

15p

FOR  
REFERENCE ONLY

INCLUDES -

ROGER SCRUTON & NEW CONSERVATIVE PHILOSOPHY.

BERNARD WILLIAMS - AN INTERVIEW.

CAN PHILOSOPHERS ENLIGHTEN PHYSICISTS?

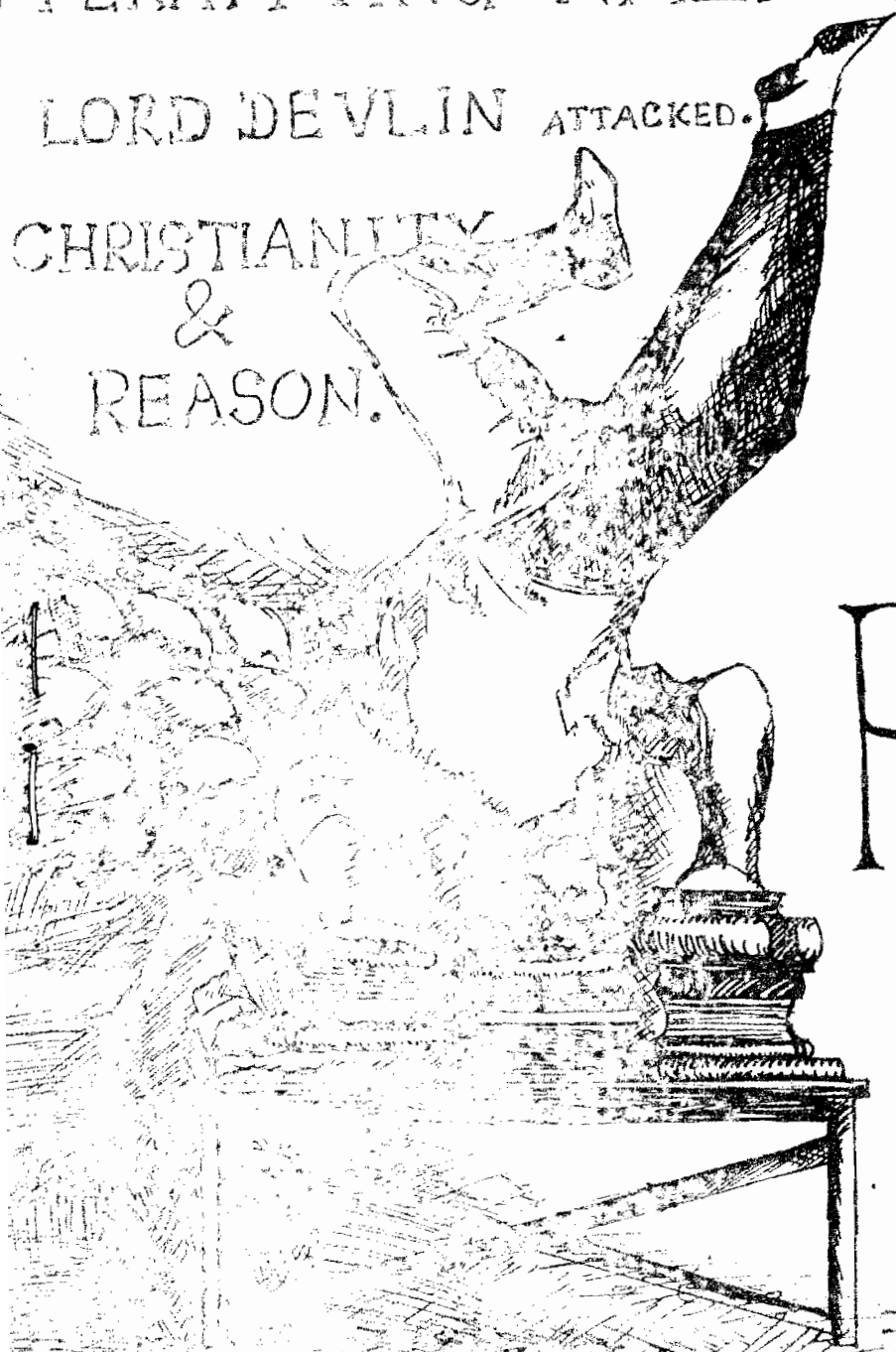
PERMITTING NAZI LAW? -

LORD DEVLIN ATTACKED.

CHRISTIANITY  
&  
REASON.

PvP

GAMBRIDGE  
STUDENT  
PHILOSOPHY.  
ISSUE 4.



PV-P: THE CAMBRIDGE STUDENT PHILOSOPHY MAGAZINE.  
\*\*\*\*\*

EASTER TERM 1983.ISSUE 4.  
\*\*\*\*\*

Philosophy is not "relevant"; ethics is not conduct studies nor logic a course in argument methods. Philosophers don't set out to give answers straight away to social, political or psychological problems-but if non-philosophers, at any rate among students, are to treat the subject with any respect, or indeed take any notice of it at all, one must show that philosophers do concern themselves with issues of current interest and significance. We hope that the articles on politics, law and Christianity, in particular, will be of interest to readers outside the faculty. The first three pieces reveal differing attitudes towards questions of government and collective morality. Bernard Williams argues that a society should adopt a moral code based on what is the "good life for man" in that society and thus that morality is determined by historical and cultural context as well as by general truths about human nature. The author of the attack on Lord Devlin, on the other hand, is arguing from belief in absolute moral laws. Professor Williams would not maintain that the Nazi law forbidding inter-marriage was justified, because clearly it is not conducive to the good life. But how would he counter someone who wanted to include a society based on belief in racial superiority among the "innocent and irreproachable" communities to which he refers? Roger Scruton would see the irreducible cultural differences between ethnic groups as grounds for immigration controls at least, if not further discriminatory treatment. Perhaps the standard liberal arguments against this are not as powerful as they initially seem. We hope the general reader will find these issues thought-provoking, and that he will also look at the other, more technical articles and so find out how philosophy as a whole conducts its enquiries.

Antonia Feuchtwanger.

CONTENTS  
\*\*\*\*\*

Page 3	Bernard Williams- an interview.	P.E.Griffiths and Antonia Feuchtwanger.
4	Devlin's "Morals and the Criminal Law".	J.D.Weinstein.
6	Roger Scruton and the New Conservative Philosophers.	Jennifer Clarkson.
9	Half-truths.	Richard Davies.
II	Philosophy and Christianity.	Paul Martin.
I3	Prejudices, Preconceptions and Philosophers.	M.A.Hannam.
I4	Defining Good.	Roger Teichmann.
I8	Love, or, "Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Bonking".	P.E.Griffiths.
2I	Going on about being able.	Richard Davies.
23	Wittgenstein's Parable of Ethics and Aesthetics.	M.Stone-Richards.
26	In the dark about light-can philosophers help physicists?	Piers Bertlin.

\*\*\*\*\*

PV-P thanks Richard Davies, Linda Rattray and Adrian Leslie for their help with the typing, Declan O'Dempsey for the use of his type-writer, Monica Whitlock for designing the posters and cover, and Mrs Morris, Paul Griffiths and the Modern and Medieval Languages Faculty for their advice and assistance with production.

\*\*\*\*\*

BERNARD WILLIAMS' ARISTOTELIAN ETHICS.

From an interview by P. E. Griffiths and A. M. Feuchtwanger.

Williams takes the subject matter of ethics to be an area of human life which he calls 'the ethical'. Williams doesn't attempt to give a strict definition of the ethical, above the remark that it always concerns some altruistic dispositions. If we want to know what the ethical side of human life involves, we will have to look at human societies. Williams prefers 'ethical' to 'moral' because 'moral' has acquired Kantian overtones.

