp. 51).

⁵⁷ Ibid., 18.

⁵⁸ Of course, once Zalta introduces modality into his theory of abstract objects, his definition of what it means to be abstract changes. His new definition is: ‘ $A!x$ =df $[\lambda y \Box \sim E!y]x$ ’ or, ‘ x necessarily fails to exemplify existence’. This means that “abstract objects are... not the kind of thing that could exist” (p.60). Somewhat counterintuitively, the stipulation that abstract object’s necessarily fail to exist is not a stipulation that all abstract objects are ‘impossible objects’ in the sense that they possess contradictory properties so that their nonexistence can be known a priori — it is fully possible that an existing ordinary object exemplify all the properties some specific abstract object encodes. Abstract objects necessarily do not exist because they are abstract; encoding a contradictory or otherwise logically impossible collection of properties is not a necessary condition for being abstract (Zalta 1983 pp. 50).

⁵⁹ Ibid., 33.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 33.

⁶¹ Ibid., 34.

is an abstract object that is a round square. Thus, Zalta establishes that for every combination of properties, there is a specific abstract object which encodes all and only those properties.

Lastly, Zalta's RELATIONS theorem schema allows Zalta to designate any relation or property, albeit with a few restrictions.⁶² Similarly to how Zalta's A-OBJECTS schema posits via an axiom an abstract object corresponding to any formula Φ , his RELATIONS theorem schema draws upon Zalta's primitive metaphysical notions regarding relations to demonstrate that there is some property or relation in accordance with any propositional formula Φ , so that: " $(\exists F)(\forall x)(Fx \equiv \Phi)$ ", or, in other words, for every propositional formula Φ , there is some property or relation F which can be specified in terms of Φ . By restricting Φ to propositional formulas, which Zalta defines as a "formula... with no encoding sub-formulas and has no sub-formulas with quantifiers binding relation variables", Zalta is able to prevent the derivation of the Clark and McMichaels paradoxes from his RELATIONS schema.⁶³ Yet, placing restrictions on the RELATIONS schema is far from an ideal solution; there are situations in which it may be quite useful to allow complex properties and relations to be constructed out of formulas in which one or more sub-formulas feature encoding and/or quantify over relation variables — Zalta admits as much in a later explications of his abstract object theory before suggesting the highly ad hoc solution that one might "postulate certain properties that are not generated by the comprehension schema."⁶⁴ Of course, one is then left with the question as to why a comprehension schema for relations is put forth in the first place if one can simply posit relations that are not specified by the schema.

In addition to undermining his RELATIONS schema, the 'no encoding sub-formulas' rule also seems to undermine the very purpose of the theory as an account of nonexistent intentional objects. If it is possible to imagine, think of, reason about, or otherwise be intentionally directed towards objects and relations that cannot be accounted for by Zalta's restricted RELATIONS comprehension schema, then Zalta's requirement that the schematic variable in RELATIONS range over only 'propositional formulas' prevents his theory from accounting for key data-points it ought to explain. These problems are made even worse when considering the fact that Zalta's definition of identity contains encoding sub-formulas — Zalta's restrictions on the comprehension of relations would thereby suggest that it is impossible to think about nonexistent objects that encode being identical to some object(s).

Capturing Clark's and McMichael's Paradoxes through the Mind-Dependence of Abstract Objects

In order to reinterpret the syntax of Zalta's theory so that nonexistent objects are rendered mind-dependent, we could include as part of our characterization of encoding as a novel form of predication that encoding can only occur only within T-brackets, and that only variables which range over objects and are bound by quantifiers from inside those same T-brackets are able to

⁶² Recall that Zalta defines properties as one-place relations.

⁶³ Ibid., 18.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 33.

encode properties. Then, rather than considering the predicate ‘exists’ to be a primitive, we could instead posit the following definition as an axiom: ‘ x exists ($E!x$) =df $\sim(\exists F)(TM(xF))$ ’, where M is a variable ranging over all and only minds. In other words, to say that x exists means that it is not the case that x encodes properties in any mind. We can then keep Zalta’s definition of ‘abstractness’, wherein an object’s being abstract is defined as that object’s failing to exist. Given this new definition of ‘exists’, we can then conclude that every abstract object is such that it encodes some property(s) within some mind, and that every abstract object is bound by quantifiers that occur inside T-brackets. In this way, we can characterize all objects that are bound within T-brackets as abstract, despite being unable to predicate anything of those objects outside those T-brackets.

In order to maintain that abstract objects are mind dependent, Zalta’s “A-OBJECTS” axiom schema also needs to be revised. If abstract objects are mind-dependent, a schema which postulates an infinite variety of abstract objects would be untenable; surely, there are formulas that no mind has ever considered, and thus for which no corresponding abstract object has encoded corresponding properties. The use of modal notation will allow us to characterize the possibility that some mind token an abstract object encode some property(s) accordance with any formula, so that for any Φ in which x is not free: ‘ $\diamond TM((\exists x)(\forall F)(xF \equiv \Phi))$ ’, where M is a variable that ranges over all and only minds. That is, for all F and for any formula Φ , it is possible for an object created by and exclusive to the domain of some specific mind to encode some set of properties determined by Φ . Having made these alterations to Zalta’s theory, we can now remove the ‘no encoding sub-formulas’ restriction on the RELATIONS schema, thus granting ourselves an unrestricted comprehension schema for properties and relations.

