

Abstracts

Anne Baril, University of Notre Dame
Toward a strong eudaimonist epistemology
Sun 12 - 1

There are projects within epistemology that cannot be successfully addressed independently of facts about what it is to live well as a human being. Perhaps the clearest example is the project of developing an account of epistemic excellence, a project pursued in recent years by, e.g., Roberts and Wood (2007) and Bishop and Trout (2005). It is only by making our account of epistemic excellence sensitive to facts about human flourishing that we can properly judge the person who spends her time counting grains of sand on a beach, or dust motes on a table, as dysfunctional, rather than admirable. In this paper I argue for this 'sensitivity thesis,' and then argue that the same reasons that count in favor of the sensitivity thesis also provide support for an even stronger 'contingency thesis': the successful account of epistemic excellence will be such that reaching this ideal will be compatible with living a flourishing human life. Our endorsement of an account of epistemic excellence is thus contingent on the truth of the claim that embodying this ideal is compatible with living a eudaimon life.

Heather Battaly, California State University Fullerton
Attacking character: virtue epistemology and ad hominem argument
Mon 9 – 10.15

The recent literature on ad hominem argument contends that the speaker's character is sometimes relevant to evaluating what she says. This effort to redeem ad hominem requires an analysis of character that explains why and how character is relevant. I argue that virtue epistemology supplies this analysis. Three sorts of ad hominem attacks that attack the speaker's intellectual character are legitimate. They attack a speaker's: (1) possession of reliabilist vices; or (2) possession of responsibilist vices; or (3) failure to perform intellectually virtuous acts. Legitimate ad hominem attacks conclude that we should not believe what a speaker says solely on her say-so.

John Bigelow, Monash University
Real probabilities
Mon 9 – 10.15

I will argue that there must be some property of a proposition, in itself, which grounds the credence it has for a given person in a given epistemic situation. This property deserves the name "probability". Hence "subjectivism" is mistaken: probability is not just credence; rather, it is a property which grounds credences.

But there are two big mysteries about this "property that grounds credences": it is hard to explain *what it is*; and it is hard to explain how we can come to *know* whether a proposition does or does not have this elusive property.

I will argue that we can make progress in dispelling these mysteries by drawing a parallel with the mathematical concept of "volume". It is hard to explain what volume

is; and it is hard to say how we can come to *know* exactly what volume a given object has.

Roughly: volume is a measure of "how many points" something contains; probability is a measure of "how many ways" something could come about.

In both cases, a rigorous definition is ferociously difficult; in both cases the epistemic access to exact values is virtually never attainable. Yet, in both cases, positing such a property is indispensable for explanatory purposes. Or so I will argue.

Jessica Birkett, University of Sydney

(Street) art

Wed 10.45 – 11.45

Art, being inextricably bound in society, is of an immediately responsive nature. This paper suggests that pluralistic reflective sentiment towards significant social and political tumult produces our most significant instances of modern and contemporary art evolution.

Embedded in the exemplary works of aesthetic evolution in modern and contemporary eras art is a demonstration of and reaction to its social and political climate. As described by postmodern theory, art is central to life; it is too powerful and pervasive in our social, ethical and political world to be considered on its own, or separate from its non-aesthetic influences.

In this centrality to life and innate demonstration of social and political climate, it is argued that art's essence precedes its existence. Art and its affect are inseparable.

The interest in art as a historical demonstration in times of social and political turmoil is due unto its ability to be a foremost, unadulterated representation of the human condition. The concern is not with the singular author of the pieces, but the broader sentiment that created these exemplary modern works during times of significant social and political turmoil, which transcend the artist and notions of visionary and individualism.

I most specifically argue for the cultural and aesthetic value upon Street Art, recognized as a most vibrant and poignant address to the current human condition, site-specifically manifesting a conceptual and aesthetic reflection to the current social and political climate; in its accessible and ephemeral nature demonstrating our most unadulterated responses on behalf of a generation. Street Art represents a broader identity and whose authenticity is derived from its shared authorship.

John Bishop, University of Auckland

Theism and evidence

Tues 11.50 – 1.05

How is theistic religious belief related to evidence for its truth? In particular, what implications follow for the answer to this question from the fact that theistic belief is belief in God's revelation of God's self and purposes within human history? I shall argue that evidential justifications of theistic belief are either implicitly circular or 'isolationist', but that a satisfactory answer can nevertheless be given to the question of entitlement to religious commitment along the lines suggested by William James in his famous (infamous?) lecture 'The Will to Believe'.

Ben Blumson, National University of Singapore

Metaphor

Monday 11.50 – 1.05

Not every metaphor can be literally paraphrased by a corresponding simile – the metaphorical meaning of ‘Juliet is the sun’, for example, is not the literal meaning of ‘Juliet is like the sun’. But every metaphor can be literally paraphrased, since if ‘metaphorically’ is prefixed to a metaphor, the result says literally what the metaphor says figuratively – the metaphorical meaning of ‘Juliet is the sun’, for example, is the literal meaning of ‘metaphorically, Juliet is the sun’.

Tracy Bowell (University of Waikato) and Jonathan McKeown-Green (University of Auckland)

The question(s) of existence

Mon 2 – 3.15

Philosophers and the folk are wont to ask all kinds of existence questions: ‘Does Santa Claus exist?’ ‘Do Numbers exist?’ Some people say that Santa Claus doesn’t exist and some philosophers say that numbers do exist. What is being denied and what is being affirmed? Is it the same thing in both cases and across all the other domains where existence claims arise? We explore the possibility that when the folk pose existence questions they are typically questioning whether or not the thing in question is of the kind they take it to be. In particular, is it made-up or not? We argue that this distinction between things that are made up and things that are ‘real’ plays a framework role. Like Newtonian mechanics, such ways of categorising things provide a formal framework for thinking about and interacting with the world. This way of understanding what is going on makes certain sceptical questions less pressing. In the same way that, these days, nothing turns on questions about the truth of the theorems of Newtonian mechanics, nothing turns on questions about the existence of medium-sized dry goods. We develop these ideas into a theory about the role and import of existence questions. In the course of developing this theory we consider approaches to these issues that are offered by Quine, Fine, Searle, Rescorla, Moore and Wittgenstein.

Rachael Briggs, University of Sydney

Objectified subjectivity

Mon 2 – 3.15

Four types of operators--conditionals, probabilities, epistemic modals, and versions of ‘it is good that’--are associated with structurally similar puzzles. Each operator in the group is closely connected to truth: it can be used to form truth-evaluable sentences. Each operator is closely connected to a type of disposition--to revise one's beliefs in a certain way upon gaining new information, to accept bets at particular odds, to count possibilities as live, or to pursue certain ends. In each case, there are good reasons for thinking that people with different dispositions seem to mean different things by sentences containing the operators. But people with different dispositions can meaningfully communicate and disagree about what will happen if Australia's population increases, what is probable, what might be playing at the cinema, or what is good. In each case, the puzzle admits of a similar solution: everybody's dispositions are respond to the same set of facts in the same way, when those facts are known. Different dispositions can then be put down to disagreement about the facts.

Mark W. Brown

Motivation in phenomenology and philosophy of action: on Hume and Husserl

Thurs 2 – 3.15

For Edmund Husserl, motivation is an integral element of our lived experience. Examined largely in passing until the second Ideas book, where it is explicitly identified as a theme of enquiry and examined at some length, motivation is further examined by Husserl in his Passive Synthesis lectures. However, in my view these studies have not been sufficiently exploited in either the phenomenological or analytical traditions. In fact, it seems strange to me that in the contemporary analytical philosophy of action there is little mention of Husserl's phenomenology. It is strange, not just because of the prolific influence of Husserl's analyses of intentionality, but also because his account of motivation is surely substantial enough to warrant attention and consideration in discussions regarding the explanation of action. With the hope of relieving any "traditional" reservations, in this paper I will first note the psychological-phenomenological relation between Hume and Husserl. I will then outline Hume's account of motivation in order to then note congruencies between Hume's psychological and Husserl's phenomenological accounts of motivation. Illustrating these points of familiarity between Husserl, as a key figure in the phenomenological tradition, and Hume, as a key figure in the analytical tradition, serves the dual purpose of fostering dialogue between the traditions and inserting Husserl's analyses into the contemporary debates regarding motivation, and action more generally. Lastly, I will briefly point to how such phenomenological analyses can prove a useful resource in accounting for practical and moral actions. The guiding thesis is that it is precisely because phenomenology's findings always stem from our essentially embodied condition that the phenomenological tradition can offer valuable insights into the structure of action and, in our specific case, motivation.

"The motive is an antecedent which acts only through its significance" (Merleau-Ponty 1962, p. 301).

