

SENSORY INFORMATION

Houghton Dalrymple

ABSTRACT

In this paper I argue that physical stimuli, such as odors, sounds, and light radiations are directly perceived, that is, they are neither perceived by first perceiving something else nor are they inferred from something else of which we are aware. The eighteenth-century British empiricists had seemed to deny that we ever perceive objects in the world, unless the perceptions and the objects are the same. But everybody knows that the perception of an object is not the same as the object itself, for example, my seeing the full moon and the full moon are two different things. While most contemporary empiricists would admit that we see lightning flashes, hear sounds of cannons going off, and smell smoke, they claim that these events are only indirectly perceived. Typically the claim is made that perceptions of these events are inferences from sense experiences. However, from sense experiences alone only other sense experiences can be inferred. If the data of sense are distinguished from sense experiences that they produce and it is understood that it is the data of sense that are perceived, then the foregoing problem and other problems can be avoided. For instance, the fact that objects produce different visual appearances at different locations, which could be recorded by a camera, is not seen, as it once was, as a problem. A table top cannot be both rectangular and diamond-shaped, but there is nothing incompatible, or mysterious, about a table making one kind of appearance at one location and another kind of appearance at a second location. Just as a certain sound is the sign of a brass band playing, certain visual appearances are signs of a rectangular table top, but what the sign happens to be on a specific occasion depends on conditions of observation, that is, it depends on what the visual stimuli are under those conditions.

MILTON FRIEDMAN: MORAL CONFUSION IN THE CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY DEBATE

C. Lynne Fulmer

ABSTRACT

This paper attacks the position Milton Friedman takes in the corporate responsibility debate. Friedman maintains that business should not exhibit moral initiatives; he justifies this claim with a number of normative claims that are sometimes not explicit and are always undefended. Moreover, the conclusions he draws based on these normative claims seem likewise unwarranted.

Many analysts see Friedman as an ethical egoist. I show that his case against moral initiatives as an ethical egoist is unsound and clearly not the only moral criterion he is using. He is more clearly using utilitarian and deontological considerations when he argues that the only social responsibility of business is business. Against his utilitarian case, I show that a free market, controlled only by the law, does not produce the best consequences for the most number of people. I also show that corporations exercising social responsibility will not produce the undesirable social consequences Milton Friedman envisions; Friedman's claims are in most cases empirically false.

When Friedman attacks corporate morality on deontological grounds, he also reasons fallaciously that in pursuing social agendas corporate social managers are breaking the most important obligation to stockholders: the promise to maximize profits. Here I argue that there is no such explicit promise and, even if there were, there might be exceptions; and finally, that a business might have more important obligations to other stakeholders.

In short, Friedman appeals to a number of ethical assumptions, implicitly and explicitly. These assumptions are not always compatible, nor are the conclusions drawn on these assumptions clearly warranted. His arguments exhibit moral confusion.

UNIVERSALIZING THE UNIVERSALISABILITY PRINCIPLE

Gilbert Fulmer

ABSTRACT

The principle that ethical ideals must be universalisable—applied to every person—is widely held. I here explore the notion that the principle might be applied to *everything*. This conceptual shift has the advantage that we need to decide not whether the universalisability principle is to be applied, but rather only what considerations are morally relevant.

The version of the Universalisability Principle that I propose to examine is the "Principle of Prima Facie Equality" (PPFE).

All existing entities should be treated as equal, unless there are morally relevant differences between them that justify differential treatment.

The PPFE gives no normative guidance by itself, since everything depends on the concept of a "morally relevant difference." Any normative judgment that could be supported by the Principle of Prima Facie Equality requires a judgment as to just what differences are morally relevant. Thus we focus on the questions that are morally significant.

**LATIN AMERICAN THOUGHT IN THE
UNITED STATES:
WHAT WE MIGHT LEARN**

John H. Haddox

ABSTRACT

While Latin American literary figures like Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Carlos Fuentes, Julio Cortázar, and Jorge Luis Borges are very widely read in the United States, the philosophical positions of even such major Latin American intellectual leaders as José Vasconcelos, Antonio Caso, Octavio Paz, and Francisco Romero are little known here.

This seems to be particularly unfortunate since philosophical positions developed by Latin American thinkers are in many cases different from (and complementary to) those presented by most philosophers in the United States in both form and content. Here these differences are explained and it is suggested that there is much of value in Latin American philosophy for us to know.