As a result of these modifications to Zalta’s theory, Clark’s paradox can be painlessly circumvented. Clark’s Paradox rests on Zalta’s concept of encoding as being mind-independent, whereby ‘ aF ’ is a term that can occur outside of any mind’s T-brackets. Clark’s paradox results from considering some object a_0 such that a_0 encodes only the property $[\lambda x(\exists F)(xF \ \& \ \sim Fx)]$, or to put it loosely and in plain English, a_0 encodes only the property of encoding but not exemplifying some property F .⁶⁵

Suppose then that a_0 exemplifies the property $[\lambda x(F)(xF \rightarrow Fx)]$, meaning that a_0 exemplifies the property of ‘being such that it exemplifies every property it encodes.’ Since the only property a_0 encodes is the property of ‘being such that it encodes a property it doesn’t exemplify’, a_0 must also exemplify the property of ‘being such that it encodes a property it doesn’t exemplify’. However, since a_0 now exemplifies the only property it encodes, it does not exemplify ‘being such that it encodes a property it doesn’t exemplify’. Thus, a_0 both does and does not exemplify ‘being such that it encodes a property it doesn’t exemplify’, resulting in a contradiction.

⁶⁵ The following formalizations of Clark’ and McMichael’s paradoxes are taken from Zalta. (Zalta 1983 pp. 158-9).

Suppose instead that a_0 does not exemplify the property $[\lambda x(F)(xF \rightarrow Fx)]$ (i.e., does not exemplify the property of ‘being such that it exemplifies everything it encodes’) — this is logically equivalent to the statement that a_0 encodes something it does not exemplify. However, this entails that a_0 does exemplify the property of ‘being such that it encodes something it does not exemplify’, which is the only property a_0 encodes. Yet in that case, a_0 does exemplify every property it encodes. In summation, an abstract object a_0 which encodes only the property $[\lambda x(\exists F)(xF \& \sim Fx)]$ exemplifies every property it encodes if and only if it does not exemplify every property it encodes.

However, the modifications we have made to Zalta’s abstract object theory allow for the possibility that some mind thinks about an abstract object that encodes only $[\lambda x(\exists F)(xF \& \sim Fx)]$. However, because the abstract object that encodes $[\lambda x(\exists F)(xF \& \sim Fx)]$ is bound by a quantifier within the T-brackets of some particular mind (so that $[(\exists x)(x[\lambda x(\exists F)(xF \& \sim Fx)])]M$), properties like $[\lambda x(F)(xF \rightarrow Fx)]$ can only be predicated of that object within those same T-brackets. In this way, the contradiction that would result from Clark’s paradox is prevented from intruding into any mind-independent reality, whilst the paradoxical object itself is still articulable as an abstract intentional object trapped within some mind.

McMichael’s paradox results from the derivation of some abstract object ‘ a_1 ’ from Zalta’s A-OBJECTS schema, so that $(\exists x)(A!x \& (\forall F)(xF \equiv (\exists u)(F = [\lambda y y=u] \& \sim uF))$. Since our modification to the A-OBJECTS schema quantifies its object within the T-brackets indexed to some mind, attempting to derive McMichael’s paradox from the modified A-OBJECTS results in

$[(\exists x)(\forall F)(xF \equiv (\exists u)(F = [\lambda y y=u] \& \sim uF))]M$, where M is some mind.⁶⁶ Thus, McMichael’s paradox can be averted in essentially the same manner as Clark’s paradox; since all of the variables are quantified within the T-brackets of some mind, the ensuing contradiction can be quarantined from any mind-independent reality, whilst, as with Clark’s paradoxical object, the abstract object from which the McMichael’s paradox is derived can still be formulated as an abstract intentional object.

Concluding Remarks and Possibilities for Further Research

Although these modifications to Zalta’s theory allow for Clark’s and McMichael’s paradoxes to be dealt with effectively, there are a few glaring issues; firstly, a metaphysical account of how exactly the T-brackets relate to minds needs to be fleshed out. Furthermore, the vague appeals to ‘minds’ and to ‘mind-dependence’ need to be supplemented with a thorough account of what exactly minds are; otherwise, this account of intentionality risks begging the question — it appeals to a vague notion of mental phenomena in order to explain ‘the mark of the mental’. Lastly, an account of intentional objects which takes a vague folk-conception of mind as a primitive

⁶⁶From $(\exists x)(A!x \& (\forall F)(xF \equiv (\exists u)(F = [\lambda y y=u] \& \sim uF))$, McMichael’s paradox goes as follows: x is instantiated as some particular object a_1 . One can then suppose that a_1 encodes the property $[\lambda y y=a_1]$. The biconditional would entail that $(\exists u)([\lambda y y=a_1] = [\lambda y y=u] \& \sim u[\lambda y y=a_1])$, whereby ‘ u ’ could be instantiated to a_2 . Since $[\lambda y y=a_1] = [\lambda y y=a_2]$, it follows that $a_1 = a_2$. However, a_1

concept will be severely lacking explanatory power and applicability — thus, the most urgent direction in which theory of abstract objects can be developed is by incorporating a more robust theory of mind.

Secondly, given how much work is done by T-brackets, there is a good possibility that the account I have presented could do away with encoding as a mode of predication at little to no cost. In that case, it seems the account no longer even remotely resembles Zalta's abstract object theory. Yet, supposing that encoding is unnecessary insofar as I have used in in this paper, extending a dual-copula approach to predication could help in developing a more robust theory of mind; perhaps one could extend the notion of encoding to explain the relation of physical brain states to information-bearing functional states, so that, for example, some brain state might encode (although not exemplify) some λ -abstraction like $[\lambda x(\exists y)(Fy)]$; that is, said brain state could encode 'being such that some proposition $(\exists y)(Fy)$ is the case'. Perhaps, then, encoding could be put to new use in furnishing this account with a stronger theory of mind.