There are two completely different approaches to the task of determining the content of the ethical. When trying to discover what is moral, some men have tried to deduce the content of morality from the forms of ethical language, from the nature of rationality, or from some definition of the sphere of the ethical. The most recent example of such a rationalistic project is found in R. M. Hare. Hare tries to deduce a substantial specification of the good life from the universal imperative form of moral commands, together with some empirical information. Williams thinks all such projects have failed, and that they are impossible. The second approach to the problem is the aristotelian one. The aristotelian project is to use all sorts of general considerations about human nature to determine what will be the good life for man. The distinction between the rationalistic and aristotelian approaches is not that between analytic and synthetic reasoning. Williams doesn't think this dichotomy is profitable here, and believes that all and any kinds of facts may be used by the aristotelian. Williams thinks it possible that an aristotelian argument might show that there is only one good life for man. He thinks, however, that no such argument has yet been produced. Aristotelians have only succeeded in ruling out certain kinds of life, not in specifying the best. He recalls Renford Bamborough's idea that the good life may be a disjunctive concept (either Socrates or a Pericles or a lotus-eater). But how long can such a disjunction be before it ceases to be an answer? Williams thinks it is a fairly long disjunction. The aristotelian approach that relies only on general facts about human nature underdetermines the good life. But there are other considerations that are relevant.

These are mainly considerations of historical context. The good life must be chosen from among alternatives suited to our time and place. Ways of life that were once healthy can be absurd or positively pernicious in the present day. Trying to be a medieval teutonic knight in 1936 was evil, and trying to be a tribe of warriors in a modern American city is both evil and absurd. For reasons like this, Williams believes conservatism to be universally mistaken. Most forms of conservatism are based on a false and idealised view of the past, but even if they were not, the past cannot be retrieved. Although Williams doesn't think history moves with any aim, he thinks that it only moves one way. This irreversibility is partly a matter of knowledge. There could once, for example have been "innocent and irreproachable" societies which assigned radically different roles to the sexes. In our present state of knowledge, however, it would be wrong to try and return to such a system. Williams is something of a cultural relativist, and will admit no single moral ideal would only occur under the rationalist conception of ethics which he rejects. For Williams, the choice of a moral life depends largely on our society and historical context.

Williams' commitment to ethical transparency springs from these ideas about historical context. He maintains that the workings of a system should be transparent to those who use it. We cannot know we ought to do something unless we know why we ought to do it. This prescription has been thought to conflict with Williams' other views, and to be part of the rationalist conception of ethics. But Williams only makes his prescription for the present day. We have exploded all the old mythical foundations of ethics, and opened up a Pandora's box of self-awareness. It is impossible to tell ourselves to forget what we know, and any attempt to return to a state of

innocence will be horribly distorted. Williams uses the word 'innocent' to describe social arrangements based on myths like divine law or feminine inferiority. But despite this rhetorical flourish, he does not see their passing as a matter for regret. Above all, he does not think we should try to return to our old state. Ignorance is innocent, but self-deceit is not. Transparency is now a universal condition for systems of ethics, but its force is not that of logic, only of history.

Williams' position has implications for the twentieth century question of the nature of moral argument. He thinks Wittgenstein's notion of a form of life is useful, though rather abstract. Much moral argument is relative to a shared way of life, and can be simply incomprehensible to someone who has never lived in that way. Williams also rejects the idea that there is a sharp line between argument and **persuasion**. Hare thinks this parallels the distinction between freedom and coercion, but Williams disagrees. Persuasion is not usually coercion, because it is not one sided. When we try to persuade someone we are as much dependent on their beliefs and feelings as our own. Persuasion, says Williams, is more like seduction than rape. He sees moral argument as 'rational persuasion'. When we say "Just think what it's like to be him", we are appealing to imagination and sympathy, as well as to reason. To respond to moral arguments we need virtuous dispositions as well as intelligence.

Williams is a believer in the value of equality and active social justice. These values have always been favoured by the rationalist approach, because of its commitment to ideas like universability. But the aristotelian approach is notably short of arguments for radical social change. This is a truism about Aristotle himself, but Williams thinks it true of the whole approach. One of Williams' most interesting aims as a moral philosopher is to give an account of the values of radical social justice on an aristotelian model.

Bernard Williams has been Knightbridge Professor of Philosophy, chaired the Royal Commission on pornography, and is Provost of King's.

---

#### MORALS AND THE CRIMINAL LAW.

A comment by Jeremy D. Weinstein, Trinity Hall.

The twentieth century has given us the definitive acid test of jurisprudential theory. This test consists of the application of theory X as it defines law and legal system to Nazi "legality". It is one thing for a theory to look all neat and cosy snuggled between the hard covers of a textbook, it is another thing for the theory to maintain a semblance of reasonable, humanitarian concern for people living under the "law" when its analysis of law is applied to the most monstrous crime of human history. What is the legal status of the Nuremburg Laws? How does one assess the conduct of officials enforcing these laws? How "legal" are the acts of doctors who were acting under laws authorising experiments on humans? What is the position of those who obeyed orders under the "law" to exterminate and/or torture Jews, Communists, Catholics, enemies of the Reich, homosexuals gypsies and Jehovah's Witnesses? Infinitely more questions can and should be asked of the conduct under "law" of citizens and officials in Nazi Germany. A theory of law, legality and legal systems must produce satisfactory answers to these questions if it is to pass the proposed "acid test". At the very

least it must refrain from stating that the more criminal aspects of the Nazi regime are legally proper.

One famous jurisprudential theory about the relationship between morals and the Criminal Law, that propounded by Lord Devlin, fails the acid test. In 1957 the Wolfenden Committee produced its recommendations for reforming some serious inequities in the English Law and, among other things, advised the legalisation of homosexual acts, performed in private, between consenting male adults. (Lesbianism had never been a crime.) Devlin countered with an essay (which has been republished in "The Philosophy of Law", Dworkin ed.) entitled "Morals and the Criminal Law". In it he argued that society has the right to pass judgement on all matters of morals; since a shared morality is as essential to a society as a shared government, society has the right to use the law to enforce that shared morality. A common morality, in Devlin's view is the bond that holds a society together. Society has the right to use the law to maintain this shared morality. "If society has the right to make judgements and has it on the basis that a recognised morality is as necessary to society as...a recognised government, then society may use the law to preserve morality in the same way it uses it to safeguard anything else that is essential to its existence."

Of course, some shared morality is essential to the existence of a society, and is in fact arguably part of the definition of a society. But not everything which incites "intolerance, indignation and disgust" in the man in the street, which is Devlin's criterion for determining what is definitely not part of society's shared morality, is of equal importance to society. This argument is developed by H. L. A. Hart in his "Morality and Treason" (also reprinted in "The Philosophy of Law", Dworkin ed.), to which the reader is referred.

Devlin's procedural definition of morality, the gut-level reaction of the reasonable, but not reasoning, man, clearly creates potential for abuse. How is this shared morality of society to be discovered? Devlin rules out public opinion polls and suggests the jury box. But the judge restricts the jury. So this procedure gives the state much control over the common, shared morality essential for society that is discovered and given legal effect. The greater damage, however, is what occurs to the man in the street before he gets to the jury box. If he is to be encouraged to allow his powers of reasoning to atrophy when considering matters moral, to what extent may his opinion legitimately be shaped by government propaganda? If the government mounted a concerted campaign to breed in the public reactions of "intolerance, indignation and disgust" when confronted with the idea of sexual congress between Gentiles and Jews, how right would it be for a jury to convict a man for such an offence? Procedurally, the state is the only judge of society's <sup>morals</sup> that matters.

The danger and potential for perversion (if that is what it really is) of Devlin's views can be seen by the application of Devlin's own words to an all-too-familiar historical example. He says "it is not possible to set theoretical limits to the power of the state to legislate against morality". Now that the German man-in-the-street was deemed by the legislative authority to think of sexual congress with Jews with "intolerance, indignation and disgust" it became, by Devlin's reasoning, the duty of the state to legislate to illegalise it in order to protect the shared morality which is essential to the existence of the society. On September 15, 1935, "The Blood Protection Act" (Gesetz zum Schutze des Deutschen Blutes und der Deutschen Ehre), commonly known as "The Nuremburg Laws", was passed. This Act prohibited marriage and extra-marital relations "between Jews and nationals of German or allied blood" in the interests of the so-called "survival of the German race". And the provision that no Jew might "employ a female national of German or allied blood under forty-five years of age...in his household" was designed to enforce this. People were convicted by judges

6  
and juries, imprisoned and executed under these laws. The morality of society had been legislated, and was enforced by the state, all in keeping with Lord Devlin's sagacious advice.