Lincoln Colling, Macquarie University

Levels of explanation in cognitive science

Thurs 11.50 – 12.50

Contemporary scientific investigations of the mind have increasingly looked towards the brain to answer questions about cognition. This is most clearly evident with the rise of cognitive neuro-imaging. This approach to studying cognition has, however, been met with mixed reactions. On the one hand, classical cognitive scientists—in the computationalist–functionalist tradition—have argued that cognitive neuro-imaging does not, and cannot, answer questions about cognition; it is limited to questions about neural function or the neural basis of cognition. While on the other hand, there are those who argue that cognitive science reduces to neuroscience. I suggest that both views are misguided. In this paper, I will present a third option: That neuroscience, properly used, can be employed as a heuristic for the development of cognitive theory.

I will first examine the traditional computationalist–functionalist viewpoint that has relied on the multiple realizability of computational function to argue for the independence of cognitive science from neuroscience. Although not a necessary part of the computationalist–functionalist viewpoint, multiple realizability has been presented as a compelling argument for cognitive scientists to ignore neuroscience. I present a critique of multiple realizability, which regards the physical realisation of a mental state to be ir-

relevant to the understanding of that mental state. Contrary to this proposal, I suggest investigating the causally relevant physical properties of realisers can inform our understanding of mental states and cognition in at least two ways: first, it can inform theories about what type of computational system the mind is—for example, should cognition be understood as symbolic manipulation or pattern completion; second, it can inform our understanding of representation—for example, as action-centred and based on simulation as opposed to abstract and symbolic representational formats. These ideas will be discussed with reference to historical findings as well as more recent empirical work examining the mechanisms underlying the ability for two agents to engage in a joint task.

Stephanie Collins, Australian National University

The moral value of emotions and the plausibility of emotional duties

Mon 3.20 – 4.20

Some ethicists, especially care ethicists, argue that certain emotions are necessary to properly assess, and act in response to, moral dilemmas. Moreover, some think that certain emotions just are the morally demanded response to some situations. In light of this, I question whether there is any sense in positing duties to experience emotion tokens, independently of the duty to cultivate a disposition to experience those emotions. The answer varies depending on whether we think emotions are instrumentally or intrinsically morally valuable. I consider each of these positions, focusing on the objections that emotions are unreliable means to moral ends and that they are not under our immediate voluntary control.

Michael Couch, University of Canterbury

Virtue ethics and education: a nihilist's view

Mon 3.20 – 4.20

In this paper I explore an alternative reading of Aristotle, different from the common reading of him that informs most discussions on 'Values Education'. I am not arguing that Aristotle was a nihilist, nor that it is the nihilist's view. I argue that this reading only involves a slight reworking of Aristotle and the result is a reading that ignores many of the main objections to Virtue Ethics on its own grounds. I focus on the intellectual virtues, and argue that the character virtues given can be better understood as examples of behaviour of a 'rational' person, rather than specific goals in themselves. This implicitly challenges interpreters who argue for specific virtues to be taught in schools, etc. I explicitly seek to find a foundation for a different, related, conception of education.

Michael Couch, University of Canterbury

Hume and education

Mon 10.45 – 11.45

In this paper I broadly discuss Hume's Philosophy of Education. There has been little scholarship on this topic, which is understandable as Hume himself wrote little specifically on education. However, just as Hume's political and social ideas did not have a separate treatise but informed his greater and lesser works, I argue that his ideas of education regularly occupied an important place in his writings. I will tie together

his few references to education, his discussions on knowledge and understanding, his observations on male and female capability, and his role as a proto-neo-virtue ethicist (in the same sense that he is also called a proto-utilitarian).

Geoffrey Cupit, University of Waikato

Equality and fraternity

Thurs 2 – 3.15

Are equality and fraternity connected? If so, how? Is there a deep connection, or merely a contingent one? Is there a direct link, or one that goes by way of other values? If the latter, which other values?

It is tempting to think that equality and fraternity are connected – and in a way that provides an argument for equality. It is tempting to think inequality undermines fraternity. (Thus if fraternity is a good, equality (or less inequality) is also a good.) But is fraternity really undermined by inequality – or only the frequent associates of inequality? Inequality is frequently the consequence of some taking more than their share, and often results in avoidable deprivation. Now avoidable deprivation, or some taking more than their share, is likely to threaten fraternity. But this hardly entails that inequality undermines fraternity. To see whether inequality undermines fraternity we must consider whether fraternity is undermined by inequality even when no-one takes more than their share, or suffers avoidable deprivation.

When is there such inequality? Suppose a family has some members more fortunate than others, and that those less fortunate cannot be made any better off. Suppose also that those more fortunate can become even more fortunate (without affecting the absolute level of the less fortunate). If the more fortunate become even better off, inequality increases. Does this inequality imperil fraternity? Or does avoiding this inequality imperil fraternity? Fraternity includes a love for our fellows, and a desire that they do well. It may require particular concern for the less fortunate. But does it not also entail a desire that our more fortunate brothers and sisters become even more fortunate than they are (other things equal)? Would it not be unloving (and unfraternal) not to have such a desire?

So is there any reason to think inequality itself threatens fraternity? To answer this question I consider why inequality might matter, and whether it might matter in such a way as to connect equality with fraternity.

Adrian Currie, Australian National University

Why arguments for psycho-physical reductionism are not arguments for psycho-physical reductionism

Mon 10.45 – 11.45

Debate about the mind-body problem typically targets ‘general’ arguments for reduction, which, if sound, apply not only to the mind, but to all macro-level objects, properties and relations. I distinguish between ‘general’ arguments for reductionism and ‘local’ arguments, which demonstrate empirically that particular objects from a given level are explicable in lower level terms. Using Jaegwon Kim’s causal exclusion argument as a foil, I show that general arguments have no appreciable up-shot and turn on either obtuse ‘meta-philosophical’ allegiances or super-empirical virtues (both of which lack dialectical traction). I show that the claim that the psychological reduces to the physical requires a local argument for reduction. General arguments for psycho-physical reduction, then, fail to be so.

Paul Daniels, Monash University

Back to the present: defending presentist time travel

Tues 10.45 – 11.45

Simon Keller and Michael Nelson (2001) persuasively argue that if presentism is at all plausible, then presentism and time travel are as compatible as eternalism and time travel. But Kristie Miller (2006) and Ted Sider (2005) aren't convinced. I argue that for their concerns to have merit, Miller and Sider must assume presentists are committed to an unacceptable account of causation. I explain why presentists aren't so committed and defend the compatibility of presentism and time travel.

Stephen Davies, University of Auckland

Evolutionary psychologists on landscape aesthetics

Wed 11.50 – 1.05

Evolutionary psychologists argue that our ancestors adapted to a savannah habit - the EEA or environment of evolutionary adaptation - and that this influences our habitat preferences. I argue against this view. There was no stable EEA and, even if there were, the social environment can be a greater influence and we are crucially ignorant of the social arrangements of our ancestors. The evidence suggests that the relevant adaptation is our environmental plasticity.

Tom Douglas, Balliol College, Oxford

Biomedical enhancement, justice and moral status

Tues 4.45 - 6

Many critics of biomedical enhancement – the use of biomedical technology to augment normal human capacities – appear to adopt what Allen Buchanan has called the Conclusive Reasons View. This is the view that the reasons not to pursue biomedical enhancement are decisive, and their decisiveness is already available to us, in advance of any attempt to weigh them against countervailing reasons to pursue enhancement. In a series of recent articles and a forthcoming book, Buchanan argues against the Conclusive Reasons View, largely by demonstrating that the likely benefits of biomedical enhancement are more significant than many critics have assumed. In this paper, I consider how a proponent of the Conclusive Reasons View might respond. I consider two arguments. The first – the Justice Argument – maintains that the harms caused by pursuing enhancement are a matter of justice whereas the benefits that Buchanan envisages are not. The second – the Moral Status Argument – maintains that pursuit of certain forms of cognitive enhancement might lead to the creation of beings with greater moral status than persons, and that this would harm mere persons by making them more susceptible to permissible sacrifice. I argue that it is possible to respond to both of these arguments, but not using resources that Buchanan provides. So though I conclude that Buchanan is right to reject the Conclusive Reasons View, I also conclude that his own arguments do not establish its incorrectness.

Marinus Ferreira, University of Auckland

Relating reasons to nature

Tues 9 – 10.15

I present and defend a distinction between different forms of ethical naturalism akin to John McDowell's in 'Two Sorts of Naturalism', hoping to use the distinction as a way to draw out the appeal of an Aristotelian virtue ethical framework. First, empirical naturalism, which states that we can determine how an organism should live from biological facts about it. I dismiss this view because, as Bernard Williams points out, it is uninformative. For organisms with language and culture, like us, it cannot distinguish the reasons for acting that come from biological grounds from ones that don't, and correspondingly gives no guidance of its own. Second, what I call excellence naturalism, which foregoes finding a foundation for ethical behaviour within straightforward biological facts but bases them in the idea of characteristic forms of life: a set of expectations regarding the development and behaviour of the relevant type of organism. I gave some attention to the virtues of this view as I see it, and then presented it with a challenge: setting down criteria for ascribing forms of life to peculiar organisms. I leave that as an open question that deserves an answer from defenders of this latter, Aristotelian view.