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Courage and Wisdom in Plato's *Protagoras*

LUCAS FROCK

In the *Protagoras* by Plato, there is a Socratic examination of whether courage is like all the other virtues or if it is completely different from the rest.⁶⁷ This discussion involves Socrates, the teacher of Plato and Protagoras, a sophist or one who being an expert in knowledge has the self-proclaimed ability to teach or impart it upon others. During their discussion, Protagoras accuses Socrates of making an invalid inference. Essentially, Protagoras accuses Socrates of using his acceptance of the idea that the courageous are daring as also an acceptance of the daring being courageous. (350d) Protagoras clearly became confused by what Socrates argued because Socrates is not guilty of making this invalid inference. Protagoras rushed headlong into this debate like the self-confident person he is, but in doing so, he made a blunder based on his ignorance and misunderstanding of Socrates' argument. I think that through all this debate, Plato is reflecting to the viewer that not only is the debate occurring between two people but the very things they are debating over are representative of the two speakers (Plato and Protagoras) character. This discussion then immediately entails that Protagoras is that madman that he so readily named earlier in the debate because he is daring/confident without knowledge of that which he rushes into. (350b)

In order to understand why Protagoras is wrong in his objection to Plato, it is prudent to break down the arguments that took place. The argument starts with Protagoras asserting that courage is completely different than all other virtues. (349d) Given this, Socrates asks him whether all the courageous are daring and he assents to this categorization. Following this assertion, Socrates further gets Protagoras agreement that all virtue is fine or noble. (349e) It can be implicitly inferred that not only Socrates but also Protagoras believes that all the courageous are fine or virtuous. After this, Protagoras also agrees to the proposition that all those who are knowledgeable are daring and also that some of the daring are not knowledgeable. (350a, 350b) After this, Protagoras, rather than just only answering Socrates' questions, decides to jump in and assert a premise of his own. (350b) He states that all daring men who are not knowledgeable are mad, and that if such people exist, they are no longer fine or noble but rather shameful. (350b) It then immediately follows from this that those who are daring but not knowledgeable are shameful rather than noble.⁶⁸

Given all these premises, Socrates then finds it fit to start to close in on Protagoras and assert some conclusions. The first conclusion that follows from the premises is that no daring

⁶⁷ All translation of *Protagoras* in this paper is taken from C.C.W. Taylor (1976). *Protagoras*: Plato Clarendon Series. Oxford University Press (Oxford).

⁶⁸ Vlastos, G. (1956), 'Introduction' in: *Protagoras*. B. Jowett's translation extensively rev. by Martin Ostwald. Edited, with an introd., by Gregory Vlastos. Liberal Arts Press (New York) This reconstruction also similarly follows Vlastos reconstruction on page xxxii.

people who are not knowledgeable are then courageous. He then also recklessly and falsely intuits that all knowledgeable people who are daring are courageous. (350c) Socrates has no standing to assert this conclusion given all that Protagoras has either agreed to or asserted. This is where Protagoras would have had a perfectly acceptable repudiation had he fully understood Socrates' actual argument. In his introduction of Protagoras, Vlastos⁶⁹ spells out this misunderstanding by the sophist.⁷⁰ As Vlastos points out, Socrates never got Protagoras' consent to this remark, and he also couldn't have gotten this through deduction because it was never established in the earlier premises or through his questioning of Protagoras. Furthermore, in his essay on this confrontation, Devereaux also believes that Protagoras misunderstood the argument that Socrates makes and that is the reason why he makes this wrong objection.⁷¹

Protagoras' objection about where Socrates went wrong is flawed in its reasoning, but he did dance around the right notion that Socrates is wrong in asserting what he does. Protagoras went wrong in trying to assert that Socrates, through his argumentation, is consenting to the converse of the original premise that all the courageous are daring, being that all the daring are courageous. Socrates would never want to assert this premise because it would open him up to the notion that some courageous men are also not wise. This would be because earlier Socrates asserted with the consent of Protagoras that some of the daring are not knowledgeable. If he accepts that the daring is courageous, he will also have to accept that some of the courageous are not knowledgeable which is the exact thing that he is trying to prove. Vlastos also points out in his analysis that this characterization by Protagoras would also keep Socrates from defining courage in such a way that it doesn't get confused with other things like daring or confidence.⁷² Having stated why it wouldn't have been in Socrates' best interest whatsoever to have contended that the daring are courageous, it is still not obvious that that is not what he does. I am going to spell out where Protagoras went wrong in assuming that is what Socrates' actual argument was. It is also precisely in this area where Plato is projecting to the careful reader that this entire conversation is about Protagoras and his ignorance and desire to jump headlong into a conversation or debate about that which he knows not of.

To acquit Socrates of these accusations, it's important to understand where Protagoras went wrong. Socrates states at 350c lines 2-4 that "these people who are wisest are also most daring, and being most daring are most courageous." Protagoras mistakes the phrase to mean that knowledge or wisdom imparts daring, which then imparts courage rather than what Socrates really meant. Socrates intended the phrase to mean that wisdom or knowledge imparts both daring and courage rather than just daring which itself imparts courage onto someone. It is precisely because such people are wise that makes them daring and courageous, not through their daring that makes

⁶⁹ Vlastos (1956), xxxiv.

⁷⁰ Throughout this paper I will refer to the sophist and to Protagoras interchangeably. They both are meant to represent the same person; that being the man that Socrates is having this interchange with

⁷¹ Devereux (1975), 'Protagoras on courage and knowledge: Protagoras 351 A-B', *Apeiron* 9 (1975), 37-9.

⁷² Vlastos (1956), xxxiv.

them courageous. This is why Protagoras objected to the wrong thing because he misunderstood what Socrates was actually saying. If Protagoras had objected to the earlier stated fallacious premise⁷³ on the grounds that Socrates had no basis for claiming it he would have been fine. However, he didn't base his objection on this basis which makes his refutation baseless and derived from a misunderstanding of Socrates' logic.⁷⁴

The words used in this confrontation matter, and the previous depiction of the misunderstanding of certain words and what they mean in conjunction with one another is a perfect representation of why that is. Throughout the translation of *Protagoras* by C.C.W. Taylor, the word daring is used during this discussion. However, in Vlastos' analysis of the discussion he uses a different word amongst this confrontation. He uses the word "confidence" rather than "daring". Initially, this may seem trivial, but its translation as such is of utmost importance. This is because before the argument ever starts between Socrates and Protagoras about whether courage is like all other virtues or if it is different, Socrates refers to Protagoras as having self-confidence. This means to me that the word used as daring in the Taylor translation and confidence in the Vlastos translation follows directly after Socrates appears to be sarcastically speaking of Protagoras and his profession using that same word and characterization. (348d-349a) The appearance of this word is not coincidental.

