

**Affirmative Action: Judith Jarvis Thompson
on Preferential Hiring**

C. LYNNE FULMER

This paper explores Thompson's defense of preferential hiring of women and blacks in public universities. It will examine her claim that victims of social injustice are owed reparations by the community and that hiring preferences for such a group does not constitute an injustice to those who are not members of that group. I will argue that Thompson's case analysis fails to provide a completely satisfactory defense of preferential hiring and may rest on unclear moral foundations. The paper takes into account the criticisms of Thompson offered by Robert Simon and Robert Fullenwider. It contends that their criticisms are damaging to Thompson's case. Such criticisms will at least require further argument on Thompson's part, although they also need further defense to conclusively rout her.

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Is Phillip Johnson's Theism Politically Excluded?

GILBERT FULMER

Jerry Sherman claims in his "The Politics of Metaphysics: An Open Letter" (New Mexico & West Texas Philosophical Society, 1997 Meetings), that the Christian theism of Phillip E. Johnson is "politically" excluded from consideration in the academic world, and is so because metaphysical naturalism is so deeply entrenched in the academic world that alternatives are *simply* rejected and not considered on their merits.

This is false. First, Johnson's views ARE given attention in that world. It is not always favorable attention, but no writer can complain if his work is criticized. Second, Johnson's argumentation is largely an uncritical rehash of positions that have long ago been examined and rejected for good philosophical reasons; Johnson seems unfamiliar with this history. Third, Johnson claims that his own role is "... to encourage critical thinking about first principles so that we base our thinking on truth and not error" (*Reason In The Balance*, 2nd ed.: 194); but he offers little argument for his *own* first principles. For example, he states that "The way out[.]" is to understand that " 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God . . . For God so loved the world that he gave his only

Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.'

That's the way things really are. . . ." (p. 204).

But this ringing declaration of Christian doctrine is unsupported by argument. In conclusion, Johnson's work deserves no more professional attention than it receives, since it is simply not very good.

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Bringing Environmental Ethics Down to Earth

GRACIELA OLIVIA MARTINEZ GUTERREZ

Building grand theories in environmental ethics, separated completely from human interests and based in the idea of intrinsic value of natural entities, may satisfy the aesthetic and religious desires of some philosophers. However, they do not have pragmatic meaning for ethical development.

To illustrate this argument, definitions and implications of eco-tourism are briefly analyzed. Many philosophers consider eco-tourism a real way to save the natural environment, but the definitions of eco-tourism elaborated by environmental philosophers do not accurately reflect the current situation. The discontinuity that I show existing between the concept and the practice of eco-tourism implies that it is not a legitimate tool for preserving biological diversity and promoting a better quality of life for native populations. Eco-tourism is a complex concept, and its practice implies serious socioeconomic, ethical, and political problems, as clearly seen in this analysis.

The philosophers proposing eco-tourism as a solution should be committed to building a new ethic without the questionable old ontological commitments made by attributing intrinsic value to nature. Environmental philosophers should build a new ethic that takes into consideration the biological and socioeconomic aspects of their reality, in order to be able to influence both policy and decision-makers. An environmental ethics that is rationally defensible, based in an ecological, scientific concept of ecosystem; and that recognizes the reintegration of culture and nature and the roots of ecological crisis in class and historical conflicts, will lead to a different set of guiding ethical principles – one with the capability to influence the direction of environmental development projects.

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Overcoming Original Sin

BRANDON KNIGHT

Kierkegaard seems to claim that we should embrace Christianity because it has the most paradoxical doctrines. This is a highly counter-intuitive claim, but even if the presence of paradox does somehow qualify a practice for worthwhile participation, why should we think that Christian doctrines are the most paradoxical?

In this paper, I attempt to explain exactly what Kierkegaard meant when he recommended Christianity because of its contradictions, and whether or not other practices might be superior since they are even more paradoxical than Christianity. For example, what if Judas was really the Messiah instead of Jesus? This would seem more paradoxical than the Christianity that Kierkegaard had in mind. Would that make it an even better doctrine in Kierkegaard's eye?