Devlin's theory about the role of morality in the law is dangerously deficient when it comes to determining that morality, both in the method and mechanism by which that morality is to be determined, and in those "men on the Clapham omnibus" from whom it is to be determined. Although Devlin might personally find it repugnant, by his analysis, there is nothing wrong with The Nuremburg Laws.

The failure of Devlin's or another's jurisprudential theories to detect the faults of the Nazi system, does not speak for the flawlessness of Nazi legality, but for the impotence of the theories themselves. If a theory can't put evil in its proper place, then that theory is collaborationist.

---

### "NOT FREEDOM, BUT CONGENIAL GOVERNMENT"

#### Roger Scruton and the New Conservative Philosophers.

By Jennifer Clarkson, Birkbeck College, University of London.

The received political wisdom of our time for anyone who considers themselves to be part of the intelligentsia, has been overwhelmingly liberal and left, socialist and libertarian.

So when Roger Scruton (Reader in Philosophy, Birkbeck College, University of London) writes in, amongst other places, a regular column in the Times, that he is anti-feminist; pro-hanging; against social justice; CND and individuality; then outraged fur and feathers are bound to start flying. Particularly if the existence of a Conservative Philosophy Group is "discovered"; and discovered to be attended by real politicians, including Mrs. Thatcher herself! Not only that, but a new magazine of conservative thought, The Salisbury Review, hits the streets with just a bit of a flourish.

"Who thinks for Mrs. Thatcher?" the Times demanded in January; and described "secret battles for the Prime Minister's mind". In March the Guardian published an article on "the new Tory philosophers", thoughtfully entitled "The Unthinkable Men Behind Mrs. Thatcher". Peregrine Worsthorne asked (rhetorically) in the Spectator whether there is another Clivedon set myth in the making; and a journalist in the Guardian, reviewing the first issue of the Salisbury Review, made much of the colour of Dr. Scruton's hair and the shape of his spectacles. Dr. Scruton's voice was heard addressing the nation one Saturday on Radio 4's "Stop the Week".

Contagious journalistic excesses aside, I think that there does seem to be in existence an active group of conservative philosophers, whose most visible member is Dr. Roger Scruton and who are trying to get their views heard, and, presumably adopted.

So, mindful of Voltaire's declaration, I thought that the least we could do is to take a look, not at the colour of the hair, but at the opinions of the young (well, my age, anyway), Dr. Scruton.

These are most accessibly set out in his book "the Meaning of Conservatism"; and neatly and concisely expressed in his "Dictionary of Political Thought".

(Mind you, it's not exactly easy, these days to be seen walking around Cambridge with a book on conservatism. I received such a quantity



of peculiar looks that I was compelled to hide it in my copy of the Guardian.)

Roger Scruton's brand of conservatism is not monetarist, and not laissez-faire. It is not capitalist, nor is it concerned with freedom or individualism. It is not, in fact, very supportive at all to the kind of policies with which the Conservative Party is principally identified today.

It is not, either, in the liberal tradition at all. Roger Scruton goes so far as to say that liberalism is the "principal enemy of conservatism".

Conservatism, he says, has been inarticulate, for it is an attitude rather than a neat set of beliefs; an attitude that it is, on the whole, better to keep and conserve the way things are now, than to initiate radical and untried changes in society.

This attitude rests on a view of man as a primarily social being, who is defined by, and inseparable from, the social arrangements and institutions into which he is born, and in which he lives. "Society is in some sense antecedent to the individuals which compose it, the individual being a social artifact; the product of historical conditions that ally him to customs, values and expectations without which he is seriously damaged or incomplete."

There are two elements here. The first is a kind of evolutionary view of human social institutions; that what we have now is the best and fittest, simply because it has survived. The second is that the social sense, the sense of participation and belonging, which is manifest in our membership of various institutions (eg. clubs, communities, church, army, nation, etc.) is such an integral part of each of us, that to destroy or change the institutions would be, in some sense, to destroy or change our very selves. Society and its members are seen as bound together to form a kind of organism.

Whilst conservatives don't mind change by tinkering with existing institutions, they revere existing institutions. Conservatism rests very much in the present and the past (which are concrete), regarding the future with much less interest, because it doesn't exist. This point is stressed because it is particularly opposed to utopian political schemes which would overthrow the bulk of the present arrangements, in order to substitute unknown and untried (because in the future) ideal systems of government. Conservatism has a deep suspicion of abstract ideals, because they are based on abstractions rather than reality.

Although this attitude might well be defensible as an attitude, it will hardly do as a universal dogma, for there will always be cases of institutions which we clearly see to be bad; and which we are not going to be prepared to accept just because they are in existence.

To counter this often-made objection, Dr. Scruton falls back on "natural justice" to serve as a standard which can override the conservative attitude. And what is natural justice? He says that it is "an instinctive conception of what is just", which cannot be eradicated from human feeling. It governs the dealings of individuals with one another in amity; and he refers to Kant's view of men as ends in themselves. However, Dr. Scruton then remarks that it's a philosophical question, not a political one. In other words, that's all he's prepared to say on it in this book- which is a pity, for it seems pivotal to his case.

Given these attitudes, from where does the state get its authority and the populace its allegiance? What kind of government should there be?

To answer the second question first, Dr. Scruton thinks that there is no ideal form of government or set of social institutions. Different ones can exist in response to different conditions, cultures, traditions- subject, of course, to the judgement of natural justice. One wonders whether the point is being made that as long as the state does (so to speak) right by you, it doesn't matter what kind of structure it has- a dictatorship is fine, as long as you are not oppressed.

The authority of the (good) state and allegiance to it both exist as plain facts about people and society. People just do recognise and



support the authority of the state and feel allegiance to it, for it embodies their aspirations, their culture, their way of life- in short themselves. L'état, c'est nous, perhaps, and thus the conservative respect for traditions and custom, and its patriotism.

The authority of the state and the allegiance it commands are linked to that of the family, which has a transcendental bond not springing from any contractual obligations. The family is seen as an essential part of human life, and the model for the wider social bonds which necessitate political activity.

Although the importance of the diversity and variety of institutions present in society is stressed, the unit that is chosen for the source of all political power is the centralised nation-state; an outmoded institution about which I shall say more later on.

I believe that I have now described, briefly, but I hope not too unfairly, the philosophical underpinnings of Roger Scruton's conservative views, and in so doing covered, of course, the aspects that interest me most.

However, some conservative policies are so notoriously illiberal (and thus commonly held to be wicked) that it will doubtless be of interest to know how some of them are derived from the general conservative attitude.

Firstly racism- or more justly, restricted immigration- can be seen as a desire to preserve the existing culture and traditions.

Capital punishment or hanging is something Roger Scruton seems to be in favour of; he is certainly in favour of punishment as retribution. He says that as the state is conceived of as, loosely, the general will; it must express the general will for revenge and retaliation. This is, I think, just factually false. It is not at all obvious that many, let alone most, people desire revenge. Would you really want to go out and actually kill someone who had killed a member of your family? There are even familiar sayings to bolster this as "Well, it wouldn't bring him back"; though doubtless opposite proverbs could be found.

Feminism is opposed, though he says very little about that part of it which supports women's aspirations outside the family. Instead he refers solely to our sexuality, and says, if I have him right, that by allowing sex outside marriage, women will not have the support they will need should they become pregnant. I suppose that this view is used to support the existing institution of the family. I don't believe, however, that feminism's aspirations are within the family, rather without it- though I hope the two are not mutually exclusive- that it is possible for women to be part of a family, and to fulfil their other aspirations and interests as well. I rather thought that that was the point of the women's movement.