Precisely before the argument ever started about courage, Socrates has already depicted the very nature of the person that Protagoras will be arguing for because it is his nature.⁷⁵ (348d-349a) It is only natural for Protagoras to want to argue in defense of his nature and profession.⁷⁶ Plato from the very beginning of this conversation has put Protagoras in the crosshairs of Socrates and shown to the viewer that Protagoras never even realized the trap that he fell into.

This nature that I am describing is best characterized in the words of Protagoras himself at line 350b, where he asserts that those who act daringly while being ignorant are mad. Remember that the word daring can also be translated as confident. Furthermore, as well as calling Protagoras self-confident, Socrates also states to Protagoras that "whereas others make a secret of this profession, you give yourself the name of sophist and proclaim yourself openly to the whole of Greece as a teacher of culture and excellence."⁷⁷ (349a) All of this reads as a sarcastic or ironic critique of Protagoras' way of life. Not only do I believe that this is based on a straight reading of this quote but also because immediately following this statement by Socrates, the two get into an

⁷³Vlastos (1956), xxxiv.

⁷⁴Vlastos also in his introductory analysis makes clear the importance of translation around this confrontation because it could result in a misunderstanding of what Socrates was actually arguing. Even with the ability to hear what Socrates was actually saying, Protagoras still came to the wrong conclusion about what Socrates meant. Vlastos (1956), xxxiv.

⁷⁵ That is its Protagoras nature not Socrates.

⁷⁶ This may even be a subconscious desire that Protagoras is not completely aware of.

⁷⁷ Please excuse the long quotation but I felt it contingent upon my entire argument to insert it fully into my paper to provide the proper amount of context straight from the mouth of Socrates.

argument over the nature of courage, and whether it can stand as a virtue wherein it exists alongside the presence of ignorance within an individual. (349d6-8) The two are on a much larger scale arguing over whether Protagoras is acting virtuously through his courage to lead the life he does or whether he is being non-virtuous through action characterized by self-confidence or daring. It is precisely this contention that has been ever present from the start and forces the reader to analyze both speakers' lives. This is the exact analysis that Socrates is also concerned with at the very start of the Protagoras because he is worried that the young Hippocrates through his association with Protagoras will have his very soul poisoned. (313e-314a) This is precisely why Plato chooses to put this argument into this passage to begin with.

Devereux, however, in his analysis of the contest asserted that Protagoras possessed the upper hand.⁷⁸ He believes this because he sees Protagoras claim that courage and skill are dissimilar and do not follow from one another in the same way that daring and skill do, as stronger than Socrates' claim.⁷⁹ This, however, to me, seems to be just restating the argument without changing anything or solving anything. Nor does this analysis seem to provide Protagoras with the high ground as Devereux seems to assert. This argument still seems as Vlastos points out to be in favor of Socrates due to his standing of already established premises which logically leads to the assertion that all the courageous are knowledgeable.⁸⁰ Furthermore, Protagoras' way of life being sarcastically remarked about by Plato as a way of positioning the debate on how he wants it to be viewed by the reader, does not seem to provide him with any upper hand.

One objection that may arise to my conclusion could be that Socrates never clearly shows the reader why he still shouldn't live in such a way as Protagoras does. He clearly establishes the necessity of figuring out what's going on with Protagoras' teaching, but he doesn't in turn then establish that such teaching or way of life is detestable or wrong. Clearly, he does think that the answer to such a question is important because he talks about its gravity with young Hippocrates at the beginning of the story. (313e-314a) I think that such an objection misses how Protagoras ended up being wrong when it came to making the objection that he made. If not for the sarcasm or irony alluded to by Socrates at least the understanding that Protagoras rushed into make an objection that he didn't have enough understanding to make should help decide that question. Why then should someone follow or agree with another person whom you know rushes into debates that they don't fully understand? Would you continue with an argument or examination of something in front of a crowd no less if you didn't fully understand what was going on? Surely this is bound to only result in wrong answers and humiliation. This is why it is so critical to undertake this analysis and be honest about the results of such an analysis so that these situations don't happen to you.

⁷⁸ Devereux (1975), 39.

⁷⁹ Devereux (1975), 38-39.

⁸⁰ Vlastos (1956), xxxv.

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Interview with Dr. Richard Fumerton

BRIANNA DAVENPORT

Brianna:

What has been your favorite part about teaching students at the University of Iowa

Dr. Richard Fumerton:

There's a whole lot of things. I mean, first of all, you always learn. It's a cliché, professors say it all the time that you learn from teaching that teaching, and research are very closely connected. But I believe that all my life, and I think I learn more from undergraduates, I hope graduate students won't take offense. That is because undergraduates, well, once they feel comfortable talking, they will say exactly what is on their mind, and with the questions they're willing to ask, they will often get you to realize that you, me, I, don't really have that firm a grasp on what I am trying to teach them.

They won't let you get away with reliance on technical expressions. They will say, "Well, what does that mean?" and I will go, "Well, this means this," and what I say involves another technical expression, so they'll say, "Well, what does that mean?" And you get to a point where I am not sure what I mean, and it is good for me to have to find ways to explain it, clearly, in ways that my mom and dad if they were still alive, or my friend who isn't in philosophy, could understand. So that, and, you know, not all students are excited about being at university, but some are, and that excitement is contagious, and I genuinely just love the back and forth of philosophical discussion. I have loved it all my life, that is why I went into philosophy.