According to Kierkegaard, truth is a matter of having right relation: truth is subjectivity. Such a position is a reaction against objectivity, which he judged to be inadequate. Human employment of reason aims at objectivity and is therefore inadequate. We must overcome reason in order to attain subjectivity. Tendencies to employ reason reflect Kierkegaard's notion of original sin. To overcome original sin, we must attain the right relationship with God, that is, we must get back into the truth-relation which is outside of reason. This relation is faith. It is a belief in the truth of contradictory propositions. Only one who has truly overcome reason can hold such beliefs. Christianity does provide such doctrines, so it provides an opportunity for overcoming original sin and getting back into a truth-relation.

The paper ends with some worries about the acceptability of my line of inquiry. After all, "Overcoming Original Sin" is an attempt at a reasonable analysis of Kierkegaard's views on Christianity and paradox, and reason was what he rejected.

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Philosophy and Insanity

MICHAEL J. MATTHIS

For Wittgenstein, the world is the totality of facts (*die Tatsache*), not things (*die Dinge*), and in this Wittgenstein follows Kant's prohibition

against metaphysical entities. Facts are manifestations of a logic that “fills the world,” and in this filling, there are no gaps or absences through which questions about the world can arise. Thus the question of the reality of the world is, according to Kant, “utterly without meaning,” and it is on this condition, what Wittgenstein called assurance (*die Versicherung*), that the factual shows itself. Any doubt, then, will unravel the, “infinitely fine network” of logic, in which all is spun out of empty concept, and thereby subject to doubt. The result of such doubt, then, will be to “plunge (the world) into chaos,” Wittgenstein asserts. “Assurance” allows the world to be such that I need not have to be concerned with my or the world’s destruction: the world, as logical, is *achieved*, already there, logically established, and any doubt about the world is similarly established, leaving “everything as it is,” according to Wittgenstein.

Because of the nature of doubt, then, Socratic questioning is fundamentally dangerous – because it is disconcerting, non-achieved, occurrent, and marked by failure, a logical obstacle. And in a world filled by logic, any such obstacle is precisely that which will plunge the world into chaos. Socrates’ *aporia* requires an absolute break with the infinitely fine network, but it is this break, which Aristotle calls *σχολα*, leisure, that enables philosophy to grasp the whole. For Wittgenstein, philosophical doubt is madness (*die Wahnsinn*) when it signifies a break from the world, and any temptation to do such philosophy should be treated with therapy. For Socrates, on the other hand, a world devoid of philosophy is itself madness: one needing its own therapy – that being philosophical questioning – whereas without it, the world has no value, and the persons in it, signified by Meletus, have no care, since the world is already achieved (“is as it is”), and is therefore indestructible. Philosophy then requires destruction as the context of creating value in a world that, otherwise, is devoid of it.

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**A Feminist Appropriation of the Ricoeurian
Hermeneutics of Symbols**

BERNADETTE E. O’CONNOR

In this paper I will summarize the dialectic, *à la* Hegel, with which Ricoeur engages Freud in his *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation*, paying special attention to the importance of this dialectic for the hermeneutics of symbols and of the myths in which they are embedded. I

then make explicit and thematic the Ricoeurian criterion for the evaluation of symbols and myths which derives from his dialectic with Freud. For Ricoeur the symbols and myths that are worthy of our attention, cultivation, and propagation are those which are more successful in transfiguring archaic material with teleological meaning. Such symbols and myths include those in which spiritual meaning compenetrates and transfigures archaic desires, those which succeed in impressing upon our opaque and archaic yearnings the light of the truth of self-recognition, those of the self’s honest appropriation of its embodied finitude, and those which prefigure solutions to conflicts in which human dignity is recognized in the other from whom desire seeks recognition. Finally, I demonstrate the significance of this criterion for contemporary social life by giving it a feminist inflection and by applying it to two myths about women: that of the Eternal Feminine, from middle twentieth-century Catholic philosophical and theological anthropology, and that of Antigone from Sophocles’ tragedy. The myth of the Eternal Feminine fails to meet the Ricoeurian criterion, while Sophocles’ Antigone does meet it.