Marinus Ferreira, University of Auckland

An impersonal version of the integrity objection

Thurs 11.50 – 12.50

In his contribution to 'Utilitarianism: For and Against', Bernard Williams introduces his famous 'integrity objection' against consequentialism. Williams argues that to treat your basic ethical dispositions as something to pick up or let go as the circumstances dictate, as consequentialism requires, would lead you to lose your grip on the ethical world and crucially undermine your status as an agent. This argument has been tremendously influential, but is mostly understood as a pronouncement on individuals and their personal morality. It's taken to depend on how we as humans actually address ethical issues, with emotions and psychological dispositions featuring prominently. I take the objection to be more general than that, however, and argue for an extended version of it. I defend the view that the integrity objection highlights deeply suspect features of the consequentialist value theory, whether the values are those of individuals or collectives, government agencies, interests groups, or any agent whatsoever. Correspondingly, I distinguish an impersonal 'value theoretic' version of the integrity objection from the more familiar 'dispositional' form, and argue its case. If my case is successful, it will severely undermine the commonplace views that consequentialism is well-suited for public morality, since Williams's powerful objection takes hold in impersonal cases as well, and that many of the problems of the theory can be avoided by taking consequentialism to be a value theory rather than a decision procedure, since it is exactly the value theory of consequentialism which leads to its problems.

Nir Fresco, University of New South Wales

The information processing construal of computation

Wed 10.45 – 11.45

There is a widespread tendency in cognitive science to equate computation (in particular digital computation) with information processing. It is hard to find a comprehensive

account of information processing, which explains concrete digital computation. Still it is not uncommon to find descriptions of digital computers as information processing systems proper. Such descriptions take it for granted that digital computation presupposes information processing. The Information Processing construal seems like a natural candidate to explain digital computation. After all, digital computers traffic in data. But when 'information' comes under scrutiny, this construal becomes a less obvious candidate.

'Information' may be interpreted semantically and non-semantically (and more specifically quantitatively), and its interpretation has direct implications for Information Processing as a construal of digital computation. This paper deals with the implications of these interpretations for explaining concrete digital computation in virtue of information processing. To begin with, I survey Shannon's classic theory of information, and then examine how 'information' is used in computer science. In the subsequent sections I propose an analysis of information processing as an explicit construal of concrete computation, the key requirements it implies and its limitations. The Information Processing construal must embrace an algorithm-theoretic apparatus to be a plausible candidate for explaining concrete digital computation.

Sam Gavin, University of Auckland

Ethics as a Branch of Biology or Biology as a Branch of Ethics?

The Challenge of Biologism for Neo-Aristotelian Ethical Naturalism

Tues 3.20 – 4.20

There is a recurring worry for naturalistic ethical theories that they will give undeserved authority to biology in the study of morality - I will call this the threat of 'biologism'. Biologism may be thought to lead to mistaking 'is' for 'ought', to illicit attempts to give some sort of external grounding to ethics, and to unsavoury ethical conclusions on the basis that some particular behaviour is 'natural'. A view that has recently faced these charges is neo-Aristotelian ethical naturalism, a view defended by Philippa Foot and Rosalind Hursthouse and developed at a foundational level by Michael Thompson. This view offers an account of morality in terms of norms that bear on human beings in virtue of their being the type of living thing that they are - their being bearers of a certain life form, in Michael Thompson's terminology. Humans are morally excellent or defective depending on whether they live up to a special class of generalisations about humans called natural historical judgements. This is the same sort of judgement paradigmatically made by field naturalists in characterising the various creatures they study.

However, doesn't this mean we must use the techniques of field naturalism to give an account of how humans morally ought to be? Michael Thompson argues that this is not the case, and we can have an introspective understanding of our own life form apart from studying human biology. However, I will argue that he leaves it open that human biology could very well come up with an account of morality on its own, and that this allows the challenge of biologism to persist unabated. I will suggest a way that Thompson and neo-Aristotelian ethical naturalists can close this gap; it will involve recognising the importance of our introspective grasp of our life form for the very practice of biology.

Matt Gers, Victoria University of Wellington

Four faces of developmental causation

Wed 10.45 – 11.45

In recent years the nature-nurture debate has settled on an interactionist consensus. Genes and environments both combine to produce phenotypes. Developmental systems theorists characterize this approach as retaining a dichotomy between internal and external resources that does not exist. They advocate a parity of reasoning thesis regarding elements of the developmental matrix. All elements must be approached as if equally important in causing development. However, on the basis of much biological science (and theories about information content in the genome) many others prefer to continue to privilege genes in development. I introduce a 4-dimensional model for categorizing causal kinds, which is based on Woodward's approach to biological causation. I demonstrate that causal kinds can be distinguished on continua of specificity, stability, proportionality and enablement of their effects. Once placed in the 4-dimensional model all causes of an effect may be analysed as similar or different in their responsibility for the phenomena of interest. This approach brings structure to developmental systems theory. Furthermore, interesting concepts in development such as actual difference makers, codes, and evolvable elements are seen to cluster in certain areas of the 4D model. There exist further possibilities for the quantification of causal kinds. I discuss examples from cognitive development.

Grant Gillett, University of Otago,

Levinas and the psychopath

Tues 11.50 – 1.05

Since Hume it has been fashionable to make a clear conceptual distinction between reason and passion and to hold that moral judgment inescapably relies on passion. Kant famously objected and countered that moral thought must essentially rest on the reason of humankind and not on contingent passions.

Post-Hume the question is often raised as to why one should be moral or rational as if the passions underpinning morality are only contingently related to reason. This claim based in a certain reading of the is-ought problem, is often bolstered by appeal to the case of the psychopath who is portrayed in the philosophical literature as rational and clear thinking but not motivated by the normal passions of benevolence.

Levinas offers an ontological reason as to why one ought to be motivated by moral considerations by analysing our being-towards-others as a primitive aspect of our being that lies at the heart not only of a successful adaptation to the human life world but also at the heart of virtuous sensibility and action.

Grant Gillett, University of Otago

What's so bad about Zombies? The gap between consciousness and brain function

Wed 11.50 – 1.05

Zombies are creepy. But it is hard to see why when philosophers get on the job. What is it that Zombies are supposed to lack and does the idea of that lack make any sense? Can we find a way that naturalistic metaphysics could account for the gap (with a little help from neuroethics) without giving undue encouragement to “the mysterions”.

Rod Girle, University of Auckland

Since we are supposed to have necessary truths, why don't we have un-necessary truths?

Mon 4.45 - 6

It is now fifty years since the publication of Quine's *Word and Object*. In that volume he dismisses modality as confusing and virtually incoherent. His message is essentially (dare I use that word) that it should be outwith our concerns in Philosophy. Quine's view of modality in *Word and Object* is revisited and discussed in terms of the methodology he uses in his discussion.

Ilan Goldberg, University of Waikato

Critical thinking instruction and students' fundamental beliefs

Mon 3.20 – 4.20

Direct instruction of critical thinking in New Zealand follows the very successful standard model: an introductory level university course, delivered in departments of philosophy, with content comprising primarily of argument analysis and fallacy identification skills a la informal logic. Writers on critical thinking have long argued that despite obvious merit, the standard model cannot constitute a sufficient approach to critical thinking instruction. One prominent stream of thought within critical thinking literature aims at modifying or complementing the standard model with an emphasis on the application of critical thought to the students' own fundamental beliefs or worldviews. I examine the reasoning behind this emerging development, and connect it to methodological literature on the rational comparison and evaluation of worldviews.

Juan Gomez, University of Otago

The association of ideas in Hobbes, Locke, and Turnbull

Thurs 10.45 – 11.45

John Locke added a chapter titled 'Of the Association of Ideas' to the fourth edition (1700) of his *Essay concerning Human Understanding*, which most scholars regard as just an afterthought. However, it has been argued that the theory of association explained in this chapter had a remarkable influence on most thinkers of the Scottish enlightenment, including Hutcheson, Hume, and Hartley, just to name a few. In his inquiry into the development of the theory of association in eighteenth-century Britain, Martin Kallich argues that Locke was not the first thinker in the early modern period to come up with such a theory, since Hobbes had already proposed a similar doctrine in *Leviathan*. Kallich also thinks that Locke's originality consists in examining the association of ideas as a "hindrance to right thinking." Hobbes, on the other hand, has a 'positive' representation of the theory. If we accept Kallich's interpretation, George Turnbull's description of the theory of association stands as an interesting case; he mentions Locke as one of his main sources, but gives a particularly 'positive' version of the association of ideas. In this paper I examine the theory of association in Hobbes, Locke and Turnbull, and argue for two claims: 1) Kallich's interpretation is not quite accurate, since Hobbes' version of the theory of association is not as closely related to Locke's version as he thinks; in fact, it can't even be regarded as a proper theory of association 2) Turnbull's commitment to the experimental method led him to construct a version of the association of ideas that was the opposite of what Locke meant by 'association'. I will support my claims by showing the similarities and differences in the

three versions of the theory, focusing on the difference between ‘natural association’, ‘associated ideas’, and ‘trains of thought’.