Brianna:

You mentioned that it is an undergraduate student tendency to be more blunt and ask those questions, how do you think graduate students could be better?

Dr. Richard Fumerton:

I think it is important for graduate students not to find themselves relying on technical expressions, the terms of art, in a given field. Every field has them, right, and they're a way you can sound like you know what you're talking about. But it is important, I think, for them, when they're talking to students or when they're just thinking about their own writings, to question themselves and make sure they really understand exactly what they are saying with these expressions. That they are not, in some sense, hiding behind them and just trying to sound really smart because, you know, nobody else knows what you're talking about. And if nobody else knows what you mean, you might not

know either. You just have to make sure that you know what you're talking about and that you can explain it to somebody who isn't already familiar with these technical expressions in philosophy.

Another way of thinking about it, is that there is a kind of innocence, philosophical innocence, to people who have never taken philosophy courses before. They can ask, sometimes, undergraduate students, really off-the-wall questions. It is kind of fun. Sometimes I won't know what they're asking, and I will ask if they can find a different way of asking the question. Then they try, and maybe I still am not sure I get it, I try to be encouraging, and then another kid in the class will say, "Well, they are asking this." Then I think about it, and then, yeah, I get that, and I can see how the words they were using were a way of asking the question. But it was a way of asking the question I had never considered before, and it is really good for me to think about something in a way I haven't thought about before. That is what I mean what I say you just keep learning.

I have done it for a long, long, long time, and most questions I have heard, but every year I teach a class, somebody asks something which will cause me to think in a little bit of a different way.

Brianna:

Someone can always spark your brain a little bit.

Dr. Richard Fumerton:

Exactly, and it doesn't have to be, you know, every question doesn't have to be really, really good and groundbreaking. It could be just a little part of the question that starts you thinking in a slightly different way than you have been thinking before. And then, all of a sudden, from that little seed, a nice little plant grows, and you're thinking about all sorts of stuff and new ideas.

Brianna:

It adds to your philosophy garden!

Dr. Richard Fumerton:

It does! I like that very much.

Brianna:

What do you think is the biggest misconception students have about philosophy when they first take an introductory course?

Dr. Richard Fumerton:

There are some courses, in any college, that have a reputation for being BS courses, you know, you can just go in and wax poetics, say something that sounds deep, and you will do well. Some students think philosophy is like that, and they are shocked that it is a subject that requires you to

be very, very precise, that puts a premium on being very clear, and it is very rigorous when it comes to evaluating arguments or constructing their own arguments.

The skills you learn in philosophy are transferable to anything you do in life because no matter where you end up, you will find yourself needing to articulate your position, whether it is a policy you want your business to adopt. When you do that, you will need to anticipate objections, that others might raise. You will need to figure out how you can effectively respond to those objections and will often be in discussion the kind of give and take you get in a philosophy class.

A good philosophy student, this is really easy for them, and it gives them a huge advantage, especially for law school. I mean, there is that almost caricature of the law professor, kind of in your face, trying to intimidate you with their aggressive questions. If you're a philosophy major, you go, "Come on, you wanna argue? Come on, let's go, put 'em up – I'm ready to go!" And it is so, so important, it is invaluable.

My kids are both lawyers, and I find that when I am talking to them about their cases, I am not a lawyer and I'm not trained as a lawyer, but we can have good discussions about the arguments they are planning to use. I like to think I can make useful suggestions about how they might respond to a counterargument, and I think that is what philosophy makes you good at in a whole bunch of fields, but especially law.

Brianna:

Who are some of your favorite philosophers to read?

Dr. Richard Fumerton:

Growing up, like when I was a 20-year-old kid, my favorite philosophers were Berkeley and Hume, George Berkeley and David Hume. As I get older, I think I have appreciated Berkeley even more than Hume, they're both, I think, really smart people, but Berkeley has a way of arguing that is really accessible. You can use Berkeley in an intro to Philosophy class, but you can also use him in a seminar in Philosophy.

Of contemporary philosophers, a lot of them are philosophers that I don't agree with much at all. One of them just died, Alvin Goldman in epistemology, and he was a very original thinker. He changed the way a lot of people think about epistemology. I think they are thinking about it incorrectly now as a result of what he did, but he was very clear, very persuasive, and fun to read.

Saul Kripke just died too, another philosopher who revolutionized, a field especially within philosophy of language and to a certain extent, philosophy of mind.

Then there are a whole bunch of others, some of them are former students, some of them are people I have met at conferences. They might not be big names in philosophy, but I know from past experiences that they have good ideas. As I mentioned a moment ago, I really put a premium on

clarity. There are some philosophers I get the feeling that they are not trying hard to be clear, and that kind of drives me nuts. I think sometimes some philosophers are trying to sound profound, and they think the way to sound profound is to be really obscure, oh this is deep and nobody can understand it. It just drives me nuts, and I just feel like screaming at them, you can say that more clearly, just try.

So, I mentioned Berkeley and Hume, they strike me as people who were trying very hard to be clear, especially Berkeley. They would come out with what some people think are outrageous views, but they would lead you to those views through very rigorous arguments, and that is what makes it so fun. You don't like where they are going, but you don't know how to get off the train once they start.

Brianna:

You have taught and written across epistemology, metaphysics, philosophy of mind, ethics, and political philosophy. Lots of philosophy! How have you seen the field of philosophy grow or change during your time at the University of Iowa?

Dr. Richard Fumerton:

Philosophical ideas can sometimes be like clothing fashions, they come and they go. A view could be hot for a short while, in the whole scheme of things, might be 10-20 years, and then it fades, and then an older view that was dismissed for a while starts making a comeback.