Conservatives are often accused of being pragmatic, of not having principles. Certainly, I think that they may have a lesser number of principles than other political philosophies (but don't forget natural justice), but this may not always be bad. One might, for instance, not need to have a principle against inherited wealth unless there was a great imbalance between rich and poor at a particular time. Oil-rich Kuwait and Borneo do not need to have principles about taxation, for oil revenues provide quite sufficient funds for government at present.

Objections can be made to the account of social and political processes. It can be said that institutions do not invariably evolve naturally but can be thought up a priori by individuals who agitate, often troubling the status quo in the process, to get them accepted.

On the other hand, massive political and social changes can be made gradually- as Britain has become socialist and may become more socialist still; but changes can be made "constitutionally", bit by bit, institution by institution. A revolution may take a little longer than overnight, but a society can be transformed over a period of time.

I am very sympathetic to the account of the nature of man as primarily social; but it is not a new idea, and more than one political

system has been derived from it. His particular analysis of human nature puts me in mind very much of the bases of current European federalist philosophies; which say that as man's self is realised in various institutions, he should have some say in the affairs and conduct of each of those to which he belongs, and political power and use is disseminated through multiple degrees and levels of institution, from local, to regional, to central and international level. Each level would deal with the matters appropriate to its span.

I think that the idea of the nation state as the one repository of social feeling is wrong at one level- it's not local enough to be grasped; and too small at another. It seems to be rapidly being outmoded and outpaced by events- by the rapid growth of international communications facilitating the growth of a global culture; by the growth of weapons facilitating global war; and that of multi-national trade which is uncontrolled and in need of international regulation. But all that is, perhaps, another story.

Suffice it to say, in conclusion, that although the conservative analysis of human nature seems pretty nearly correct, the emphasis on tradition and the past does seem to be heavily stressed; to the point where, despite protestations, the upholding of existing institutions as ends in themselves seems to be recommended.

And the remedy for that is natural justice, and natural justice has not been explained.

---

#### HALF-TRUTHS.

By Richard Davies, Trinity College.

On the "classical" view of logic and its proper objects and constituents, a proposition has determinate truth-conditions and a determinate truth-value. The determinateness of the truth-conditions of the "classical" proposition is a sign that it is unequivocal and not sub-divisible into more atomic propositions. The determinateness of truth-value is established by reference to the finite number of available values. Thus, in "classical" logic, all propositions are either true or false and never both. (There is no such thing as a malformed proposition: there are only sentences which express no proposition.) Equally, in a many-valued (eg. three-valued) logic, the value which is not truth and not falsity is, nevertheless a determinate value. The third value can be given a reading by a finite truth-table.

Yet, it is apparent that such an account does not mirror very closely the presuppositions which seem to be carried by many forms of words in common use in English. For, it is quite everyday to hear expressions like, "quite true", "absolutely false", "very true", "not quite true", "far from true", &c. We may even hear it said that, say, a novel is "a bit true, though obviously false", that some other fiction is "as true as Monetarism, but no more", or, what is tantamount to an assertion of both truth-values, "well, yes and no" in answer to some suggestion (though such cases are normally a prelude to disambiguation).

Now, it appears that we have some sort of clash of logical intuitions, on the one hand, a truth-value is an all-or-nothing matter and, on the other, it can come by degrees. But my initial suspicion is that the features which incline us to qualify the truth-attribution to a statement are not of particular logical significance. This does not

entail that there are not at least two conceptions of truth in common currency. Naturally, it might be argued that whatever does affect the degree of truth assigned to a statement is, *eo ipso*, a proper subject of logical enquiry. And I confess that I have no principled way of denying this.

Nevertheless, the features which I have been able to discern which seem to make us attribute degrees of truth are primarily psychological or circumstantial. Of course, I cannot guarantee that the following list of such features is exhaustive and that no-one could produce a feature which might be properly of a logical nature, nor that everyone will agree that the features I list are not properly logical. However, it is as well to be clear about what I am discounting.

- (i) Verisimilitude or exactitude and relevance.
- (ii) Non-truth-functional (eg.) conjunction of which the majority of conjuncts have one ("classical") value and a minority have the (an) other.
- (iii) What was often thought but never so well expressed.
- (iv) Obviousness or resistance to revision.
- (v) Widespread of agreement.
- (vi) Usefulness in everyday affairs.
- (vii) "Importance" (eg. that there is a God; that men have rights; or that life has a purpose).
- (viii) Tautologousness/necessity/analyticity/ a priori-ness.
- (ix) Centrality in a system of beliefs.
- (x) Needing little supplementation to, eg., "enter into the Absolute".

Now, even if I am correct in saying that non-"classical" accounts of these sorts are not of particular interest to the logician, there remains the question of how to give a reading of attributions of degree-of-truth. And, it seems to me that the most obvious way of doing this is by noting first that it is absurd to assert a sentence of the form "p, but I don't believe that p". The absurdity is a consequence of the fact that an assertion that p commits the utterer to the belief that p. Belief that p is, at least, taking p to be true. So asserting that p carries with it readiness to assert that p is true. It follows from this aspect of assertion that to assert "p" is materially equivalent to asserting, "it is true that p".

A similar process can be applied to attributions of degree-of-truth. A man who asserts that it is very true that p can be taken to be asserting that p is certain- that he has a strong belief that p. In this sense, the certainty ascribed to p is not a property of the proposition but of the attitude of the speaker to p. Thus, to use the adjective "true" of a proposition is to state one's readiness to assert it. And to use the phrase "very true" is to state that one is very ready or that one's "pro-attitude" is strong.

If it is valid, this argument has wide-ranging implications. Copy/correspondence, causal and semantic theories of truth clearly cannot assimilate this recalcitrant usage. A coherence theory which abandoned "classical" bivalence could cope by reading degrees of truth as degrees of nearness to the axes of a belief system (see vi, ix and x above). Note, however, that modern forms of coherence theory are much attached to "classical" bivalence. But a redundancy theory can not only deal with the matter (since the reading I give to degree-of-truth presupposes some features of such a theory), but even argue that "classical" bivalence may as well be abandoned. The trouble is that such theories blur the line between a knowledge-claim and an assertion of belief.

This, then, comes down to a straight choice about what the study of Logic is supposed to yield. Those who claim that it must describe the way we talk, will be inclined to coherence or redundancy theories. Those who say that logic is, in some sense normative have a wider choice of theories of truth, but also have to be prepared to discount some common ways of talking.

PHILOSOPHY AND CHRISTIANITY.

By Paul Martin, Trinity Hall.

In view of the annoyance expressed by some in reaction to the questionnaire sent out last term, I feel I should start by trying to justify it. The questions may very well have been on the level of the Sunday School questionnaire as someone suggested: but then there are many questions which, though they may be simple and are the kind that can be answered parrot-fashion by those brought up in a certain tradition, can also merit deeper consideration and even philosophical inquiry. That they were ambiguously worded and could be interpreted differently according to one's own position is a more serious charge. However, the general areas covered by the questions were clear and most of those who answered addressed themselves to those, as well as pointing out what they thought was wrong with the question. Whether they uncovered what people studying philosophy 'really think', I doubt, but the questionnaire did produce a whole range of views on the relation between Philosophy and religion.

Philosophy nowadays, at least as it is taught in Cambridge, avoids tackling questions like 'Does life have any meaning?' and 'Are we here for a purpose?'. Some seemed to think this was because Philosophy had discovered the answer to these was 'No' and so had given up the search! A fair number said there were no answers to them, suggesting perhaps that they weren't proper questions, and some denied they were the important questions in life at all or that there were any questions more important than all the rest. Whether this is so or not, man has always been preoccupied by such questions and they are certainly a major province of religion. It is interesting that a majority (out of the 30 that replied) thought there were answers, though perhaps a large number for each question and not ones that were universally true. A real possibility is that there are answers, even ultimate ones that are not supplied by the whim of the seeker, but that we have no way of discovering them. Many doubted that the study of Philosophy would find them and left that job instead to 'the poet, the preacher and the mystic'. Others thought that it could at least help to evaluate any answers that were suggested and to clarify our thinking about them. According to this general approach there need be no conflict between religion and Philosophy: either their provinces are sharply distinguished or they are given complementary roles to play. Christianity claims to be able to answer these questions on the basis of revelation from God. Philosophers, qua Philosophers, can chose to ignore this and go about answering other questions; or they can scrutinise the revelation to see whether it makes sense and whether it fits with what we know already. If the first course is taken, I don't think that one should take the further step of denying the possibility of there being some answers just because they cannot be discovered by reason.