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**Exorcising Hume’s Ghost:
Hume and the Observation of Causation**

DOUG RICE

For many philosophers of science, the lack of a successful epistemology of causation presents a major deterrent to the use of causal concepts in philosophy of science, as they are deployed, for example, in causal theories of scientific explanation. Here, I take up Hume’s criticism of causal knowledge, focusing on two claims: causation cannot be observed in the single instance, and inductive inferences are unjustified. The latter, I remind the reader, has broad skeptical consequences, and thus provides no reason to disparage causal knowledge in particular. The former claim, I contend, is simply wrong: causation can be observed in the singular instance. This conclusion is forced on us, I argue, by recent evidence from experimental psychology, which shows that if motion, three-dimensionality, and even color are perceived, then so is *causation*. The empiricist philosopher of science should, I suggest, draw three conclusions from this: (1) causation *is* observable, (2) the epistemological pedigree of causal knowledge is equal to that of less controversial sorts of empirical knowledge, and (3) the philosopher of science should feel free to

deploy causal concepts in theorizing about explanation and other aspects of science.

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After Locality

ALEX SILVA AND ROBERT FERRELL

This paper looks at possible problems with the implicit ontological stance of neo-Pragmatism, as we understand it, in light of recent developments in theoretic physics. It would seem that an explicit ontological stance would be necessary for a viable, coherent, philosophical position. Analytic philosophy has been the primary force in philosophy in the U.S. for the better part of this century. A preference for Positivism there has been well noted. More recently, there has been an upsurge of interest in Pragmatism. Yet, most of the discussion has been focused upon social and even aesthetic problems with little attention being paid to science, at least in the way that Peirce and James did. The implication here is that some of these neo-Pragmatists may have brought with them some baggage from a former, Positivistic outlook.

An attempt has been made by Hans Albert to develop a constructive philosophy which calls for a search for alternative hypotheses, in order to develop a truly progressive science. This approach has been labeled Positivistic by Habermas and others. There is an apparent conflict with the pragmatic emphasis on *praxis* over and against *theoria*. While it is possible to focus on practice in terms of social issues, a coherent ontology necessitates a position concerning physical reality, same availed of the experimental findings in the field of quantum physics. Any effort to take a Jamesian stance regarding a pluralistic ontology, as opposed to the "block universe" assumption, seems thwarted by recent experiments—such as that of John Bell—which either threaten the locality of Einstein or imply a kind of holism. For us, scientific findings should carry over into a philosophic standing. The implication here is informed by Burt's early critique of the Positivist attempt to escape metaphysics. In our post-modern era, the problem of non-locality either forces us to choose between undecidedness and a more holistic alternative, or admit to incompleteness. The consequent reduction of philosophy to conversation by some prominent neo-Pragmatists has not solved the problem, but rather avoided it.

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The Teleology of Organs

WILLIAM SPRINGER

In his "Historical Sketch" at the beginning of *Origin of Species*, Darwin makes some remarks about the principle of natural selection having been "shadowed forth" by Aristotle. The passages Darwin refers to are, in fact, Aristotle's presentation of Empedocles' position, the same position to which Aristotle objects. I use this interesting confusion as a platform from which to critique theoretical objections to the reality of the teleological morphology and physiology of organs.

That the structures and activities of boundless complexity and coordinated interactivity which we call the organs of plants and animals arose out of lifeless molecular stuff is what all who ascent to evolution not only concede, but also implicitly affirm. That the organs serve a purpose, that they manifest design principles as if they had been made intentionally, is something that would be readily conceded if it were not for intellectual strictures arising from some other source than the evidence as it naturally presents itself to us. That organs exist as Aristotle describes them, that is as being for some end, *i.e.*, as serving the organism, or as we might say today, as manifesting design principles, does not require attributing foresight or intentionality to the organs. Postulating an external agency to account for the existence of such conspicuously well-designed organ structures and activities is a separate and independent issue.

If we suspend scientific and philosophical theorizing about the teleology of organs, we, in effect, find such theorizing empirically verified in every one of them, from eyelids, to lungs and hearts. We *perceive* teleological structures and activities: they are part of all living things; they are natural.

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Peirce and the Joker: Questions of Self-worth and Character

THOMAS URBAN

This is a paper about the relation of the individual to the meaning of self-worth and character. It proceeds from a comparison of two comments by Charles S. Peirce. Peirce wrote that the influence of a person of character lives on after death, and is personal (*Collected Papers* 6.519). At

another place he asserts *that personal existence is an illusion and a practical joke* (*Collected Papers* 4.68). Both claims are accepted as true, which leaves open the need to form a new, more practical concept of self-worth and character, namely without the problem of self-contradiction. Questioned is the notion that individuals possess an intrinsic worth which extends to our understanding of the possession of character, character being the mark of a virtuous human self-worth.