In the field of ethics, there is much more today applied ethics than theoretical ethics. Back in the day, way back, in the day early 20th century, for example, there was a whole school of philosophy that thought ethics begins with what is called metaethics, questions about the subject matter of ethical judgements. What does it mean to say that something is good or bad, or right or wrong, or whether one should or shouldn't do something? And for them, that's where it ended too.

Once you get clear about all that stuff, your philosophical job was done.

Why? Why wouldn't you be interested in ethical questions that people have to decide in order to live their lives? Well, some of those philosophers thought well those questions involve expertise on empirical matters, factual questions, often scientific questions, and they thought that as philosophers they don't have that expertise. What they could contribute was a framework within which the debate could take place and then left it for other people to figure out the factual questions you would need answers to in order to make an ethical judgement.

Illustrating it very simply, there is a view I am sympathetic to, that to figure out what you ought to do in life, the right thing is you always have to figure out consequences, the alternatives open to you. That is at least part of what you have to do.

But I am a philosopher. What do I know about the practical world? Do I really know much of anything about economic policy? I am not even sure economists know very much, since they disagree so much about what the effects of a given policy would be. There are a lot of fields where it is just really, really hard to figure out the answers to the questions, to questions like: What is going to happen if you do this, as opposed to this, as opposed to this? But those are the questions, I think, at the very least, you need an answer to in order to figure out, in a given field, what you ought to do.

You can make it all conditional. You can, as a philosopher, say, “Well, I don’t know what would happen, but if this would happen, then this would be the right thing to do, and then if this other thing happened then this other thing would be the right thing to do.”

But then there is someone impatiently saying, “Okay, yea, yea, but what should I do? Can you tell me how to live my life?”

In the old days, more philosophers would say, “No, I can’t tell you that, and it’s not my job.” Now though, there are a lot of people who do very, very applied ethics. There are a lot of philosophers in other fields too who think that there isn’t a sharp division between philosophy and the empirical sciences, and who think that maybe it’s more like a partnership between different fields that would be required to get answers to some of the traditional philosophical questions, like, What are you? What is a mind? What is its relationship with the body?

I think a lot of philosophers today would say that you can’t find those answers just sitting around in your chair, you know, you should partner with cognitive scientists or neurologists. Old school philosophers, I think thought they didn’t have to do that and they could just figure it out by thinking really hard about information that everybody has. That is definitely one of the major shifts in the field.

It might not be, if you take a big, big picture. If you go back far enough, somebody might point out, well that is the way it was. I mean, it wasn’t as if in the ancient world or even in the 17th and 18th century, there were philosophers – they did philosophy, mathematicians – they did math, geometers – they did geometry, historians – they did history.

One of my favorite philosophers, David Hume, he wrote what was for a very long time the most popular history of England. He was a real wonder kid, he wrote his first philosophy book when he was a very young man, he was very young when he wrote the second one, he wrote on a whole bunch of different fields. As I said, he wrote the history of England. I haven’t read the whole thing, but it is supposed to be very fun to read because it is a very gossipy history of England. He would be talking about who was having affairs with whom, and he would have very definite opinions about who killed the princes in the tower, he knew who it was. But it was all based on gossip, not like a history book would be written today with a ton of references. But that, in a way, is more fun to read, you know it’s fun to hear gossip.

Anyway, that is a broad sketch of how I think the field is quite a bit different. The conception of philosophy is changing among many people. There are holdouts, there are still old school, but now the newer school seems more inclined to think of philosophy as ideally partnering with other fields.

In academics there was a trend, I think it might be dying off, but maybe not, to move toward interdisciplinary work. I was always worried about it because it is good when you can work together, one person from one field and another from a different field. But they better both be really good in their own field. I don't want a jack of all trades, master of none kind of approach, because that does not help anyone.

Brianna:

Earlier in your education, either as an undergrad at the University of Toronto or later in graduate school at Brown University, was there a piece of advice or criticism that actually changed the way you approached philosophy?

Dr. Richard Fumerton:

The answer is no.

I am very independent. I love my philosophy teachers, but I don't think they influenced very much in terms of my philosophical views. They probably did influence how I did philosophy, but not through advice so much as, you know, taking a bunch of classes. Some of them I loved, and some I did not love so much. Certainly, I would think about the differences, why I did like the one class and why I didn't like the other.

When it comes to teaching, for example, I tried to emulate the style of teaching that I liked, as opposed to the styles, the kind I thought was more dry or too boring.

So, it is more of that. It was not that someone ever sat me down and said, you know, why don't you approach philosophy THIS way, and I don't remember anyone ever giving me advice like that, and if they did, I didn't take it.

The most common advice, I got in a very subtle way, was from my parents. I mean, they didn't try to steer me in any particular direction. They basically told me to trust my instincts, so that if I was enjoying something, then that is the direction I should go. I didn't worry much about the practical consequences of studying philosophy, as an undergraduate or a graduate student.

The nice thing about being a graduate student in fields like philosophy is you don't get as much debt because you get a TAship or some other kind of support. I was lucky, I had a couple of very nice fellowships in addition to TAships, so I just had a great time. As an undergrad, I had a great time. As a graduate student, I didn't feel like it was hard work, I would work when I really had to work, but I also had time to play tennis and hockey and have fun with friends.

You have enormous flexibility as an academic, you can work really hard when you need to, work late at night, work all day on really rainy days. But when it is a beautiful day and I want to go outside and do something, I can usually arrange my schedule (don't tell the deans I said this) so I can do that. I could almost always pick my kids up after elementary school. That is really nice, to be sitting there as your kids get out of school and be able to walk home with them.