This brings us to the question of whether Philosophy makes it more difficult to accept the answers given by religion and whether to believe them one has to abandon reason. 'A little Philosophy inclineth a man to Atheism; much maketh him perplexed' was one comment, but the same person pointed out that both Professors in the faculty are practising Catholics. Most said Philosophy did make it more difficult, at least by the way it was taught, but others declined to judge since they were not believers themselves. Particular doctrines were more difficult to accept than others, like the inerrancy of the Bible asserted by some Christians. If this is true it shows that religious faith is not totally immune from the influence of Philosophy: the religious believer who also tries to be rational must take into account the criticisms of the Philosophers. However, this is only the case if he claims that what he

believes is objectively true. There is a kind of religious faith which is not bothered by such considerations because it is self-confessedly irrational. Most people again said that believing the answers given by religion did not necessarily involve an abandonment of reason. It involves abandoning the belief that reason is sufficient on its own to provide answers, someone said, but if the answers are backed up by what one knows from experience and the revelation is considered to be reliable it would still be rational to believe them. Of course, what seems reasonable to the believer is not necessarily so and there may be many believers who do not consider the rationality or otherwise of their faith. However, it is difficult to accuse people like Professors Anscombe and Smiley and Keith Ward of being irrational in their Christian beliefs. In connection with this there is the question of whether one relies ultimately on reason, instinct or authority in making decisions. Obviously it is artificial to separate them since in experience we probably rely on a bit of each, the proportion varying according to the nature of the decision. An equal number opted for reason and instinct; authority was reliable only if it had been proved reliable in past experience. The same could be said about revelation: its reliability depends on its source and instinct and reason play a part in assessing it.

When it comes to the question of truth and morality, it seems to me that either all our decisions, whether they be conclusions about the world we live in or courses of action we undertake, are relative, or they can be judged to be right or wrong according to an absolute standard. A majority of people thought there was a thing such as absolute truth, though not as something independent of what is/is not the case. Some doubted whether the real truth could ever be ascertained and suggested that our apprehension of it would always be relative. The same could be said of an objective morality: more people doubted that there was one, but there was an equal number who thought there was. Perhaps this shows the inadequacy of reason and our need for revelation as well. There were some interesting comments on the sufficiency of scientific explanations. A few thought that in principle science could explain everything, but most were sceptical, at least as far as human feelings and values were concerned. I suppose the most fundamental question is whether there is a reality that cannot be discovered by empirical science or not. Again, most people said there was, though not necessarily the kind of reality talked about by Christians.

Finally, for anyone who's interested: most people who answered study Philosophy primarily because it's enjoyable, though they disagreed with the suggestion that it's not much work! A large proportion study it primarily because it's important. Hume was the most popular Philosopher, with Wittgenstein in second place. And most find that their day to day lives and values have been affected by studying Philosophy. Some of its beneficial effects are to deflate one's complacency and pomposity, to make one more honest with oneself and more rational. Someone even confessed that it made him or her enjoy working! Others, however, pointed to the 'obsessively analytical approach' that it engenders and had come to realise its limitations.

## PREJUDICES, PRECONCEPTIONS AND PHILOSOPHERS.

I was sitting in the College Bar at the start of term when a friend challenged me with this question: "Don't you think there's a contradiction in being a Christian and a philosopher?" Thinking about it later I wondered why he found the thought of someone being a philosophy student and a Christian so surprising. In this article I wish to explain briefly why I was surprised by his surprise.

A lot of time is spent in philosophy thinking about the world, our place in it, how we know and communicate things, and what it is to be and to do. Presumably one hopes by studying philosophy to understand more about these things, and how to think more clearly and coherently. But this is not an activity done in isolation. We all come to the subject with beliefs, opinions and preconceptions about ourselves, our minds, other people and the world: political views, religious beliefs and a host of other ideas. We are already committed, and although we may apply the methods that we learn to develop both to our commitments and those of other people, we cannot rid ourselves wholly of our pre-philosophic inheritance. Furthermore, even if we rationalize our beliefs and reject inconsistencies we are still likely to end up with different points of view to other philosophers.

I think that this helps to explain why there has been such a great diversity of opinion and belief amongst philosophers past and present. Granting them the benefit of the doubt, let us assume that philosophers have some measure of integrity; we find ourselves then with large numbers of highly intelligent and rational people divided on political, religious, social and economic issues. This either suggests a basic flaw in the study of philosophy, or we could account for it by recognizing the diversity of background and culture which these people come from. The source and determining influences of the religious (or political) beliefs of Hume and Kant, for example, are as likely to be their upbringings and family life, as they are their careers in the academic world. Obviously years of reflection and thought will lead us to modify and change our beliefs; but what it is that is modified and changed is something we bring to our subject. We can apply reason to our presuppositions and prejudices; but where we start from will determine where our reasoning takes us.

I do not claim that philosophy has nothing to do with religion and politics ( or taste in clothes and music, for that matter). What I do think is that whether we are inclined to the Right or to the Left, to faith or unbelief, is something which philosophy has little to do with. (I suggest this as a generalization to which there are, I accept, exceptions.

As a witness for my defence I call Friedrich Nietzsche ( in "Beyond Good and Evil"):

"Philosophers all pose as if their real opinions had been discovered though the self- evolving of a cold, pure, divinely indifferent dialectic, whereas in fact a prejudiced proposition, idea or suggestion, which is generally their heart's desire abstracted and refined, is defended by them with arguments sought out after the event. They are all advocates who do not wish to be regarded as such."

M.A.HANNAM (CHURCHILL)

\*\*\*\*\*

#### DEFINING GOOD.

G.E.Moore's attack on the "naturalistic fallacy", expounded in the first chapter of his "Principia Ethica" may be regarded as a classic version of the old chestnut, "No 'ought' from an 'is'", and it is his aversion to the idea of reducing "good" to other terms that leads him to compare it with "yellow", as being a "simple and indefinable quality". A crucial part of his argument- indeed, it may be said, the crux- is that we could not substitute for the word "good" any defining conditions because we can always, "with significance", ask of those defining conditions whether they themselves are good. Not asking this vital question, Moore says, would be the hasty, but vacuous, settlement of a large class of disagreements between ethical naturalists, since they could easily agree that, for example, a certain action was conducive to pleasure but not obedient to scriptural injunction- and so would part friends, so to speak, merely differing in their idiosyncratic applications of the word "good".

But an ethical naturalist\* is not committed to defining the word "good" as meaning his particular condition or set of conditions. "Good" itself may refer to - its meaning may be- a property under just one, quite minimal, definite description; for example, "whatever property of a thing which gives rise to correct pleasure in that thing qua that thing". All the naturalist alleges is that whatever property is thus



describable happens also to be describable by another definite description; as it might be, (in actions) "being conducive to pleasure".) I suspect that the word does, in fact, function in this opaque way, the opacity deriving from the notion "correct"(of pleasure), or at any rate something like it.

Many words are like this. The term, "a cold", in effect means, "that thing which causes coughing, a runny nose, hoarseness, etc." The dictionary definition, "an inflamed state of the mucous membrane", provides another description of the same thing, but one which wouldn't have made sense to people quite capable of applying correctly "a cold" some centuries ago, nor indeed to many such people today, no doubt. Just as in this way a definite description was found to attach to something referred to by a word whose meaning did not originally encompass that definite description, so may some description of whatever "good" refers to be found over and above the meaning of the word "good" itself.