Dana Goswick, University of Melbourne
A dispositional account of ordinary objects
Tues 4.45 - 6

It is not uncommon to encounter dispositional accounts of concepts or properties. Mark Johnston, for instance, defends a dispositional account of colour concepts and David Lewis defends a dispositional account of value. Dispositional accounts are often motivated by a desire to avoid eliminativism -- e.g. There are no colours! There are no moral values! -- whilst recognizing that there's not a 1-1 match between how the world seems to be to us and how the world is independently of our perception -- e.g. The world contains objects which have varying surface reflectant properties rather than objects which qualitatively match our colour perceptions. The world is non-normative rather than laden with (human-independent) moral values. Concerns similar to those that arise for colors and values arise for ordinary objects. A desire to avoid eliminativism -- There are no ordinary objects! -- whilst recognizing that there's not a 1-1 match between how the world seems to be to us and how the world is independently of our perception -- The world is modally bare rather than laden with (human-independent) modality -- can be used to motivate a dispositional account of ordinary objects. I examine the feasibility of such an account and defend a particular version of dispositionalism about ordinary objects.

Gillian Griffin, Flinders University
Virtue in military ethics
Mon 10.45 – 11.45

This paper whilst agreeing with the proposal that in military ethics, attention must be given to the virtues and vices of human character, it is argued that virtue should be presented not as an alternative but as a full complement to practical judgment. In military operations, practical judgement generally has a deontological focus, an obligation in which soldiers are compelled to act. This paper argues that even though there are valid criticisms of virtue theory, which cloud its use as a monomic, normative theory of justification, they do not refute the substantial benefits of applying a human character perspective to military ethics, when done so in conjunction with a necessarily imperfect act-orientated perspective.

Alastair Gunn and Ruth Walker, University of Waikato
How should secular environmental ethicists respond to Christian concepts of stewardship?
Mon 4.45 - 6

Biblically based concepts of stewardship have been widely influential among Christian environmentalists in developing models of sustainability. Given that the Bible is not authoritative for secular ethicists it is arguable that they should reject these models. The logic of stewardship requires an “owner” on whose behalf the steward acts. For the secularist this cannot be God and it is difficult to establish a plausible alternative, e.g. future generations. In order to make it possible for secularists and theists to engage

fruitfully with each other, there has to be some shared way of reading the Bible/bible. We explore three possibilities: “confessional”, “non-confessional” and “classic”, and conclude that the classic approach provides at least some common ground on which to meet.

Richard Hamilton, University of Notre Dame

What, if anything, have we learned from the situationism debate?

Sun 10.40 – 11.55

Situationism, most closely associated with Gil Harman, John Doris and Stephen Stich, has established itself within the literature as a particularly well-motivated empirically based objection to Virtue Ethics. For some critics, who were never particularly well-disposed towards us, it represents the final nail in an already creaking coffin. Needless to say, Virtue Ethicists have been less impressed by the Situationist position. Some have chosen to criticise its empirical credentials; others have highlighted the ways in which Situationists misrepresent the diversity of traditions which collectively comprise Virtue Ethics.

While I have much sympathy for these responses, I also believe that the Situationist challenge has presented Virtue Ethicists with a valuable opportunity to clarify our core assumptions and, where necessary, to correct some errors. In particular, I will argue that Situationism does represent a decisive objections to those varieties of Virtue Ethics which over-emphasise the psychological at the expense of the social. I will argue for a re-assertion of Aristotle's fundamental insight that it is unwise to talk about virtuous agents without also discussing the communities which form them and to which they in turn contribute. In the context of a dialogue with Virtue Epistemology, I will also defend Aristotle's view that the exercise of moral reasoning, and the associated virtue of *phrōnesis* is always socially and situationally sensitive.

Richard Hamilton, University of Notre Dame

Does evolution entail moral fictionalism?

Tues 2 – 3.15

One of the sustaining neuroses of the Creationist movement is the fear that evolution by natural selection destroys objective morality. This fear has recently received reinforcement from an unlikely source: a growing number of analytic philosophers seem committed to the view that the truth of evolution by natural selections entails moral fictionalism. My response takes the following form.

Evolution by natural selection is the best supported theory we have about the origins of organic life. Moral fictionalism is an entirely inadequate account of the nature of morality. If evolution by natural selection did entail an entirely inadequate moral theory, then there would be good reasons to doubt the adequacy of evolutionary theory. Since the only grounds for doubting the truth of evolution by natural selection are dogma and superstition, belief in moral fictionalism is irrational. Holding irrational beliefs when one should know better invites a psychological explanation. I conclude with a brief psychoanalysis of moral fictionalists and suggest that they probably should have been hugged more as children.

Thomas Harvey, University of Auckland

Velleman on action

Thurs 11.50 – 12.50

David Velleman, in *The Possibility of Practical Reason* (2000), argues that the standard causal theory of action fails to ascribe a distinct role to agents in the execution and performance of an intentional action, and that such a theory ought to be rejected in favour of an agent-causationist account of intentional action on which an agent's desire to act in accordance with reasons is functionally identical to the agent. I argue that Velleman's attack on the causal theory of action is misguided, since behaviour by a biological organism caused by an appropriate set of antecedent mental states may be ascribed to that organism qua distinctive agent provided that a full account of such antecedent states cannot be given using the vocabulary of the natural sciences. It is concluded that it is no more necessary to identify some aspect of an agent that is "functionally" identical to that agent than it is to identify a physical part of an agent that performs an agential role.

Robert Hunt, University of Auckland

Virtue, justice and the virtue of justice

Tues 4.45 - 6

In 1997, Roger Crisp and Michael Slote put forward the challenge of creating a 'virtue politics': a virtue ethical account of political morality. The authors suggest that such an account is necessary if virtue ethics is to genuinely compete with utilitarianism and Kantianism, which both have well developed accounts of political morality. However after thirteen years there has been relatively little development on this front. This paper investigates the conceptual foundations on which a virtue political theory must rest, more specifically in regards to how the concepts of virtue and justice are to be related. I reject what I label 'instrumentalist' accounts of the relationship between virtue and justice (which map roughly and broadly onto 'civic virtue' theories) on the grounds that they do not adequately allow for a properly virtue ethical conception of the good to be made compatible with their conceptions of justice. I also reject what I label 'reductionist' accounts (of which I take Michael Slote's forays into political morality to be paradigmatic) on the grounds that they do not adequately account for certain straightforward and unobjectionable features of contemporary accounts of justice. I explore and affirm instead a 'synthetic' account of the relationship between justice and virtue which treats justice and virtue as partly overlapping and partly distinct moral concepts in a virtue political theory

Rosalind Hursthouse, University of Auckland

Ideal rational action

Sun 2 – 3.15

In virtue-ethics speak, the term 'virtuous action' is usually our substitute for the term 'right action'. We also have the expression 'ideal virtuous action' by which we mean an action that comes from virtue. An ideal virtuous action is not only a morally ideal action but, I argue in this paper, the ideal rational action, the paradigm of what we mean by 'acting for a reason' or 'from Reason' itself, in some special sense - the upshot of an ideal practical rationality.

Ben Jeffares, Victoria University of Wellington

Simple answers are wrong answers: why the social sciences will never be easy

Tues 4.45 - 6

There has been a growing amount of interaction between three fields in recent years: The social sciences, the cognitive sciences, and the biological sciences. So, we have seen a certain amount of cross- fertilisation between formal elements of the social sciences such as game theory and parts of economics, with ideas from population biology. Recent years have seen work in the cognitive sciences impact on the social sciences with emerging fields such as behavioural economics. And evolutionary accounts of human behaviour have a long and chequered history.

This paper briefly explores elements of these interactions using a simplified series of hypothetical case studies. I demonstrate that the interactions are complex, and that no one discipline can realistically be thought of as fundamental and that the idea that one of the disciplines will provide the organisational schema that accounts for the interactions is optimistic at best, and dogmatic at worst.

Jeremy Johnson, University of Auckland

An argument for the existence of external reasons

Thurs 10.45 – 11.45

In 'Internal and external reasons' and later writings, Bernard Williams argued that all reasons are internal. That is, we only have reasons to do those things we are motivated to do, or that we would be motivated to do at the end of sound deliberation based on our initial motivations. Against this thesis there are at least two responses: the Kantian and the Thomist/neo-Aristotelian, and in my talk I'd like to take up the latter by developing a line of objection to Williams from John McDowell. I will argue that there are paradigmatic cases of having a reason to do something in which the reasons are those of a phronimos (an ideal deliberator), and that variation cases of having a reason are properly characterized by reference to the paradigm and the phronimos. This will allow me to argue that there is a sense in which in some variation cases some of the reasons the agent has are external.