That is what I did. I ended up as a philosopher because I took philosophy courses, loved them, took more philosophy courses, loved them. So, the most obvious thing was to go to graduate school, so I did. I loved my graduate school, made great friends there, and had a great time. I came to Iowa. It has been like I never had to work a day in my life, just a wonderful, wonderful job. A wonderful university. It has been good to me, the philosophy department, it is a great place to work. Iowa City is a great place, especially to raise a family.

Brianna:

Do what you love most of the time, and it will never feel like work.

Dr. Richard Fumerton:

Yes. Now you know I have had bad summer jobs over the years as an undergraduate. I know that there are people who aren't nearly as lucky as I am. It is good to get those kinds of jobs every so often because it makes you more empathetic for one thing. It probably made me work a little harder at academics because I realized I didn't want to work construction the rest of my life. I didn't want to work in a limestone quarry or in a United Cigar store. I did not like them. I mean they were bad. I kept telling myself I can get through this, I can get through this, like the little engine that could.

Brianna:

What role do you think philosophy should play in public life today, whether that be in politics, technology, or in education more broadly?

Dr. Richard Fumerton:

This is coming from someone who is obviously biased, I think philosophy is really important, and it should. I will put it in terms of philosophical skills, as I suggested earlier in our conversation, because I think these are the abilities you get in philosophy: if you are a good philosopher – there are bad philosophers, and you can get taught by bad philosophers. But if you become a good philosopher, you are good at being very, very clear, at making sure that questions are unambiguous, or, if they are ambiguous, at disambiguating them in various ways.

You learn to think carefully about alternatives and make sure you're not overlooking options when you are figuring out what to do, what position to take. Maybe most important of all, you learn how to argue for a position. What is a bad argument, what is a good argument, and what you need to do to be in a position to be sure that the premises of that argument are correct.

I think anybody that is good at doing that stuff will be way better at politics, since many politicians are not great at arguing for positions – they're often not good at thinking of all the alternatives or anticipating all of the problems a position might face.

I also think this is true of business, certainly of law, I can't think of a field, to be honest with you, where you wouldn't do better because you had a good philosophical background. I stress good training. There are bad philosophers, you can have bad philosophy classes, and those are not going to give you much of anything, but if you get taught well by good philosophers, I think you have a huge advantage over other people, no matter what you do in life.

There are articles appearing more frequently from people in business who reflect on their philosophical background as undergraduates and talk about how valuable it was to them, despite not being in a field that in any obvious way involved philosophical questions they were trying to answer as undergraduates. But they write that they will never forget those philosophical studies, and they use them all the time.

There are businesses, I think, that are starting to think that maybe they should be hiring from fields such as philosophy and not so much business school, the thought being that you can teach somebody my business, that part is teachable. What is harder to teach is those skills we just talked about. It is hard to teach someone to reason well, to present a report clearly, to be able to answer a question clearly and effectively and in a way that people find plausible.

I think that philosophy is by far, and ethics and public policy, those are the two fields that I think are by far the most effective backgrounds for law school. It is still the case that more kids take political science as a background for law school. But my advice to anyone is to take a lot of philosophy courses, including logic, if you want to do well in law school.

The LSATs are weighed heavily by a lot of law schools. You have to practice them because of the time constraints, and you must get to a position where you can answer the questions fairly quickly. But the kinds of skills you learn in a course like Principles of Reasoning or Symbolic Logic will help you enormously in answering those questions on the LSAT.

Most of the questions are written by Ph.D.'s in philosophy, and I know many people who worked for LSAT development. For a while, I was an outside advisor, and my job was to look at the logical puzzle part of the test and make sure there was a correct answer. They have a pattern, and if you get good at philosophy, you will get good at recognizing that pattern. You will be able to answer those questions much more quickly and much more effectively than many other people without those backgrounds.

Brianna:

How would you like your students and colleagues to remember your contributions to philosophy at Iowa?

Dr. Richard Fumerton:

I would love it if they would remember me as somebody who was always trying really hard to be clear. Somebody who was always willing to listen to other sides of an issue. When reading the work of other people in my department, for example, to give them advice, I would like them to think of me as somebody who was good at getting outside my way of thinking about things to get inside theirs, so I could see things from their perspective, and give them advice so that it would make sense from their perspective.

That is how I would like to be remembered.

Film Review: *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*

ALIKA CHO

A few weeks ago, the University of Iowa's Philosophy Club enjoyed a screening of the movie *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*, directed by Michel Gondry. The general premise revolves around the relationship, or lack thereof, of Clementine Kruczynski and Joel Barish. Following a painful breakup between the two characters, Clementine undergoes a memory procedure to forget Joel, their relationship, and who she was with Joel. After being informed of the procedure being done on Clementine, Joel impulsively decides to erase his memory as well. The film explores the interconnection of romantic relationships, mistakes, and the grievances of loss.

Prior to the University of Iowa's Philosophy Club's screening of *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*, we were introduced to the concept of the innate link between personal identity and memory by Dr. Katarina Perovic, associate professor and director of graduate studies at the University of Iowa. She asked us the question: "What part of your identity matters?" While Dr. Perovic discussed the importance and differences between long-term and short-term memory, I found that her crash course on the continuity of memory translated well into the nature of human relations.

Dr. Perovic describes episodic memory as the human brain's ability to store memories of events and narrative knowledge of the past. This aids in our ability to interpret the who, what, and where of our memories. I found the concept of episodic memory to be an integral concept of *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*, which was shown a week after Dr. Perovic's visit. Episodic memory permits us to recover from our past mistakes, mature our minds, and correct our behavior. This is arguably the most powerful primitive trait we as humans possess—it is an ability that lies intrinsically within our instinctive lizard brains.

However, when we apply this knowledge to the film, we see an action that goes against this primitive trait. At the end of the film (spoiler alert!), we see both Clementine and Joel rekindling their spark despite the loss of their memory, as oddly timed circumstances cause them to meet again. However, they are incidentally informed of their past (the failure of their relationship and the fatal memory erasure). Despite recognizing the flaws in their pasts and the dangers of rekindling their relationship, the two conclude the film by disregarding their troubled past, deciding to give each other a second chance. They directly negate their primitive ability to learn from former mistakes.