This is how the ethical naturalist can explain why in using the term "good" we do not mean by it his specific conditions: for we may nevertheless (wittingly or unwittingly) refer to those conditions. Thus Moore's point that if "good" meant, say, "being conducive to pleasure", then the phrase, "pleasure is good" would be utterly vacuous, is irrelevant. It would not be vacuous for the same reason that, "the thing that causes coughing, etc., is an inflamed state of the mucous membrane", is not vacuous- or that, "yellow things are things with a disposition to reflect or emit light of such-and-such an approximate range of wavelengths", is not vacuous. And yet both of these sentences use what are commonly called definitions, of things or properties, in the sense of "definition" which Moore is early on at pains to emphasize he is concerned with: namely, defining, not the meaning of a term, but the nature of what is referred to. This is, in other words, to find other definite descriptions of it.

What of Moore's assertion that we can, "with significance", always ask of a property, "but is it good?"; a question, we must be careful to remember, properly means, "does it have the property, good?", not, "is it the property, good?" It should be noted firstly that this assertion is no basis for arguing to the indefinability of good, since Moore's reason for making it is just that good is a simple, irreducible quality which may or may not attach to any condition or set of conditions. Presumably we should just take it in the spirit of an appeal, which, like his notorious manual ostension, Moore is persuaded we must accept.

One thing which should act as an obstacle to anyone's accepting it

straight off is its vagueness. I have already cut off one interpretation, easy to fall into unawares, of, "is that property good?" In addition, we should distinguish from it: "Is a thing with that property good (in virtue of having it)?", "Is a thing with that property good (because goodness goes with that property)?", and, "Is it good for something to have that property (i.e. is that connection of thing and property itself good)?" The question we are meant to be dealing with is, "Is the property itself good?" If "yes" is always a possible answer to this, then it would seem the property must be a different one from that of goodness, which is what Moore is trying to establish; unless it behaves in a reflexive manner, rather like the property "being a property".

I think that in fact there is evidence in the way "good" is used to suggest that it is of this reflexive type. It is certainly true that it has a capacity for being piled on: at least part of what gives Moore the certainty that "this feature is good" is always "significant", also lends the language such phrases as, "acting virtuously is good". Either the latter is only a pseudo-synthetic proposition and we are just sloppily bountiful in our usage (in which case "this feature is good" may likewise be fatuous though admittedly a possible sentence), or "good" in fact functions reflexively, in the aforesaid manner.

A definition of "good" which would fit this bill would be something along the lines suggested earlier: "a good thing is one which gives rise to correct pleasure in the thing qua that thing". Perhaps it seems bizarre to say that, as well as admiring a thing in its role (as that type of thing), we admire the property it has, of causing our admiration, in its role (as a property). But this is surely a genuine faculty of the mind—we can shift our attention, and admiration, from the acrobat himself to his nimbleness, for instance. At any rate, Moore's assertion that we can always ask, "but is that property good?", if true, is explicable in ways other than the resort to a simple, inexpressible quality, good. It may just be that language allows us to pile on the predicate, vacuously or not.

Finally, an epistemological approach may be of more use in considering the question of (in)definability. If we assume that good is a real property—which, of course, an emotivist will balk at—the question arises how we perceive it. I take it that perception of good is not simply sensory perception: there is no sensible property, good, like that of yellow. Our moral sense is our intelligence. To begin with, the advocate of indefinability must either allege a host of different simple qualities for all the different uses of "good" (good person, good act, good acrobat, etc.), or perhaps cut off the simple quality, ethical good, and treat the

other "goods" as not under question here, and quite possibly definable. Moore, in fact, does define, for example, the goodness of actions in terms of the intrinsic goodness of certain effected states of affairs. But more importantly, if good is simple and indefinable, then since we do not directly perceive it (with any of our senses), nor, as Moore says, directly experience it in ourselves (since it cannot be defined as, or in terms of, any mental state, activity, or whatever), then it follows we must infer it from what we do directly perceive or experience. But how can moral pleasure (approbation, admiration) derive from something with which we have no direct acquaintance? We cannot take the option of saying it derives from whatever it is we infer good from, since this would be to define good as being that thing (or those things). But we know nothing about this simple quality, good, but that it is somehow associated, perhaps causally, with whatever we infer it from. How, then, could we find any pleasure in it?

The ethical naturalist, on the other hand, can quite easily account for the fact of moral pleasure. What we know and can describe, be it pleasure, philosophical contemplation, or the rational will (Kant's "jewel"), that we can claim as the object of our moral acquaintance. The problem of "who is right" must, I think, be settled by reference to the respective views of man—indeed, probably by reference to his teleology. According to this view, moral pleasure is not correct or incorrect in itself, but rather in virtue of its basis in a "world-view". The fact of a passion arising in this way from understanding, as well as being of great interest psychologically, is what introduces the element of emotional response into ethics, so besetting it with problems: how can pleasure be correct, how can propositions be action-guiding and so on. How far that passion is a part of, or merely concomitant with, that understanding, is another question.

ROGER TEICHMANN (TRINITY HALL)

---

\*By a "naturalistic" ethical theory I mean one which claims good to consist in some natural property (or, it might be, properties). Moore, in his definition of the term, includes a little more, in the way of imputed reasons for the belief.

\*\*\*\*\*

LOVE, OR, "GROUNDWORK OF THE METAPHYSICS  
OF BONKING!"

I am not going to try to present to you love the emotion. I could not say that, any more than I could say anger. What follows is an attempt to explicate love; to find something we can discuss which is a necessary and sufficient condition for love, and which helps to explain love's importance. The ideas I present were discussed at the Moral Sciences Club last term, and I would like to thank members for their criticisms, some of which I have incorporated.

There are many things that can be called love. It will obviously be a word whose bounds are unclear. Perhaps it is a cluster of applications which need not be connected to each other at all. I shall discuss a central idea of love, that found in sexual love and friendships, which I take to be the archetype of love. I contend that if people had no friends or, to coin a phrase, sexual relations, we would not have a single concept of "love"; even though other things to which the word now applies were still to exist.

This archetypal kind of love is not to be sharply differentiated into friendship and sexual love. The two blend into each other, and anyway it is the elements they have in common that I wish to analyse. Friendship minus love yields mere acquaintance, and sex minus love a form of bi-lateral trade; though no doubt a very profitable one. The thing I wish to capture in my analysis is that which added to acquaintance yields true friendship and added to sex, or the hope of it, yields sexual love. Alludes of "love", but especially this central one, involve something which is an opposite to hate. What makes love opposite to hate is our attitude to the interests of the objects of love and hate. My first statement of the analysis of love is that I love someone when a thing's being in their interest is a reason for me to bring it about. The converse is true of hate. If I hate someone, then the fact that something is in their interest is a reason for me to prevent it coming about.

Some of the extensions of love to other areas might be discussed here. Socrates, in the Euthyphro, makes the point that we cannot do service to God, since He has no interests we can further. The love of God encounters this problem, and must be expressed through formal rituals. It could also be seen as hypothetical interest identification. The idea of hypothetical service is essential if we are to cope with any love for

a distant person, whose interests we are in no position to further. Love for inanimate objects is certainly problematic, and probably requires teleological approaches to them in order to make sense of it. Love for animals is unproblematic until we get a long way down the scale of life forms (do bacteria have needs and interests?)

We often talk of "falling in love", and this can consist becoming infatuated with someone at a glance. I think this may be a case of love, but often what is felt here is lust; which I use in a non-pejorative way, and discuss below. This "love at first sight" is often not mutual, and I feel inclined to stick to mutual feelings for the rest of the essay, as there's more to say about them. The idea of lust brings us to the role of desire in love. Can you be in love with someone you do not desire? (Here I mean either sexual desire, or, in the case of friends, esteem, and the consequent desire for friendship.) I think the answer is clearly "yes". It is perfectly possible to come to love someone through long and close acquaintance, or originally casual sex. This possibility indicates that desire, though it has a role in love, is less central than empathy. Desire or high esteem is a spur to interest-identification. But desire without interest-identification yields the idea of lust. Lust is the desire to possess, rather than merge with, someone.