Drew Khlentzos, University of New England

If: Theories and Evidence

Wed 9 – 10.15

This talk compares and contrasts 3 theories of indicative conditionals familiar to philosophers, assessing them in terms of constraint satisfaction and responsiveness to evidence. An argument is put forward that the constraints are 'hard' ones: failure to satisfy any one renders a theory unacceptable. By that measure none of the theories is acceptable. An alternative approach to indicative conditionals might be called for. One is suggested.

Suzy Killmister, Massey University

Creating autonomous persons

Mon 11.50 – 1.05

Somewhat surprisingly, many of the most prominent accounts of autonomy fail to provide clear and principled guidelines for differentiating autonomy-inhibiting from autonomy-enabling socialisation. Such guidelines are crucial not only for conceptual clarity, but also practically for liberal states attempting to determine the limits of toleration around childhood education. In this paper I show why three key conceptions of autonomy – John Christman’s historical internalism; Al Mele’s historical externalism; and Natalie Stoljar’s normatively substantive account – fail to supply the necessary guidelines. Diagnosing the reasons for this failure leads to the development of an alternative account, privileging reflective competencies and the attitudes that underpin them.

Justine Kingsbury, University of Waikato

Evolutionary theorising in philosophical aesthetics

Tues 9 – 10.15

There have recently been a number of attempts to bring evolutionary theory to bear on questions in aesthetics. This paper distinguishes normative questions in aesthetics from descriptive questions, and considers whether evolutionary theorising can illuminate either or both kinds of question. Even though the answer in both cases is a tentative "yes," I conclude that the role that evolutionary theorising can play in aesthetics is very limited, and that its usefulness has been oversold.

Fred Kroon, University of Auckland

Pluralistic content relativism and the content problem for empty names

Tues 11.50 – 1.05

In this paper I consider two problems for the idea that descriptions play a pivotal non-semantic role in what is asserted with sentences containing empty names: the identification problem, which holds that candidate descriptions often fail to have the kind of content that would allow them to fulfil this role, and the variation problem, which holds that candidate descriptions often show considerable variation even in ordinary conversational exchanges. I suggest that a theory like causal descriptivism can be used to solve the identification problem, but point out that the nature of the descriptions appealed to in such a theory makes the variation problem look even more recalcitrant. For much of the rest of the paper I look at a new way of solving the variation problem, one which combines the appeal to causal descriptivism with an appeal to Cappelen and Lepore’s Pluralistic Content Relativism — the doctrine, roughly, that what is said or asserted by an utterance at a context of utterance depends crucially on the context of interpretation from which the utterance is interpreted.

David Lumsden, University of Waikato

Self narratives

Sun 7 – 8.30

Various philosophers have argued in one way or another for narrative theories of the self, including Alasdair MacIntyre, Paul Ricoeur and Daniel Dennett. There have also been a number of sceptics about that position, including Galen Strawson and Peter Lamarque. I shall argue that there may be good reasons to consider that narratives need to play a role but will suggest that it does not follow that personal identity needs to be underpinned by a whole life narrative. Rather the extent to which we construct whole life narratives can be variable and what are important are various partial narratives.

Patrick McGivern, University of Wollongong

Levels of explanation and domains of scale

Wed 11.50 – 1.05

Standard accounts of levels of explanation associate levels with distinct types of entities and properties, such ‘the biological level’ and ‘the physical level’. On these accounts, levels are distinguished by the different theoretical regimes used to characterize phenomena, and the typical philosophical challenge is then to reconcile explanations found at one level with those found at another. Here, I’ll contrast this standard picture with a view of levels as ‘domains of scale’ in ecology. Rather than being individuated by their constituent types of entities and properties, ecological domains of scale are individuated by the manner in which information gained by observations made on one scale can be applied across other scales. One advantage of the ecological view is that it allows us to clarify questions about whether distinctions between levels must be drawn before we can raise questions about reduction, or whether distinct levels can only be posited if reduction has in some sense failed.

Jonathan McKeown-Green (University of Auckland) and Tracy Bowell (University of Waikato)

The question(s) of existence

Mon 2 – 3.15

See above for abstract.

David Merry, University of Auckland

One Trait or Two, Mr. Hume?

Tues 10.45 – 11.45

If Hume is, as many suppose, a moral-sensing virtue theorist, then he ought to be able to provide an analysis of what it means to consider a character trait clearly, and in particular what it means to consider one single character trait rather than two at once. Hume does not provide us with a clear account of the identity conditions for character traits, and so it is very hard to know just what he would count as considering just one trait. Fortunately, Hume has said more than enough for us to reverse engineer a theory of character traits. In this paper I argue against two moderately recent attempts to provide a Humean theory of character traits, one on which character traits are just passions, and another on which character traits turn out to be largely conventional. I present an account of character traits which depends on the notion of a smallest response dependent unit. Aside from helping make sense of Hume's work, the account

presented in this paper illuminates a range of challenges for an analysis of character traits in general.

Dean Ogden, Monash University

Radical presentism

Tues 3.20 – 4.20

Acceptance of a commonly held principle concerning truth, Truthmaker, and a commonly held theory about time, Presentism, leads to a problem for past- and future-tensed truths: they lack truthmakers. In this paper I will offer a solution to this problem that will allow both Truthmaker and Presentism to be maintained. This solution aims to avoid some of the pitfalls commonly associated with solutions that posit the existence of certain kinds of properties or propositions, by instead questioning the very nature of past- and future-tensed truths.

Elizabeth Olsen, Otago University

Logic says you ought to believe...

It is commonly said that Logic is Normative. One way that this is interpreted is that logic does not tell us how we think, but how we ought to think. Others interpret this as meaning that saying q is a consequence of p , is tantamount to saying if you believe p you ought to believe q . However, to validate this move from logic to ethics of belief, a bridge principle must be introduced. Most simplistic bridge principles can be shown to be flawed, and the flaws of simplistic bridge principles indicate a mismatch between our current norms of belief, the logic we use, and the bridge principle that connects the two. Any one of these three might be adjusted to eliminate the mismatch, so which should we choose?

Shaun Oon, National University of Singapore

Impractical Moral Identity

Thurs 10.45 – 11.45

While we do have reasons to act morally, there is no reason why we must necessarily be moral beings and act morally. In *Sources of Normativity*, Christine Korsgaard argues otherwise. She claims that if we have any practical identity at all, we necessarily have moral identity. She also argues that bearers of moral identity necessarily have reasons to act morally. So given that we have practical identities, we necessarily have reasons to act morally. I will show that this argument fails as it equivocates on moral identity as, what I call, agential identity and moral identity as practical identity. While we necessarily have the former (agential moral identity), which Korsgaard plausibly shows as being so, it does not mean that we necessarily have the latter (practical moral identity), which is what Korsgaard has yet to show and which she needs for her argument to succeed.

Travis Paterson, University of Victoria

Culture and Rights: Comparing Indigenous Title in Canada and Australia

Mon 2 – 3.15

The relationship between the common law of Canada and Australia and Indigenous peoples has been one plagued by the logic of dispossession and domination. For over 200 years colonial courts effectively ignored Indigenous claims to the continued existence of their rights to traditional lands and self-government.

In their respective attempts to address their own colonial histories, the Canadian and Australian courts have both begun to recognize the rights and title of Indigenous peoples to their traditional land-bases. Initially this gesture appeared to promise greater rights and freedoms for Indigenous peoples, including entitlement to self-government and the right to manage and benefit from traditional lands without the need for external authorization. Unfortunately, however, in a number of recent decisions the progress demonstrated by the courts in earlier cases has stalled, even reversed.

This paper will demonstrate that where the Canadian and Australian courts have recognized Indigenous rights and title they have done so by applying a culturalist framework. I argue that this culturalist framework has served to arbitrarily circumscribe the scope of Indigenous rights to a narrowly conceived bundle of “cultural” rights which privileges the sovereignty and title of the state over that of Indigenous peoples. Because of their reliance on a cultural approach to the interpretation of Aboriginal rights, common law courts have proven to be severely restricted in their capacity to recognize rights that would translate into greater freedom and equality for Indigenous peoples. In light of this, I conclude that although the law can be a powerful tool for furthering Indigenous rights, the courts cannot be the primary source of greater freedom and equality. Because of their inherently conservative nature courts often follow precedent and generally rely on norms and rules already accepted in the greater society. For this reason, although they can protect and encourage certain rights movements, the courts must radically alter their conceptual framework before significant changes and improvements can be made to Indigenous title jurisprudence.