This questioning about intrinsic worth for individuals is carried forward through a discussion of Peirce's critique of modern philosophy. Of particular import are Peirce's issues with nominalism, his association of meaning with reality. Reality for Peirce is the public domain, by logic a common space in which all testable meaning appears. Included is discussion of the Medieval origins of the nominalist-realist distinction, its significance for a sound grasp of Peirce, and finally, the wisdom in understanding self-worth and character in public rather than personal, private terms. It is argued that the full, true sense of the virtuous human Self, its self-worth and character, can only be seen from the perspective of the realist position within the context of practical presentations.

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**BRIEF HISTORY OF THE NEW MEXICO & WEST TEXAS
PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY**

by Hubert G. Alexander

"The New Mexico Philosophical Society was organized in 1948, when I moved to the University of New Mexico. Hubert G. Alexander, Chairman of the Department, expected me to do it. He then took charge and continued to promote its interests until today. Proximity to universities in El Paso and Lubbock, Texas, and in Chihuahua, Mexico, and participation of professors from these and other Texas cities, led to its expansion as the New Mexico and West Texas Philosophical Society in 1964." (quoted from a statement by A. J. Bahm in 1986.)

The first meeting of the New Mexico Philosophy Society took place in Albuquerque in April 1949 with Archie Bahm acting as chairman and Leon Pousson (Catholic Teachers College) acting secretary. Others present included P. M. Baldwin (New Mexico College of A & M), H. G. Alexander (University of New Mexico), Lisle Hosford (New Mexico Highlands University), Miguel Jorrin (University of New Mexico), and a number of University of New Mexico students, including Sherman Stange. Archie Bahm was elected President, Percy Baldwin, Vice-President, and Lisle Hosford, Secretary. Publication of the papers was proposed at this meeting. On our first program, Prof. Baldwin read a paper entitled "Is There a Mind—Body Problem?" and Lisle Hosford read one called "Techniques in Teaching Philosophy."

A notable meeting was held in the summer of 1949 at La Fonda in Santa Fe. Because of their presence in the State, we had presentations by Rudolph Carnap ("Empiricism, Semantics, and Ontology"), Yves Simon ("The Functions of Authority"), Christopher Salmon ("The Significance of Contemporary Political Trends in Britain"), Kurt Leidecker ("Teaching Oriental Philosophy in the U.S."), and Milton Nahm ("Some Aspects of Freedom in Aesthetics"). Carnap (University of Chicago) was vacationing in Santa Fe, Yves Simon (Notre Dame) was teaching at St. Joseph's in Albuquerque, Christopher Salmon from England was teaching at UNM for the summer, Kurt Leidecker (University of Virginia) and Milton Nahm (a native New Mexican who was teaching at Bryn Mawr) also happened to be in the State.

At the second annual meeting of the New Mexico Philosophical Society in Albuquerque (April 1950), Percy Baldwin was elected President, Lisle Hosford, Vice-President, and Hubert Alexander, Secretary-Treasurer.

The officers decided that members should be those who pay dues (\$1) and were invited by the executive committee to be members. The possibility of publishing papers was still being discussed.

In 1951, the following were elected as officers: Lisle Hosford, President, Hubert Alexander, Vice-President, and Archie Bahm, Secretary-Treasurer. The meeting was held in Albuquerque. In 1952 the meeting was at Eastern New Mexico University, following an invitation from Harold I. Woolard. New officers were: Alexander, President, Woolard, Vice President, and Cecil Crawford (NMIMT, Socorro), Secretary-Treasurer. Papers were read by Woolard, Alexander, and Crawford. Percy Baldwin served as chairman of one of the sessions.

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Remarks to The Southwestern Philosophical Society

by Hubert G. Alexander

It is most unfortunate that the real founder of this Society cannot be with us. He very much wanted to be here, but an unusual set of circumstances intervened. I am of course referring to my old friend and colleague, Archie J. Bahm. He was invited by S. P. Kanal to research the traditions of naturalism and humanism in East Indian philosophy in view of the fact that there seems to be considerable misconception in the west regarding the lack of such a tradition.

