

2018 Illinois Philosophical Association (IPA) Call for Commentators and Session Chairs

Please contact Jonelle at jmdepetro@eiu.edu if you are interested in commenting on or chairing a session for any of the following papers. The IPA will be held November 2-3rd at Eastern Illinois University in Charleston, IL

Please visit the website for more information:

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1. Music and Moral Virtue

ABSTRACT:

Results from moral and social psychology have been used to attack virtue ethics. If there are no such things as stable, widely applicable character traits, then what is the student of virtue supposed to learn? In this paper, I will argue that it is not the case that results from social and moral psychology must be evidence against virtue ethics. Instead, results from social and moral psychology should inform the way the virtue ethicist builds her theory. As an example, experiments in moral psychology point to emotion differentiation as a trait which reduces the situational volatility of moral judgments. I propose, considering further results from psychology, that the study of music can be a tool to train emotion differentiation and therefore has an important role in the education of the student of virtue.

2. Hope, Depression, and Practical Deliberation

ABSTRACT:

Aristotle asserts in the *Rhetoric* that “no one deliberates concerning things that are not hoped for.” The aim of this paper is to argue that Aristotle is right, and that hope motivates and sustains practical deliberation. To show this, I examine the role of hope in treating depression, a state marked by increased difficulty in decision-making and acting. I argue that the recent research on the positive role of hope in moderating the effects of depression reveals an important and overlooked philosophical significance—hope is required for practical deliberation and action.

3. Lies and Hypocrisy: Speech acts in ethical thought and discourse

ABSTRACT:

I pursue a hybrid strategy for making sense of ethical thought and discourse. I argue there is good reason to think paradigmatic ethical claims are assertions, and as such, subject to a norm of belief. However, ethical assertions are also subject to a sincerity condition requiring speakers to be in the relevant motivational state for their ethical assertions to be felicitous. This points the way to a hybrid proposal. Andrew Morgan’s hybrid speech act theory posits a sui generis kind of speech act for ethical claims on the basis of a motivational norm like the one I consider. I argue (against Morgan) that it is more theoretically parsimonious to treat ethical claims as members of the assertive family. The additional norm in place for ethical assertion does not require a new kind of speech act; instead, the norm is grounded in the competencies involved in mastery of ethical concepts.

4. Debunking the Lockean Case for Black Reparations

ABSTRACT:

In *The Second Treatise of Government*, John Locke develops an unprecedented account of the right to reparations. In this paper, I argue that it is not at all clear how one can sufficiently move from Locke’s theory of reparations to black reparations. To motivate this claim, I present and criticize Bernard Boxill’s own attempt at making such a move. I maintain that Locke’s hard ethical individualism complicates his theory of reparations.

5. Circularity in Hume's 'Of the Pride and Humility of Animals'

ABSTRACT:

In Treatise of Human Nature 2.1.12, David Hume argues that the passions of pride and humility in non-human animals have the same character and etiology that he earlier identified those passions as having in humans. His arguments in this section appear to have the same structure as the arguments found in Treatise 1.3.16, 'Of the reason of animals.' I show that, though they are generally similar, the arguments in Treatise 2.1.12 are problematically circular, whereas the arguments in Treatise 1.3.16 are not.

6. A Case Study in Formalizing Contingent *A Priori* Claims

ABSTRACT:

Some authors have offered examples of claims that are alleged to be contingent and a priori justifiable (Kripke, 1980; Williamson, 1986; Hawthorne, 2002; Turri, 2011). If so, this would have the interesting consequence of upending the traditional epistemological classification that weds the source of justification to the modal status of the claim, on which all and only a priori justifiable claims are necessary, and all and only a posteriori justifiable claims are contingent. I focus here on the circumstance that all the examples given by these authors have been formulated in natural language. I give various formalizations of one alleged example of a contingent a priori justifiable claim. I then argue that, on any formalization of the example in a modal logic, it is either not contingent or not a priori justifiable. I conclude that modal-logical tools should be used in advancing alleged examples of contingent, a priori justifiable claims.

7. The Broader Threat of Situationism

ABSTRACT:

Situationists cite numerous experimental results in support of their general argument against virtue ethics. In large part, their argument relies on the following assertion: systematic observation reveals pervasive behavioral inconsistency. Which kinds of behavior most important to the virtue ethicists varies in the literature. Contemporary defenders of virtue ethics appear to settle on at least five kinds of behavior: perception, construal, deliberation, emotional response, and overt behavior. Call these five kinds of behavior trait-relevant behavior. Many have criticized situationists as focusing only on overt behavioral performances while ignoring other important aspects of virtue. In this paper, I survey a representative sample of empirical studies and argue that situationists can demonstrate pervasive behavioral inconsistency in almost every kind of behavior cited above. In doing so, I argue that situationist criticism should be taken much more seriously by defenders of virtue ethics.