Charles Pigden, University of Otago

A sensible knave? Hume, Jane Austen and Mr Elliot

Mon 4.45 - 6

My paper deals with one woman’s literary response to a philosophical problem. The woman is Jane Austen, the problem is the rationality of Hume’s ‘sensible knave’ and Austen’s response is to deepen the problem. Despite his enthusiasm for virtue, Hume reluctantly concedes that injustice can be a rational strategy for ‘sensible knaves’, who feel no aversion towards thoughts of villainy or baseness. Austen agrees, but adds that absent considerations of a future state there are other vices besides injustice that can be rationally indulged with tolerable prospects of worldly happiness. Austen’s creation Mr Elliot is just such an agent - sensible and knavish but not technically ‘unjust.’

Charles Pigden, University of Otago

Identifying goodness

Tues 9 – 10.15

The paper reconstructs Moore’s Open Question Argument and discusses its rise and fall. There are three basic objections to the OQA: Geach’s point, that Moore presupposes

that 'good' is a predicative adjective (whereas it is in fact attributive); Lewy's point, that it leads straight to the paradox of Analysis; and Durrant's point that even if 'good' is not synonymous with any naturalistic predicate, goodness might be synthetically identical with a naturalistic property. As against Geach, I argue that 'good' has both predicative and attributive uses and that in moral contexts it is difficult to give a naturalistic account of the attributive 'good'. And I reformulate the OQA to deal with Lewy's point. But the bulk of the paper is devoted to Durrant's objection. I argue that the post-Moorean program of looking for synthetic identities between moral and naturalistic properties is either redundant or impossible. For it can only be carried through if 'good' expresses an empirical concept (a point proved by the reformulated OQA). Hence synthetic naturalism is impossible. I discuss direct reference as a possible way out for the synthetic naturalist and conclude that it will not work. The OQA may be a bit battered but it works after a fashion.

Belinda Prakhoff, University of Melbourne

Recasting emotional content in music

Tues 10.45 – 11.45

In this paper, I will re-examine two of the most persistent themes within the philosophy of music: the idea that the emotional colour of a work is that work's "content"; and the idea that language, or linguistic structure, might metaphorically explain musical structure and how we understand it.

My aim in doing this is also twofold. First, after giving some background on how the concept of musical content arose and why it has caused so many problems within the debate, I will show that the linguistic metaphor can assist, rather than (as traditionally thought) detract from accounts of where the emotions fit into our understanding of the nature of musical structure. Secondly, I will argue that this can be used as a basis for a recasting of emotional content in music into characterising structural properties of music. There are explanatory gains to be made in so doing that go far beyond mere re-labelling.

Bill Ransome, Griffith University

Is agent-based virtue ethics self-undermining?

Tues 2 – 3.15

Agent-based virtue ethics strives to offer a viable account of both moral conduct and the source of moral value, independent of 'deontic' teleological and deontological characterizations. One of its chief proponents offers an agent-based virtue-ethical account that aspires to derive all moral value, including the moral status of actions, solely from the 'aretaic' concept of benevolence. I suggest that morality as benevolence fails to offer a viable account of either virtuous moral conduct or the source of moral value, because it is self-undermining in both respects. In order to solve this structural problem, it appears as if the theory may have to give up its agent-based status.

David Ripley, University of Melbourne

Circumstantialism and identity

Wed 9 – 10.15

This talk begins from a controversial claim: that the (good) reasons for invoking possible worlds in a theory of content are also (good) reasons for invoking circumstances that are not possible worlds: circumstances at which tautologies and other necessities may fail, or contradictions or other impossibilities may hold. I will argue that there is at least one compelling reason to prefer a broader circumstantialist theory to one that restricts itself to possible worlds: the broader theory allows us to give a clear and direct account of Frege's puzzle without denying the necessity of identity. Hesperus and Phosphorus are identical at the actual world, and so at all possible worlds; but they are not identical at all circumstances. There are impossible circumstances where they are distinct. In gaining the information that Hesperus and Phosphorus are identical, we learn that the actual circumstance is not among those circumstances at which they are distinct. This is to learn something non-trivial, but necessary. I'll argue that this account (pace an argument due to Soames) is compatible with a view of proper names on which they simply pick out their bearers, and have no descriptive content. Putting this all together, though, requires a distinction: Hesperus and Phosphorus are distinct simpliciter, although identical at the actual world. I'll close the talk by considering the distinction between identity simpliciter and identity at a circumstance that makes this possible.

Denis Robinson, University of Auckland

What shall we tell the students? – reflections on pedagogy and describing what philosophy is

Mon 4.45 – 6

This talk is less an instance of philosophy, or even of a scholarly exercise, than a set of overtly impressionistic remarks about the nature of philosophy as an academic field or discipline. I wish to share concern and stimulate discussion about the particular issue of how we communicate with our students, particularly our more junior or beginning students, about the nature of that discipline. I think sometimes we retreat too easily – and for fairly evident reasons – into vague generalities and/or an uneasy shuffle.

I will argue that we should not be shy about the fact that there is no easy and agreed account of what philosophy is, since dealing with questions which have no easy and agreed answers is a fundamental part of philosophy. The paper elaborates that point. What is needed is to give some account – an avowedly contestable one – of what provides the unity of this conspicuously multi-faceted discipline, and what sort of thing one does in trying to pursue it. The account needs to be thoroughly non-technical since it is to be addressed to beginning students. Most of the talk will be coextensive with the document I give to all my students addressing this question. Some of it is unashamedly metaphorical.

Geoffrey Roche

Jean Améry versus Adorno and Horkheimer on the association of Sade, the Enlightenment, and the Holocaust

Tues 9 – 10.15

Since the publication of Adorno and Horkheimer's *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1944), Sade's capacity, in some sense, for philosophical prophecy — particularly of the real-

world impact of dangerous ideas— has been a matter of serious discussion. But there has been to date no direct comparison between Sade's texts and what we know of Nazism and the Holocaust, leaving both association and interpretation vague. This article addresses this gap, and continues from Jean Améry's criticism of Adorno and Horkheimer's dogmatically Marxist understanding of Nazism.

I begin by outlining the key commonality between Sade and Nazism, being the doctrine of supremacy, and its corollary, the dismissal of and call to destroy biblical monotheism and its secular, Enlightenment principles (such as equality and rule of law). Also noted is the widely acknowledged (though rarely articulated) similarity of Sade and Nietzsche in this respect. This is followed by an outline of the historical placement of these doctrines on a continuum, extending from Sade's age to the 1930's. I then address a major problem with Adorno and Horkheimer's association of Sade and Nazism with rationality and "instrumental reason." In response, I argue that that Sade and Nazism are to be associated with a counter- Enlightenment that emerged, illegitimately, from within the Enlightenment mainstream, being grounded on dogmatically asserted beliefs that were essentially romantic and irrational. I also suggest that Jean Améry's association of Sade with the psychology of Nazi atrocity is well supported by both accounts of the Holocaust and by Sade's own depiction of the rituals of sadism.

David Rowe, La Trobe University
Virtue Ethics: Nietzsche contra Swanton
Sun 3.20 – 4.20

In this paper I argue against a particular aspect of Swanton's virtue ethics on Nietzschean grounds. I then sketch what a Nietzschean virtue ethics might look like. Swanton holds that for any particular virtue to be a virtue it requires, among other things, aspects of love-for-oneself, or self-love, and love-for-others, or universal-love. She attempts to show that, contrary to appearances, self-love and universal-love are consistent and does this in respect to a Nietzschean inspired critique. I will argue that Swanton has not done justice to the Nietzschean element in her defence of these aspects of the virtues. In particular, I will argue that there is a problem if universal-love cannot be reduced to self-love. I then turn to the Nietzschean corpus to construct a virtue ethics but find little that is of any help in this regard. I conclude that a Nietzschean inspired virtue ethics might be interesting, but this is to go beyond Nietzsche... and beyond Swanton.

Klem Ryan, Brasenose College, University of Oxford
Considering Carl Schmitt and the regular war paradigm
Tues 10.45 – 11.45

In the past decade there has been resurgence in the interest in normative theories of war. The impetus for this resurgence can, in part, be linked to recent criticisms made against the influential account of just war theory presented by Michael Walzer in his *Just and Unjust Wars* (1977). Gregory Reichberg in a 2008 article argued that one of the key tensions in Walzer's account stems from an important error in Walzer's exposition of just war theory wherein he fails to appreciate or differentiate two distinct and sometimes conflicting normative paradigms that underpin his account of the 'war convention'. Walzer's error leads to his conflation of a just war paradigm of warfare with a statist and legalist conception of war, which Reichberg terms the 'regular war paradigm'. This failure I believe contributes significantly to the criticisms of incoherence levelled at

Walzer by his critics. Furthermore Walzer's failure to recognise the regular war paradigm has contributed to confusion over its relevance and significance for normative theorising about war.