Each individual has needs and interests, and because of scarcity, and because other people figure in these needs and interests, people are rivals for gratification. Sex is a classic case in which one person may exploit another for gratification. Is love caused by identity of interests or vice-versa? In the sense in which we are discussing, I think, it is love that causes interest-identification. This ties in with what we said earlier, about the possibility of falling instantaneously in love. Being in love makes whatever is good for the loved good for the lover, and this is a state that Dante could find himself in at a glance. Mutual love reconciles our previously conflicting interests, though not by a simple, trade-like integration. The process is complicated by the new interests that love may bring with it, such as the interest we usually have in having a relationship with the person we love.

Identity of interests goes some way to explain the glory of love. It gives trust and security, allows us to let fall our usual oppressive social defences, and lets us put an end to scheming and calculation. This might be expressed by saying that we are no longer alienated from the rest of the world; no longer imprisoned within our own individuality; no longer constantly tried by the conflict between separateness from and dependency on others. Sartre has argued that love is impossible, because

of the contradiction in attempting to fuse two things whose essence is their individuality. But love is precisely the mechanism that reconciles this conflict.

That then is the theory~~nessence~~. Moving to its application, we can see that the most desirable quality in two lovers is that they love to an equal degree. If one of them is more in love than the other, they will sacrifice more to ensure the existence of the relationship. Nothing is felt while the relationship continues, but if the love is not requited, then at some future time, that hurt will burst upon them with all its pent-up force. If one person is more in love than another, then the one more in love has a prudential motive to avoid an intimate relationship, and the one less in love a moral motive to avoid it, or at least, moral responsibility not to take advantage of it. In crude terms, someone infatuated with an unprincipled lover is going to get taken to the cleaners.

Love comes in degrees, and as we have seen, it is preferable that love should be equal. But it can be equal at many levels. Perhaps no-one has ever been perfectly in love, so that all stress is absent from their relationship, and their unity is complete. The greater the degree of equal love, the greater the degree to which the glory of it applies. Two people perfectly in love might disagree about where their interests lay, but could never have a clash of interests. The less the degree of our mutual love, the more scope there is for clash of interests, and the greater the degree to which we retain a private area of our life. The success of equal, loving relationships often depends on our ability to restrict the relationship to areas in which stress is minimised. The limiting case is what might be called mutual lust. This results in what a friend called her "II-to-7 friendship". Here the interests of the lovers are identified only in their sexuality. To sustain a successful relationship at this level of equal love, certain personal qualities are required, mostly matters of self-sufficiency. Where precisely we draw the line between love and mere co-operation is fairly stipulatory.

To summarise the contents of this paper. There is an archetypal sense of love, found in sex and friendship, between which I do not strictly differentiate. The difference between love and hate is our attitude to their object's needs and interests. Love corresponds to interest-identification; to empathy. When we fall in love, we gain a motivation to do anything that is in the interests of the loved. Love is the thing that makes our interests identical. The significance of it is that it

allows us to escape the prison of our individuality. Where two people love unequally, the one more in love can be exploited. Finally, love comes in degrees, and so there are many kinds of relationships involving different degrees of equal love, and different degrees of the breakdown of our individuality.

P.E.GRIFFITHS (TRINITY HALL)

\*\*\*\*\*

### GOING ON ABOUT BEING ABLE.

For the purposes of this essay, I shall assume the synonymy of "disposition", "tendency", "capacity", and other such terms. Though this terminology has some drawbacks, it seems to be that used by Roger Teichmann in his excellent article "On going on being able to" (Pv-P No.3).

Mr Teichmann is surely correct in observing that an object's dispositions are not made any the less dispositional if we refer to its composite atoms' dispositions and that knowledge of e.g. an atomic structure does not alone give us an explanation of the object's dispositions. There is, of course, the sense in which a ball's bounciness is explained by the elasticity of the substance of which it is made. And this is a (if not the) standard form such an explanation takes. But, since elasticity is obviously dispositional, the explanation is not of what a disposition is but of why this ball is bouncy.

Given that dispositions are not ultimately reducible to non-dispositional specifications, we may ask how and to what we attribute them. Mr Teichmann quite properly discounts any principled objection to passing "deductively from statements about occurrences of events to ones about tendencies of those events to occur." Thus, he finds the locus of dispositions in the occurrence and recurrence of events. And there are good arguments for saying that there are specifiable probabilities of a certain event's occurring; and, so, that event-types have tendencies to be instantiated.

However, I am inclined to think that individual events do not have tendencies among their properties. For, an event does not have the temporal duration implicit in the notion of a tendency. There is also something amiss in supposing that individual non-occurent events have some (though insufficient) tendency to occur. But



I do not wish to argue here the question of whether it is membership of a population of possible events which makes for the tendency of an actual event to occur (given, e. g. a Principle of Plenitude).

On the whole, it seems more economical to regard dispositions as, in the first instance, qualities of objects. And I imagine that the redness of a ball is a quality of it in just the same way as its bounciness is. The inductive sceptic has to reject the ball's redness if he is to be consistent with his rejection of its disposition to bounce. Indeed, redness can be construed as the disposition to appear red (under favourable circumstances) much as bounciness is the disposition to bounce (under favourable circumstances). If we call these two qualities deterministic, we may give a fuller specification of their type as, "the property of being F under all favourable circumstances". In a similar way, a coin's disposition to come up heads in about half of the chance trials carried out on it is the property of being H under + or - 50% of favourable circumstances. All fair coins have this quality. I see no reason why a statistical disposition should not be a legitimate quality.

A disposition is a quality whose meaning is partly given by what constitutes favourable circumstances, though mostly by what occurs under these circumstances e. g. the flammability of my copy of Kant's "Prolegomena" is not the same as the flammability of methane. The one will ignite at approximately 450° F and the other at a much lower temperature. This fact might incline us to take one or other of two views about the relationship of dispositions to an object's other properties.

One line is to observe that, because an object's flammability (for example) is dependent on circumstances external to the object, flammability is not an intrinsic feature of it. Thus, some distinction between properties and predicates might be drawn to the effect that properties are those qualities an object has irrespective of circumstance, while a predicate is anything that can be truly said of a thing. Given that flammability will only manifest itself if the circumstances are right, and yet that it is true to say that my copy of Kant's "Prolegomena" is flammable now, we might want to say that flammability is not a property but merely a what-can-be-truly-said-of: a predicate.

The theoretical advantage of this view is that there need be no problems with a general principle of the connexity of properties. There is no requirement that flammability either necessitates or is necessitated by (a disjunction of conjunctions of) an object's other properties. But there are two powerful objections. One is that the intrinsic/extrinsic distinction is, if clear then probably arbitrary,

and, if unclear then unhelpful. Second, as it stands, the account seems to put the cart before the horse. We do not say that an object is flammable because we have antecedent beliefs about counter-factuals; rather belief in the relevant counter-factuals is a consequence of and flows from the attribution of the disposition.

The other line seems to be not so much to worry about the status dispositions, but to see to what extent they are correlated with an object's other features. The specification of an atomic structure may be ultimately a dispositional matter. But the question of which structures- both atomic and large-scale- have which dispositions is of considerable interest.

This approach leaves wide open the question of whether the connexity of properties is an admissible principle i.e. it confers on it the invidious status of an empirical hypothesis. Were it vindicated, it might be found that structures do determine which dispositions an object has, though the former would not explain the latter unless laws were available. If dispositions were regarded in this way as emergent characteristics, it might be thought that they were once more being relegated out of the field of "proper" properties. But, as Mr Teichmann shrewdly notes, "a thing's being able to conduct electricity is a necessary condition of its having the atomic structure of copper, and vice-versa".

RICHARD DAVIES (TRINITY)

\*\*\*\*\*

#### WITTGENSTEIN'S PARABLE OF ETHICS AND AESTHETICS

"It is clear that ethics cannot be put into words.

Ethics is transcendental.

(Are ethics and aesthetics the same?)"

These thoughts come from the closing passages of the Tractatus which are referred to as Wittgenstein on the Mystical. The proper expression of the mystical is the closing line, Tractatus 7:

"Whereof we cannot speak thereof we must pass over in silence".