8. Seemings and Moore's Paradox

ABSTRACT:

Phenomenal conservatives claim that seemings are sui generis mental states. Many of their critics deny this, claiming, instead, that seemings can be reductively analyzed in terms of other kinds of mental states; e.g., beliefs, inclinations to believe, or beliefs about one's evidence. In this essay, I present a novel defense of the view that seemings are sui generis. I argue that Moore-paradoxical statements are generated whenever one of the three proposed reductive analyses is substituted for 'seems' in statements like 'The stick is straight, but it does not seem to me that it's straight.' Since the latter statement isn't Moore-paradoxical, the three proposed reductive analyses of 'seems' are unsuccessful. This result supports the view that seemings are sui generis.

9. Causal Presentism

ABSTRACT:

Naïve presentism is the view that everything that exists is coinstantaneous with myself. Past and future things do not exist. This view faces a devastating challenge from the special theory of relativity. In this paper, I argue that naïve presentism is, in fact, refuted by the argument from special relativity. I then mine the intuitions behind the intuitive plausibility of naïve presentism in non-relativistic spacetimes to develop a presentist position based on the notion of causal efficacy.

10. Two Problems for Matching Principles

ABSTRACT:

Jonathan Way has recently proposed an account of creditworthiness according to which a creditworthy action is not only done for the right reason, but also out of a principle which explains why the reason for which the action is done is the right reason. This paper presents two objections to this view. First, there are cases in which an action satisfies Way's conditions for creditworthiness and yet is intuitively not even *pro tanto* creditworthy. Second, an agent can satisfy Way's conditions without being appropriately sensitive to some of the major normatively relevant features at hand, even though she is sensitive to the feature that wins out. In such cases, the action is intuitively not fully creditworthy.

11. Rationality and Cognitive Enhancement

ABSTRACT:

Discussions about cognitive enhancement typically focus on the permissibility of the practice. In this paper, I retain a focus on cognitive enhancement but set aside questions about its permissibility. Instead, I focus on an aspect of cognitive enhancement that has been largely overlooked—its rationality. When is it rational to undergo cognitive enhancement? In the case of what I'll call massive cognitive enhancement, my answer is: never. The reason is that one must base one's decision to undergo massive cognitive enhancement either on what I'll call phenomenal or non-phenomenal outcomes. If the former, the choice is not rational because massive cognitive enhancements are transformative and, I'll argue with Paul (2015), transformative experiences cannot be chosen rationally. If the latter, the choice is not rational because it *ought* to be based at least partly on phenomenal outcomes.

12. Practical Knowledge: Practical Reasoning, Reliable Judgment, and Reliable Execution of Intention

ABSTRACT:

Retracing Elizabeth Anscombe's discussion of practical reasoning in §§33-44 of *Intention*, I make explicit technical notions of wanting and calculation as they occur in intentional action. Wanting is the agent's calculated movement towards something and the conception of that thing under a description according to which it is a possibility and is good or worth achieving. Calculation is the agent's conception and taking of movements under descriptions according to which they are the means of achieving the thing she wants. By explicating these notions, I defend a 'reasons-based' reliabilist account of practical knowledge according to which an agent, *A*, has practical knowledge that *p* iff 1a) *A* is or was moved to make a desired end described as '*e*' true by 1b) her calculated movement described as '*p*' and 2) believes the truth with respect to *p* because the belief that *p* was produced by her calculative movement towards *e*.

13. Generalizing Selection Scenarios in Evolutionary Psychology

ABSTRACT:

Many Philosophers have criticized evolutionary psychology for adhering too closely to selection scenarios associated with natural selection. In this manuscript, I argue that Prum's competitive selection scenario for the development of aesthetic attitudes shows these criticisms are cogent in the realm of evolutionary aesthetics. Furthermore, I argue that Prum's because nature likely doesn't distinguish between types of attitudes with which to use its mechanisms, criticisms are in no way departmentalized to merely evolutionary aesthetics, but rather can be generalized to all of evolutionary psychology.

14. Schopenhauer, Rossini, and Musical Imitation of Concepts

ABSTRACT:

In Schopenhauer's principal work, *The World as Will and Representation*, he names Gioachino Rossini as a composer whose music "speaks its own language", because Rossini does not mold his music according to the lyrics and the events of the libretto. In this paper, I examine Schopenhauer's criteria for genuine art music. I argue that not only do Schopenhauer and Rossini agree on music's relation to lyrics, but they have a similar attitude toward imitative music. I will explain Schopenhauer's thoughts on the unproductive concept in music and compare them with Rossini's own thoughts. I analyze the thunderstorm movement from Rossini's *Il Barbiere Di Siviglia* and argue that while it is imitative, it is not directly so and hence can be reconciled with Schopenhauer's theory. I find that emotive content expressed through melody is critical for Schopenhauer's account of the composition of genuine art music.