It is against this background that the work of the jurist Carl Schmitt (1888 – 1985) deserves consideration. Schmitt's writings on international law and warfare feature relatively little in Anglo-American political thought, having only comparatively recently been translated into English. This is to the detriment of the contemporary debate on normativity in war, given Schmitt's rare and detailed exposition of the regular war paradigm. To remedy this deficiency, in this paper, I briefly outline the central features of Schmitt's account of normativity in war and his critique of the just war tradition. I explain how this account helps us understand more clearly some of the features of Walzer's war convention, as well as their limitations. I then consider objections to the regular war paradigm made in two recent articles by Chris Brown and Anthony Coates, in which they argue that the regular war paradigm encourages both a greater incidence of warfare, and leads to a dangerous and unappealing lack of moral restraint by emphasising the importance of *in bello* over *ad bellum* considerations. I argue these criticisms are not sustainable against Schmitt, as they rest on a number of misinterpretations of his account and of the regular war paradigm in general. In particular these criticisms fail to acknowledge or address the reasoning behind the idea of belligerent equality, which is one of the central features of the regular war paradigm. I conclude by considering the continuing relevance of Schmitt's account to the current debate, and in particular consider how an appreciation of the regular war paradigm provides a potential line of response to Walzer's contemporary critics.

Talia Sellars, University of Auckland
A defense of Dyke's token-reflexive view
Tues 2 – 3.15

Given that the B-theorists deny that tense (past, present and future) is an objective part of the reality of time, they must give an account of how it can be that sentences which make tensed claims can be true. There are a number of ways that they might do this, the two main accounts are the date-analysis and the token-reflexive account of the non-tensed truth makers and truth conditions of tensed sentences. My preferred account is Heather Dyke's version of the token reflexive account which says that a sentence token, such as "Event *e* is now" is true if and only if (the time of) the event and (the time of) the sentence-token are simultaneous. However various criticisms have been raised against the token-reflexive account. I will defend Dyke's theory against these criticisms, in particular the claim the token-reflexive view cannot account for, or gives the wrong truth values for unuttered sentences. This criticism (along with others) is mistaken, and I will explain why.

Vanessa Scholes, Open Polytechnic / Kuratini Tuwhera
Participation in moral judgement in moral philosophy

This paper discusses some of the different ways moral philosophers ask students, colleagues or experimental subjects to participate in moral judgement; namely, thought experiments, case scenarios and case studies. After outlining some uses of these participatory tools in the service of moral philosophy, the paper considers several potential dangers in their use. These include: neglect of relevant epistemological questions in the design or use of the tool; neglect of participants' preconceptions and

post-conceptions; presumptions regarding attitudes and abilities of participants; and corruption of the tool. The dangers are illustrated with reference to recent work in moral philosophy from a variety of sources.

Neil Sinhababu, National University of Singapore

Why my pants are not subject to requirements of rationality

Mon 11.50 – 1.05

Human agents like myself are subject to requirements of rationality – for example, the requirement not to believe both p and $\text{not-}p$. They either meet these requirements or violate them. Inanimate objects like my pants are not subject to these requirements of rationality.

They neither meet these requirements nor violate them, as the requirements do not apply to them. I argue that narrow-scope accounts of rational requirements can explain to which things rational requirements apply, and to which things rational requirements do not apply. This gives them an advantage over wide-scope accounts, which cannot provide such an explanation and must import one from elsewhere.

Nicholas Smith, University of Auckland

Virtue ethics and the primacy of character

Mon 2 – 3.15

In recent times, writers on virtue ethics have been anxious to distinguish virtue-ethical approaches from consequentialist and deontological approaches. A common way to do so has been to claim that (only) virtue ethics maintains the primacy of character evaluation over action evaluation. An example of this is found in Gary Watson, who claims that an ethics of virtue is the claim that “action appraisal is derivative from the appraisal of character.”

In this paper, I first interpret what it means to claim that character evaluation has primacy over action evaluation, and I distinguish a strong and a weak version of this claim. The strong version holds that the ethical status of an action as right, wrong, or optional is a function of (or entirely derivative of) the ethical status of the agent’s character as good, bad, or neutral. The weak version holds that the ethical status of an action is never independent of the ethical status of the agent’s character.

After fleshing out the strong and weak versions of what it means to affirm the primacy of character, I argue that affirming the primacy of character in either sense is neither necessary nor sufficient for being a version of virtue ethics. For the sufficiency claim, I engage with an argument found in Justin Oakley’s “Varieties of Virtue Ethics,” and after repairing his argument from counter-example, I conclude that it is successful. Afterwards, I explain that the reason why the sufficiency claim fails is that to affirm the primacy of character is merely a claim about what Shelly Kagan calls a “primary evaluative focal point,” and, as such, leaves all standards for evaluation unspecified. Given this, it is thereby possible to combine the primacy of character with the principle of utility as the only standard of evaluation.

Turning to the necessity claim, I show how Christine Swanton’s recent definition of virtue ethics (forthcoming in “The Definition of Virtue Ethics” for the Cambridge Companion to Virtue Ethics) implies that affirming the primacy of character is not necessary for being a virtue ethics. In this discussion, I give an independent argument for the goodness of Swanton’s definition of virtue ethics, and I show how there can be theories that meet its requirements and deny the primacy of character (as Swanton’s theory of right action does). Further, I argue that to define virtue ethics as necessarily

affirming the primacy of character begs the question of whether standards embodied in virtue concepts apply directly only to character traits, or whether they can apply directly to action (as Anscombe understands them) or rule (as Hursthouse supposes).

Michael Strevens, New York University

Explanatory autonomy and explanatory irreducibility

Thurs 2 – 3.15

A powerful argument for anti-reductionism turns on the premise that the biological, behavioral, and social sciences are, in the way that they explain their characteristic subject matters, in some sense autonomous from physics. The argument is formulated and strengthened in this paper, and then undermined by showing that a reductionist account of explanation is not only consistent with, but provides a compelling account of, explanatory autonomy. Two kinds of explanatory abstraction, objective and contextual, play important roles in the story.

Christine Swanton, University of Auckland

Does virtue ethics need moral principles?

Sun 9 – 10.15

It is by now a common place that virtue ethics is seen as “particularist” in a sense made popular by writers such as Martha Nussbaum and John McDowell: acting virtuously and rightly requires the ‘situational appreciation’ characteristic of a virtuous agent, and not just knowledge of general moral rules or principles. However, is it the case that virtue ethics should be particularist in a stronger sense associated with the writings of Jonathan Dancy? In this sense, virtue ethics eschews moral principles altogether.

In this paper I argue for Dancy-type particularism for virtue ethics, and defend it against the most serious objection: namely that reasons on the particularist view cannot be intelligible as reasons; they cannot serve as reasons to justify actions. The objection is rebutted by deploying, in conjunction with the theoretical resources of virtue ethics, the notion of a default reason. A default reason is a reason that is ‘set up to be a reason in advance’ (Dancy 1993).

Liling Tan, National University of Singapore

What we owe to the global poor

Thurs 11.50 – 12.50

Naively, it seems that giving to the global poor is something that is good to do, but not wrong not to do. But is this all that morality demands of us? In *World Poverty and Human Rights*, Thomas Pogge challenges this common assumption, arguing that by doing nothing for the global poor, we are not merely failing to help, but we are violating our negative duty not to harm others. One objection to Pogge’s position is that affluent individuals acting in the context of the global institutional order do not meet the criteria of sufficient agency to count as harming the global poor. I argue that while this objection largely fails, it points us to the limits of what Pogge can claim, given his philosophical commitments.

Chris Tucker, University of Auckland
Welfare and Rowe's problem of evil
Tues 2 – 3.15

William Rowe endorses Rowe's Requirement (RR): God's existence is compatible with some intense suffering only if God could not prevent the suffering without thereby (i) losing some greater good or (ii) permitting some evil equally bad or worse. RR is highly plausible and usually assumed in the literature on the problem of evil. I argue, however, that RR is mistaken. Although God does need special reasons to permit lives that overall aren't sufficiently good, He doesn't need special reasons to allow every instance of intense suffering.

Laurens van Apeldoorn, Nuffield College, University of Oxford
Does Hobbes have an instrumental conception of practical reason?
Tues 3.20 – 4.20

Does Thomas Hobbes have an instrumental conception of practical reason? This question is often answered in the affirmative, and with this affirmative answer Hobbes is taken as a proto-Humean who foresaw the fading authority of reason in practical decision-making. Although it is indeed true that Hobbes subscribes to an account of practical reason that could be called instrumental, the concept of 'instrumental reason' itself is ambiguous and admits to various interpretations. In this paper I aim to reject the interpretation of Hobbes as proto-Humean, which I take to encompass two independent ideas. The first idea is that human reason is limited to theoretical reason, that is, to identifying true factual statements about the world. If true, this would mean that the practical use of reason is limited to informing us about factual matters related to our aims or ends. The second idea is that our ends are determined by what we desire. If true, this would mean that when we act to further our ends, we act solely on the basis of our passions. Both these views have regularly, but mistakenly, been attributed to Hobbes. In section 1, I will argue that Hobbes does not embrace the view that practical reasons are indistinguishable from factual truths found out by theoretical reason. In section 2, two concepts of 'desire' are distinguished and I argue that Hobbes's references to desire do not support a Humean interpretation of the term. In section 3, I will argue that Hobbes was a 'projectivist' about value, which further undermines the Humean interpretation. In the last section I argue that a correct assessment of Hobbes's conception of practical reason is of great importance for our understanding of his moral and political philosophy, since, as Hobbes repeatedly reminds us, the laws of nature are 'dictates of reason'.