In fact, to underline this situation, Archie recounted the following episode. Upon telling of his impending departure for India, one of his colleagues remarked, "Oh, so you're going over there to meditate," and another said, "Are you going to learn some new yoga tricks?" Actually, he tells me, there is a long tradition of naturalistic thinking in India, and this should be better documented for American and European philosophers. Hence, the invitations to come to India at this time and interview as many of the current teachers of philosophy there as possible.

It just so happened that the Indian Philosophical Congress is meeting in Calcutta on October 21-24 of this year, and this meeting would afford a unique opportunity to interview a large number of Indian teachers of philosophy concerning the above-mentioned project. So Archie regretfully decided to leave for India on October 12th last, to return probably around December first.

However, I had him write out for me to present to you the various trials and vicissitudes he encountered in his efforts to establish four regional philosophical societies. Here is what he wrote.

I can vouch for the accuracy of the part of this statement which concerns me, and I am sure the rest is a fair representation of what took place, give or take the slippage of one's memory. I had hoped to fill in some of the dates that Archie could not, but unfortunately both my file (as well Archie's) of the Southwestern Philosophical Conference/Society had been lost or discarded. I do remember, as Archie mentioned, that after the war we spent a while trying to become a division of the APA with nothing but rebuffs, but I have no record of the particular attempts that were made, nor of the reasons for the rebuffs.

I'm not sure when the name was changed to Southwestern Philosophical Society from Southwestern Philosophical Conference, but I am sure it must have been between 1951 when I was president and 1967 when the first papers were published in *The Southwestern Journal of Philosophy*. There are other here who, I'm sure, are better acquainted with the occasions, so I shall say no more about them.

But before relinquishing this post, I do wish to pay a well-deserved tribute to Archie Bahm, who so industriously and against so many odds, kept up the fight to have our profession given its proper place and recognition both in and out of academia. I need only mention his invaluable *Directory* which he started in the spring of 1962 in mimeographed form, with 500 copies of 325 pages each. We all owe Archie a profound debt for his vision and his work on our behalf.

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How the Southwestern Philosophical Conference Originated

by Archie J. Bahm

My interests and efforts caused the organization of four philosophical societies, two state and two regional. Opposition by prominent professors was encountered while organizing the first three.

The Michigan Philosophical Society was organized during 1933. I had just finished my Ph.D. in the University of Michigan when I consulted with DeWitt H. Parker, Chairman of the Department, about the proposal. His response was discouraging. Perhaps he just did not want to

be bothered with it. But the reason he gave was that he feared that professors in other colleges would think that the University of Michigan was trying to impose itself on them. Previous correspondence with such professors convinced me that this was not true. The Society was organized in Ann Arbor and met again a year later, at which time it voted to merge with the already – existing Michigan Academy of Arts, Sciences and Letters of which it became the Philosophy Section. It continues to hold annual meetings.

The Southwestern Philosophical Society was organized during 1935 as the Southwestern Philosophical Conference. I became an Instructor in Philosophy and Sociology at Texas Technological College in 1934. Regarding Dallas as the center of the Southwestern region, I wrote to professors in Texas and surrounding states, proposing a meeting at Southern Methodist University and receiving encouraging replies from most of them. However, E.T. Mitchell, who naturally regarded the University of Texas as the center of philosophy in Texas and in the region, objected to the idea. He then contacted R. A. Taanoff of Rice University and Charles M. Perry of the University of Oklahoma, both of whom had already approved the idea. Each of these two professors then raised questions about the proposal. Mitchell had expressed fear that the society would be dominated by professors from the numerous denominational colleges in the region, perhaps especially since the first meeting was proposed at a Methodist university. Serious resistance created uncertainties which led to calling the first meeting, an "Organizing Meeting." The meeting was held in December, 1935, under some difficulties at Southern Methodist University, which had closed its meeting and eating rooms for the Christmas Holidays. During the organizing meeting, assurances of the quality and competence of the membership overcame enough fears so that the Conference was organized and the decision was made to hold the first meeting in 1936, again in Dallas but in a hotel.