15. Happiness As Activity and Happiness As Narrative

ABSTRACT:

Given that Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* is an extended inquiry into the nature of happiness (*eudaimonia*), it should be startling that interpreters disagree as to what exactly Aristotle takes happiness to be. In this paper I will argue that disagreements about the constituents of happiness result from a failure to distinguish two senses of happiness that Aristotle moves between throughout the *EN*, what I will call happiness-as-activity and happiness-as-narrative. Aristotle admittedly is less clear about this distinction than one would like him to be, but I will argue that there is good textual evidence for attributing it to his writing and also good philosophical reason to suppose he had it in mind, for it helps resolve interpretive puzzles and, more than that, helps illuminate what it means to be happy.

16. In Defense of Androgyny for Straight Men

ABSTRACT:

The status of the concept of androgyny in contemporary philosophy oriented toward social justice is a marginalized and complex one. Marginalized, because there is currently almost no discussion of androgyny in the philosophical literature. Complex, because there is tremendous interest today in transgender, which is related to androgyny in complex ways (to which I will return in detail shortly). In this presentation, I wish to revive the old feminist concept of androgyny, which has more recently been absorbed into and eclipsed by a cluster of concepts including transgender and gender non-conformism (TGNC).

17. Socrates, the Silver Rules, and Special Obligations: A Moral Analysis of Long-Distance Running

ABSTRACT:

During the past few years, a trend has emerged in long-distance running: runners have been helping each other complete races by physically assisting each other towards the finish line. Despite the overwhelming popular approval of this behavior, I argue that it is morally wrong. I do this in two stages. First, by explaining a Socratic argument from Plato's *Crito*, I show that runners should not let themselves be physically assisted. Then, by examining the Silver Rule and the concept of special obligations to ourselves, I show that runners should not physically assist others. I thus conclude that, since moral wrongdoing should be avoided, this trend in long-distance running should end—now.

18. The counterfactual analysis of dispositions – with a twist

ABSTRACT:

In this paper I suggest that counterfactual analyses of dispositions' bearers' behavior have had a logical problem, and suggest a fix. After laying some groundwork (§1), I adopt a variant of the standard counterfactual semantics, according to which *counterpossible* counterfactuals can be non-trivially true, and use those counterpossibles to (i) analyze a simple form of disposition and (ii) offer an in-principle argument that the analysis avoids simple problems with masks and finks (§2). I then extend the analysis to another sort of disposition, and work through a number of counterexamples (§3)

19. Future-bias, the Instrumental Rationality Account, and Its Problem

ABSTRACT:

According to the Temporal Neutrality Thesis, a person's welfare in the past and future is important just as much as her welfare in the present is. Given that a person is herself no matter where she is located (past, present, and future), at a glance the thesis sounds reasonable. However, Derek Parfit suggests a case that shows the thesis's problem. In this case, a patient either went through a painful surgery for ten hours or will receive the same treatment for an hour. I think it is prudentially permissible for the patient to prefer the past surgery schedule to the future operation one; and this intuition shows that a person's past welfare is less important than her future welfare. In this paper, I will introduce the Temporal Neutrality Thesis's reply to the case. And then I will provide a criticism of the reply.

20. A Limit on Nozick's Acquisitions

ABSTRACT:

John Locke argues in the Second Treatise of Government for conditions on permissible acquisitions of resources from the natural commons. People must labor over a resource in order to acquire it, and they cannot acquire more from the public commons than would leave "as much and as good for others." Robert Nozick dubs the "as much and as good for others" requirement the 'Lockean Proviso' and argues that one need only leave "as good for others" rather than also leaving "as much" resources. I will argue that "as good" must be interpreted not only in terms of resource goods but also in terms of the resultant political, personal, and legal rights, which produces a further limit on legitimate acquisitions. One may not acquire resources that will lead to such dramatic inequalities that the increased access to resources cannot compensate for the damage to human rights.

21. Two Defeaters for the *Mind* Argument

ABSTRACT:

Peter van Inwagen presents a version of the Mind argument immune to even agent-causal conceptions of free will. However, I propose defeaters of this argument. The first is a thought experiment that serves as an undercutting defeater. As for the second, if there are true propositions taking the form of counterfactuals of freedom, these serve as rebutting defeaters. There are good reasons to think that there are these counterfactuals, and no comparably good reasons to think that there are not.