F.P. Ramsey gave the inevitable smart reply to this: "Whereof we cannot speak thereof we cannot whistle about either". And this has very much been the attitude of the Anglo-American philosophers concerned with Wittgenstein- that the Mystical passages were somehow an irrelevancy, at most of psychological or biographical interest. But not only was

Wittgenstein quite serious in his Mystical attitude, but this is reflected in the composition of the *Tractatus*. It begins with ontology, moves onto ontological considerations about language, e.g. the picture-theory of meaning, the logic of language, considerations about the ontological status of logic and scientific discourse, and finally to the "metaphysics". Thus it can be read as a Kantian exercise in that its primary aim was to draw the limits of rational discourse but it also recognised the legitimacy of the metaphysical tendency in man, what Wittgenstein called, after Kierkegaard, "running up against the limits of language".

This attitude (that of A. Phillips-Griffiths, among others) shifts the axis of concern in Wittgenstein from the philosophy of logic and science to that of value. For the early Wittgenstein, considerations of ethics and aesthetics were misguided for they presupposed something fundamental that was not available, value, or rather, "value in the world". If one were to describe all that one saw in the world one's descriptions would not include value, for value is not a fact in the world, it is, at best, "something" which is introduced through the "metaphysical subject"; but for Wittgenstein, there is no logical connection between the will and the world. And since ethics and aesthetics presuppose the fact of value, they cannot be put into words.

The *Tractatus*' attempted way out of this problem was to see something of worth in the attitude of ethics and aesthetics, in virtue of which they are one: ethics is the world viewed "sub specie aeternitatis", aesthetics the object viewed "sub specie aeternitatis". In such an attitude one views life from without rather than from "within the midst of relations", for in the latter, we see things in space and time and there is a tendency to attribute a pre-eminence of value to oneself and one's statements; to view the world "sub specie aeternitatis", that is, in a condition of timelessness, is to be indifferent to the concerns of the world. Hence such statements as:

"A stone, the body of a beast, the body of a man, my body, all stand on the same level". (Notebooks, p.84e)

"The murder will be on exactly the same level as any other event, for instance the falling of a stone". (Lecture on ethics, Phil. Review) But given the clearly unsatisfactory philosophical nature of these thoughts, it should not be surprising that he consigned ethics and aesthetics, the Higher, to the realm of silence.

The problem with such a view is that while it cuts off whole dimensions of significant discourse, it does not cut off dimensions of felt experience. The view that ethics and aesthetics are impossible as coherent

disciplines is abandoned in the "Investigations" along with the ontology that framed the inevitability of such views. The main thrust of Wittgenstinian aesthetics derives from the "Lectures and Conversations" and from certain passages in the "Investigations", but mostly from the timbre of the latter: the studied avoidance of generalisation in favour of the particular in context, the close attention to language as it is used, the form of language in which questions are posed, in order to expose many traditional philosophical problems as pseudo-problems: philosophy thus conceived is more "pathology" and less theory, and is dialectic in its presentation. Few "aestheticians" have looked into his writing on grammar, and this is where there is a great deal of scope for further study. P.M.S. Hacker's excellent study, "Insight and Illusion", points out that though the later Wittgenstein studiously eschewed generalisation, his views were still comprehensive. One thus feels that the next stage of Wittgenstinian aesthetics is to leave behind the piecemeal analysis of particular items of art, a practice not surprisingly already exhausted, and to become concerned with the cultural networks, personal and social, that situate art-works: this is less an aesthetics and more a philosophy of culture, of value.

M.STONE-RICHARDS (WARWICK)

\*\*\*\*\*

In the dark about light - can philosophers help physicists?

Light is very weird stuff, and I suspect that no self-respecting philosopher should be unaware of just how weird it is. To illustrate the non-cumulativity of science, I'll begin with a potted history of light.

The Pythagoreans postulated that rays are emitted by the eye to explore the world. Euclid spoke of the eye as if it were sending out visual rays whose ends probed the object. Later, Plato held a theory that whenever the eye is open an inner light is emitted. Perception by the eye, however, required a "related other light", such as the sun, which was external to the eye and allowed rays to come from objects.

The emanation part of Plato's theory became the take-off point for the optics developed in the 17th century. The modern idea of an infinite number of rays leaving from every point of an object became an accepted paradigm. The observer no longer had any special rôle in the study of light, since he may or may not be the recipient of some of these ray bundles. Instead of the lux of the ancient philosophers, where lux relates to light as a subjective phenomenon, we have only lumen, the stream of light "objects".

In 1704, Newton published the Opticks in which these "objects" are taken to consist of tiny corpuscles subject to forces in accordance with Newton's laws. These are the "singly imperceptible bodies" which Locke's perceptual theory depicts as coming from external bodies so as to "convey to the brain some motion; which produces those ideas which we have of them in us". Despite its clumsiness, this theory of light dominated for a century. After a major row over the status of scientific hypotheses, the corpuscularians eventually bowed out to the wave theorists who could offer superior, more coherent explanations of phenomena such as interference. In the 1870's the wave theory of light became securely embedded in Maxwell's theory of electromagnetic radiation. Waves of light seemed set to stay.

Inevitably it was Einstein who led the movement which undermined this complacency. In 1905, he proposed a "heuristic" point of view whereby light was to be treated as if it consisted of particles or quanta of energy localised in space. This idea enabled simple explanations of things like the photoelectric effect. But until certain crucial experiments had been performed in the early 1920's, physicists vigorously opposed the idea of treating light quanta, or photons, as real. Niels Bohr had even gone so far as to develop a theory in which the sacrosanct laws of strict conservation of energy and momentum were to be abandoned. But photons won through.

It is easy to understand the physicists' hatred of photons. The situation was this: (1) The wave theory had been thoroughly established; (2) Waves and photons (particles) are contradictory entities. Philosophers might be shocked to learn that it was the laws of logic, as represented by, (2), which were subjected to the greatest pressure. But Bohr conceived of a means of saving p-v-p. He noted that photon phenomena and wave phenomena would never manifest themselves at the same time. Light can behave like a wave on Mondays, Wednesday and Fridays, and like a particle for the rest of the week. But it mustn't behave in both ways on the same day. It all depends on which apparatus has been set up.

Einstein called this complementarity solution a "tranquillising philosophy". It is also the standard textbook account. It is justified on the grounds that physics is not concerned describe things as they really are, but only to predict and describe things as they appear in an experimental context. (Spot the Kantian parallel!). The philosopher might be less happy with this solution which is liable to reek of positivism.

I am becoming increasingly less satisfied with this solution for other reasons. The problem is that wave-particle duality occurs for matter as well as light. Now one of the premises on which the complementarity solution is based states that the apparatus must be described in solid, old fashioned Newtonian language, rather than in the post-1925 quantum mechanical language which physicists need in order to describe atomic objects. This means we are operating double standards. More accurately, of course, atoms go to make up the chunky apparatus that litters the physicist's lab. The only way out is to say that we can choose whether to treat a piece of apparatus as Newtonian (classical) or as quantum-mechanical. Normally it doesn't make much difference; but it does make a difference. We seem too be back to some kind of subjectivism.

An entirely different approach plays down the wave aspect of light contained in premise (i) above. In this case, light really consists of particles, although there are terms in the equations with wave-like properties which will give the probability of finding a particle at a particular location. But this solution is too anaemic for a healthy realist. If there are terms in the equations which go through the motions of interfering etc., it seems unreasonable not to suppose that there is actually something out there which is interfering etc.

So far I have mentioned theories in which light is thought of as consisting of particles, of waves, and of either-particles-or-waves-but-never-both-simultaneously. There could be real particles guided along by real waves. This contradicts firmly held beliefs about things like "reduction of the wave-pack" but it does seem eminently plausible. This possibility will soon be tested experimentally.

Light has been through some extraordinary contortions to get to where it is today. We are in the dark as to where it will go next. But I hope to have shown that the study of light can raise some very fundamental questions about the nature of science, questions which the philosopher, rather than the physicist may be best equipped to answer.

PIERS BERTLIN (JESUS)

\*\*\*\*\*