The Mountain-Plains Philosophical Conference was organized in 1947 at the University of Denver to which I had moved during the summer of 1946. Denver was the largest city in the region and seemed a natural center for a regional society. Correspondence with chairmen in surrounding states revealed a willingness to participate. Unexpected objection came from Joe Cohen, Chairman of the Department, University of Colorado, in Boulder. He was accustomed to representing the region at the Western Division meetings with some prominence. He seemed to regard the proposed Conference as a nuisance and expressed objection to having to listen to papers by professors from conservative denominational

colleges in the region. The University of Denver, a private faculty-managed university, was founded as a Methodist institution and still had some minor Methodist associations. But when he learned that chairmen and professors from leading universities in surrounding states approved the idea and planned to participate in an organizing meeting, Joe Cohen came to the meeting at the University of Denver anyway. The Conference was organized, but Professor Cohen succeeded in weakening prospects for continuation by including a constitutional provision that the Secretary should not be a continuing office but should be elected every year. Frank Dickenson, Chairman of the Department of Philosophy in the University of Denver, approved the idea; but, having tried to organize a Colorado Philosophical Society during the previous year and having been rebuffed by Joe Cohen, expressed some annoyance at my achievement. "The trouble with you, Bahm, was that you didn't know that it couldn't be done."

The New Mexico Philosophical Society was organized in 1948, without opposition, when I moved to the University of New Mexico. Hubert G. Alexander, Chairman of the Department, expected me to do it. He then took charge and continued to promote its interests until today. Proximity to universities in El Paso and Lubbock Texas and in Chihuahua, Mexico, and participation of professors from these and other Texas cities, led to its expansion as The New Mexico – West Texas Philosophical Society in 1964. The Southwestern Philosophical Society survived through World War II difficulties by publishing a volume of papers called *Essays on the Theory of Value and Valuation*, dated April 1945 and edited by H. N. Lee. The Society later sought admission to the American Philosophical Association as a fourth Southwestern Division, but was refused.

Its continuation for fifty years has resulted from the conscientious efforts of hundreds of able and willing members, as evidenced by its notable list of presidents, and several able secretaries.

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**Dedication of the Hubert G. Alexander Library,
Department of Philosophy, University of New Mexico**

When I first asked Hubert Alexander about the style and commitment of the New Mexico-West Texas Philosophical Society, he explained that it wasn't a society in which a philosopher could build a reputation by demeaning another. "We meet for mutual enrichment. We carve on our arguments, not on each other. That's how we improve our arguments."

On one occasion, I commented to him that he seemed to be a happy philosopher. In a matter-of-fact tone he replied, "Yes, I married well and have been unusually fortunate in family relations." His warm smile at the thought of his family suggested even more than his words communicated.

While many of us as philosophers were working on questions about induction and deduction, Hubert Alexander was also working diligently to spell out the role of imagination: not only in the arts, but also in the sciences and philosophy. In his book on philosophy and language, he developed an in-depth analysis of imagination. After reading his chapter on the topic, I could no longer think of imagination in the simple way that I had.

Hubert wrote a book about his father, a work that inadvertently reveals a great deal about Hubert, who had the good sense to appreciate his father's life. This book reminded me of the closing page of Dewey's *A Common Faith*, in which he speaks of our being in the world as a gift of grace and doing of those who went before us. It is a pleasant thought to me that Hubert has passed on to his son, Tom, the same grace and good sense, so that those philosophical genes continue in Tom and his students.

Joe Barnhart
University of North Texas

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Our conference last year marked the last time many of us would see our friend and founder of this society. Hubert Alexander died on September 3, 1998. He was known by each of us in as many ways as there are people here today. All of us know that he was a founder of this society and the principal force that bound this organization for more than 50 years. Many of us know of his work as a philosopher and colleague in the quest to reveal reason, value and meaning within our community, and among different communities. This society is a concrete expression of the same goals and interests about which he wrote in his articles and books. Many of us knew

him as friend, now lost to us, and some of us were his students. A special few of us have that intimate knowledge – that is their privilege alone – as wife and sons. That remains only theirs alone, and no words honoring Hubert can remain such if they fail to respect the privilege of such intimacy. So, let me honor him in the only way I can, and in the ways open to us all, by calling to mind some of his history and contributions.