Stan van Hooft, Deakin University
Virtue and identity
Sun 4.40 – 5.55

Virtue is often defined with reference to society or to practices. It highlights character traits which are deemed admirable in a person insofar as that person is useful to society and conducive to the success of its practices. But from the virtuous person's own point of view it relates to one's sense of identity and takes its motivational power from the sense of self-worth which it gives to that virtuous person. The existential project of being virtuous is not a matter of conforming to social expectations or objective moral norms: it is a matter of fulfilling one's own ideals of oneself. But where do these ideals

come from? Are they constituted by the ideal of acting as a rational agent, as Christine Korsgaard has argued? Given what Sabina Lovibond has described as our communitarian second nature, the moral forms that our moral communities impart to us allow us to affirm ourselves as the persons we are in the context of our societies, and to express our inclinations in forms acceptable to, and structured by, our surrounding culture. Pursuing her rejection of the priority of psychology and following Wittgenstein, Lovibond rejects any appeal to metaphysical entities such as free will or even self-conscious intentions housed in a mind in her account of practical rationality. For her, to act morally is not to give oneself the moral law so as to constitute one's freedom, or to be driven by benevolent sentiments such as caring. It is to express our socially formed virtue in action. Accordingly, this paper will argue that what is at stake in virtuous action is not "right action" but the recognition of the communitarian agent as a subject worthy of social respect. That such a view does nothing to refute the relativism of which virtue ethics is often accused should not be held against it.

Stan van Hooft, Deakin University

Caring, objectivity and justice: an integrative view

Wed 9 – 10.15

The argument of this paper is framed by a debate between the justice perspective and the caring perspective in moral theory. Whereas the caring perspective requires us to care about others and to want to help them meet their vital needs, and so to give preferential consideration to those others, the justice perspective requires us to consider their needs without the intrusion of our subjective interests or emotions so that we give everyone an equal moral status. Justice requires objectivity. I argue that a deep form of caring lies behind both approaches and so unites them. In the course of the argument, I reject Michael Slote's sentimentalist form of an ethics of care, and expound Thomas Nagel's moral theory, which seems to lie at the opposite end of a spectrum ranging from moral sentiments to impersonal objectivity. Nevertheless, Nagel's theory of normative realism provides unexpected support for the thesis that a deep and subjective form of caring lies at the base of even our most objective moral reasons.

Ruth Walker and Alastair Gunn (University of Waikato)

How should secular environmental ethicists respond to Christian concepts of stewardship?

Mon 4.45 – 6

See above for abstract.

Kirsten Walsh, University of Otago

Hypotheses and Newton's First Optical Papers

Mon 10.45 – 11.45

Newton's famous pronouncement, *Hypotheses non fingo*, first appeared in 1713, but his anti-hypothetical stance was present as early as 1672. For example, in his first paper on optics, Newton claims that his doctrine of light and colours is a theory, not an hypothesis, for three reasons:

1. It is certainly true, because it supported by (or deduced from) experiment;
2. It concerns the physical properties of light, rather than the nature of light; and
3. It has testable consequences.

Despite his clear anti-hypothetical statements, a corpuscular hypothesis lies beneath Newton's theory of colours. What are we to make of this? Is Newton guilty of feigning an hypothesis?

Some writers, such as Sabre and Dear, argue that Newton's Hypotheses non fingo is merely 'lip-service' to the dominant methodological tradition. Others, such as Janiak, argue that Newton's anti-hypotheticalism is a polemic device, designed specifically to oppose his Cartesian and Leibnizian critics. I argue that, despite his corpuscular hypothesis, we should take Newton's pronouncement as a genuine account of his methodology.

I take a fresh look at Newton's first optical papers in light of the role of hypotheses in the Baconian-experimental tradition in which Newton's early research was conducted. I argue that Newton is working with a rough but genuine distinction between hypothesis and theory. This distinction is consistent with both the Baconian-experimental method and with his later anti-hypothetical pronouncement.

John Williams and Brian T. Mooney, Singapore Management University

Know-how, virtue and connaturality

Mon 11.50 – 1.05

We show how know-how, once elevated to a skill, both informs and is informed by intellectual and moral virtues. We analyse know-how partly in terms of counterfactual success. This analysis is elucidated partly in terms of intellectual virtues. Intellectual virtues are themselves elucidated in terms of moral virtues and *visa versa*. Thus know-how is informed by the intellectual and moral virtues. The notion of connaturality connects the metaphysics of purposes with the purposes exemplified in human knowing. These purposes involve our directedness towards objective goods. In turn these goods require virtues which help us participate in such goods. Thus our connatural knowledge makes certain virtues possible. Virtue is an excellence, and since human virtues involve know-how, excellent know-how is partially constitutive of the possession of a skill. Thus the intellectual and moral virtues are informed by know-how.

Daniel Wilson, University of Auckland

The case for descriptivism in the ontology of theatre

Tues 11.50 – 1.05

If the benefits of an ontological model (for example, in terms of the elegance of the model when compared with its explanatory power (Dodd)) for items in a particular social practice like theatre outweigh the costs to our pre-theoretical intuitions or our current ways of engaging in these practices then according to revisionary accounts of the ontology of theatre (broadly speaking) we should modify our beliefs and practices to conform with theory. Descriptivism by contrast examines existing pre-theoretical intuitions and practices and tests ontological models against what we do and say in practice.

In this paper I will examine the case for descriptivism in the ontology of theatre and offer arguments against revisionary approaches. I will particularly focus on Julian Dodd's ontology of music and show why the arguments for his revisionary approach fail. I will also consider various limitations of descriptivist accounts and identify some conditions under which this approach may lead to unintuitive ontological models. While

theatre is the main focus of my talk the conclusions may also apply equally well to other social practices.

David Wood, University of Melbourne
Four Conceptions of the Criminal Law
Wed 11.50 – 1.05

This paper explores four ideal or critical as opposed to descriptive or positive conceptions of the criminal law.

The first conception sees the criminal law as centrally concerned with punishment, as a system of punishment “writ large”. It holds that ‘the conditions for legitimate criminalisation are largely dictated by the conditions for legitimate punishment’ (Shute, Gardner and Horder, eds., *Action and Value in Criminal Law* 1, 2 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993)). The most prominent adherent to this conception is Husak, who bluntly declares that the criminal law is ‘that body of law that subjects offenders to state punishment’ (*Overcriminalisation: The Limits of the Criminal Law* 80 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008)).

However, punishment is often seen as consisting of two dimensions, elements or aspects, one of censure, condemnation, reprobation or denunciation, and the other of sanction or hard treatment, and these two considerations serve to introduce the next two conceptions of criminal law.

The second conception, then, sees the criminal law as centrally concerned to express the community’s emphatic disapproval of what it regards as highly wrongful, criminalisable conduct. The criminal law is essentially a system of moral censure. Its distinctive characteristic is its moral function of condemnation or denunciation. If, according to the prevailing ‘censuring convention’, censure can only be adequately expressed through punitive hard treatment, then the censure conception reduces to the punishment conception. Only where censure can be adequately expressed formally or symbolically, is the censure conception of criminal law distinct from the punishment conception.

In marked contrast with the censure conception, the third, hard treatment conception of the criminal law sees it purely instrumentally, as a device or mechanism for furthering any end held to be relevant (e.g. crime-minimisation). Seeing it as ‘pure means’, this conception denies that the criminal law has any distinctive features or characteristics. No question of the moral assessment of the criminal law arises, only the question of whether it is an efficient means for furthering whatever end is endorsed.

Finally, and in stark contrast with the hard treatment conception, the fourth conception sees the criminal law in explicitly moral terms, as fundamentally concerned with retributive justice. The point of the criminal law, on this conception, is to ensure those who engage in wrongdoing serious enough to warrant criminalisation receive just retribution. It is in virtue of this fundamental role that the criminal law can lay claim to being – at least, in an idealised form – a ‘great moral machine’, to use Feinberg’s phrase (‘Some Unswept Debris from the Hart-Devlin Debate’, (1987) 72 *Synthese* 249, 260). If, as Rawls famously stated, ‘[j]ustice is the first virtue of social institutions’ (John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* 3 (rev. ed.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999)), then, retributive justice is the first virtue of a system of criminal law. That the criminal law may also further other worthwhile ends, such as reducing crime, is a bonus.