While this is merely one account of "one-upping" an innate human trait, I decided to explore the power of human relationships. I interviewed a friend (M), who had messily concluded a relationship a few days ago. He stated that his former partner (O) had gone to a party and supposedly spent the night with another man. This led me to ask him the question:

A: What would you do if you and O were in the same position as Clementine and Joel? What if both of you had lost your memory, reconvened, and were informed of your flawed pasts? Would you want to continue a relationship with her anyway?

M: If we both lost our memories and were in a similar situation to them...I think we'd come to a consensus very similar to the two main characters in the movie. If we both found out what happened between us in the past and [I] had a bird's eye view of her issues and problems, we would most likely acknowledge it and talk about it and still be friends because neither of us had any idea this even happened. It'd be like an alternate reality that didn't exist at all, almost. We'd both know what we would need to do to build trust in one another and work through her issues. We'd still take it slow probably and I'd still wait for her, but it may even be beneficial to have that knowledge. It allows me to accept her flaws in a more pure and untainted way.

My friend's experience and thoughts with O is yet again another account on how powerful human connection can be. Contextualizing human beings within a civilized society exposes its flaws. However, these flaws are not always a bad thing. While we will always possess the so-called "lizard brain" passed down to us from our ancestors, our desires for human relationships and human connection trump all. *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* ascertains that human beings are willing to contest our primitive, ancestral traits due to a sense of desperate longing, a need for someone we desire. I find this occurrence to be the definition of humanity: a peculiar beauty.

Film Recommendations

**WATCH, QUESTION, & DISCUSS – JOIN PHILOSOPHY CLUB’S
WEEKLY FILM SCREENINGS!**

A Short Film About Killing (1988)

Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind (2004)

Frankenstein (2025)

Memento (2000)

Possum (2018)

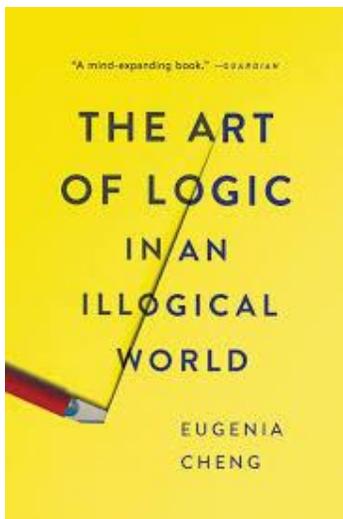
The Truman Show (1998)

The Substance (2024)

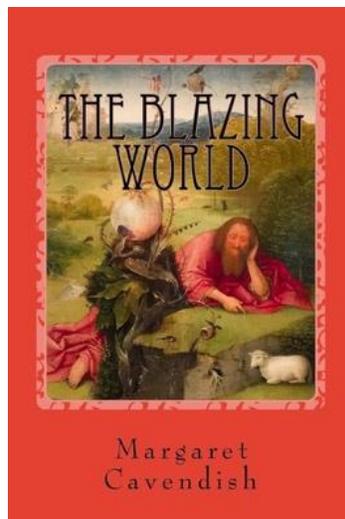
Book Recommendations

**“HOW MANY A MAN HAS DATED A NEW ERA OF HIS LIFE FROM THE
READING OF A BOOK”**

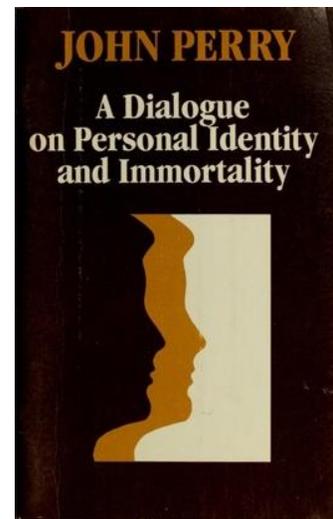
- HENRY DAVID THOREAU WALDEN



The Art of Logic in an
Illogical World
Eugenia Cheng



The Blazing World
Margaret Cavendish



A Dialogue on Personal
Identity and Immortality
John Perry

Get to Know the Editors



Brianna Davenport was the Head Editor for this edition of *Labyrinth*. She is a senior at the University of Iowa majoring in Ethics and Public Policy with a specialization in Political Science, a Philosophy minor, and a certificate in Entrepreneurial Management. Her interests include natural philosophy, affordable housing, and the intersection of ethics and data-driven policymaking. Following her graduation in Spring 2026, she plans to return home to Minneapolis to work for a couple years before attending law school in the future.



Jessica Ilogho Storm was an Editor for this edition of *Labyrinth*. She is a junior at the University of Iowa, double majoring in Psychology and Sociology with a family and health services track. Her interests include child psychopathology, social cognition, poverty and wealth disparities, and the intersectionality of race, class, and gender for women of color. Upon graduation in the Fall of 2027, Jessica intends to pursue a graduate degree in Sociology.



Alika Cho was an Editor for this edition of *Labyrinth*. She is a freshman at the University of Iowa majoring in Ethics and Public Policy as well as Criminology, Law, and Justice on the Pre-Law track. Her interests fall in the inner workings of humanity and how it can be applied to the federal law system; she is extremely excited to continue her studies in these areas. Alika dreams of attending law school following the completion of her undergraduate degree with the intention of becoming a criminal defense attorney.



Samantha Burds was an Editor for this edition of *Labyrinth*. She is a junior at the University of Iowa majoring in English and minoring in Art. She is interested in the ethical discussions found in literature and the ability for stories to catalyze perspectives and change minds. Although unsure what direction her career will lead, Samantha plans on continuing to enjoy and share stories with the world.