**"DO YOU BITE YOUR THUMB AT US, SIR?":
AMBIGUITY, INTENTION, AND FALSE COLORS IN
AESTHETIC THEORY**

Chuck Harriman

ABSTRACT

Language and other symbolic forms are systematically ambiguous. They require interpretation, and interpretation is context dependent. An important factor in interpretation is forming an hypothesis about the intention of a work. Estimating the intention of a work is analogous to assigning false color values to computer images. The addition of false colors makes apparent what otherwise might be difficult or impossible to see, but only a naive observer would suppose that the colors are present in the original image. When it is well done the estimate of intention greatly improves our ability to appreciate a work. As in the computer image, the structure of the original object determines within certain limits the pattern of false colors, but the judgment of the interpreter also plays a significant role. When constructing or employing an interpretation it is important to remind ourselves that the colors are not present in the original.

REDEFINING "GOD"

Peter Hutcheson

ABSTRACT

Can the problem of evil be avoided by changing the definition of "God?" I think that the answer is "no," and thus agree with P. J. McGrath, who argued recently for that conclusion in an exchange with various authors in *Analysis*. However, I do not think that McGrath has established his conclusion, for he does not consider the possibility of conceiving of God as not being all-knowing. In this paper I argue that if God is conceived as not being all-knowing in order to avoid the problem of evil, one can deduce consequences that are disastrous for religious belief. Thus, the problem of evil cannot be avoided by conceiving of God as less than all-knowing. And since McGrath has shown that conceiving of God as being either not all-powerful or not all-good would have devastating consequences for religious belief, we may infer that the problem of evil cannot be avoided by redefining "God."

PHENOMENOLOGY AS REALISM

Richard Owsley

ABSTRACT

Phenomenology as a philosophy has at various times been considered an example of idealism, realism, and neutralism. While the claims of idealism and neutralism have merits, it is the contention of my paper that an excellent case for viewing phenomenology as realism can be made. To buttress the claim, my paper confines phenomenology to the work of Edmund Husserl. It further confines the discussion to Husserl's work of 1911, *Philosophy as Rigorous Science*. The realism of this early work of Husserl parallels the realistic presuppositions of thinkers in Austria, the United States, and Great Britain. The first decade of the twentieth century was in all three countries a period of revival of realism against the idealistic claims of Hegelians and Neo-Kantians. For the purpose of this paper, realism is considered to have four marks: 1) There is a world which precedes human being and human activities. This world is real in the sense that its status is neither sustained nor threatened by some supposition involving human activity; 2) what is real is not changed in the process of being known; 3) those things which are real offer a reliable standard through and by which humans can measure and guide their judgment and their conduct; and 4) all the varied experiences of being human can be grounded in what is real.

ARTISTIC FREEDOM AND PUBLICLY FUNDED ART

William Springer

ABSTRACT

Is advocacy of unrestricted freedom of expression for publicly funded art and its exhibition defensible?

I argue that it is not on two grounds of principle, one logical, the other ethico-political. I follow these arguments by pointing out why I think it is also not defensible on the basis of expediency.

The logical argument. Advocacy for freedom of expression of any kind is ethico-political and can be made only by stepping outside of the language of aesthetics. Such a move is in effect the abandonment of the principle of autonomy of art.

The ethico-political argument. The claim that art *should not* be subject to censorship even when it is publicly funded is a demand to suspend the *prima facie* duty of fidelity. By accepting a grant artists enter into an implicit fiduciary relationship with the public (the grantors) that they will not use the grant to offend that public.

Finally, efforts to defend, and demands for, unlimited freedom of expression for publicly funded art is not expedient, for such efforts and demands are almost certain to give rise to a backlash which will make it impossible for organizations such as the National Endowment for the Arts to flourish.

THE SCYLLA AND CHARYBDIS OF DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE

Lee Stauffer

ABSTRACT

This paper considers the possibility that no system of distributive justice can be at once fair and efficient. The distribution of medical care is used as an example. The most equitable systems, such as socialism, fail to reward effort and thus encourage people to work less. However, in most real situations of distribution, the amount of goods and services available for distribution is altered by the amount of labor available. The opposite extreme of libertarianism rewards labor and thus is efficient in increasing goods and services, but may be quite unfair. Unfortunately, it appears that with regard to distribution we can be fair or we can be efficient, but we cannot be both.