Wisdom, modesty and patience have their own forms of strength—they make the substance of a man – and Hubert embodied them; all qualities I saw first from the standpoint of student and later as his assistant and friend. His wisdom, modesty and his efforts in behalf of inclusion we all are familiar with; in fact we counted on them, and he never failed us as colleagues. Most of us gathered here at the dedication of this library knew him in this regard. Few of us, though, are aware of the origins of the character of the man we counted on.

Hubert Alexander was born into a family devoted to inclusion and understanding, beginning life – and probably his education – in 1909 in Lincoln, Nebraska. His parents, Hartley Burr Alexander (the Philosopher) and Nelly Griggs Alexander trace their families back to the beginning of America, to the Rhode Island Quakers and Boston Puritans: the Shermans, Congdons and Hedleys (1992, 6). Although his roots lay in the East, his fortunes carried him west mainly under the direction of Hartley Burr. Before him lay a life of study, travel, and contact with many cultures: European, mid-western and eastern American, but most importantly the Native American and Spanish culture of the Southwest (1993, 78).

Hubert accompanied his father on archaeological digs, witnessed the ceremonial dances and rituals of a number of Indian tribes around the Southwest, and was schooled in the history of the encounter of Spanish with Native American culture (1992, 103). All of this was as much a part of his education as his college years at the University of Nebraska and at Pomona College in California. He graduated in 1930 from Pomona and pursued his Ph.D. at Yale, receiving his doctorate in 1934 after defending his dissertation, "The Intelligibility of Time." This work was later revised, expanded and published in 1945 as *Time As Dimension and History*.

His later philosophic work turned to the philosophy of language. But his work in this area did not focus only on the logic of language, but more on the culture of language. His books, *Meaning in Language* (1967) and *The Language and Logic of Philosophy* (1972), combined logical analysis with analysis of the communicative purpose of language, hence the discussion of the symbolism used in language, and its psychological and cultural content. Were I to call Professor Alexander a philosopher of language, it would be as much (perhaps more so) in the tradition of Ernst Cassirer as that of

Austin, Ryle or Wittgenstein. Professor Alexander was more a humanistic thinker, emphasizing the grounds of meaning in the history of the human use of language. Such meaning is contextualized in the sense of expressing the needs and temporality of human cultures as embodied in their rituals and artistic expressions as much as their "linguistic customs" (1993, 78). In this way, he combined his study of time, history, anthropology, and philosophic analysis with his archaeological experience and artistic training, and applied them to the study of language as a vehicle of meaning and expression of human values. The man himself, dug deeply and embodied what he learned in the way he lived his life.

Here, I can only call your attention to his focus on the concrete, the inclusive motives, covering person and community reflected in his writings, studies, teaching, and dealings with friends and colleagues. This is some of the substance to which I refer in appealing to Hubert's legacy of patience, modesty and wisdom.

Quite possibly, there are few ways better to honor a philosopher than to study his writings and preserve them in a library dedicated to his memory. But it is certainly true that there is no better way honor a teacher than to look to those he taught, students and colleagues alike, and recognize the success of his work in their accepting the invitation to philosophy, and in the friendships he inspired – friendship with the man and the pursuit of friendship with wisdom.

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Gary Cesarz
Auburn University

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Hubert Griggs Alexander spent his entire life philosophizing. The last time I saw him, six months before his death, he was still concerned about philosophical issues. To be sure by that time his energy had been depleted, his attention sometimes wandered, and he was somewhat forgetful. Nonetheless, one could still recognize flashes of the energetic enthusiasm, the sharp mentality, and the dependable memory of earlier years. To be in Hubert's presence was to understand that the thinker and the man were one and the same. He was kind toward intellectual antagonists, accepting of those who disagreed with him, yet he remained critical. He was basically serious about thinking and living, yet he exhibited a sparkling sense of humor. Independent and free spirited, he retained his position in this organization long after he could have turned the onerous duties over to a younger person. To the very last Hubert remained concerned that members attend meetings, pay their dues, and live up to commitments. He never relented in seeing to it that papers of excellence were given at the meetings and published in *Southwest Philosophical Studies*. Meetings were always well planned and executed at appropriate locales. Whether held in Albuquerque, as they often were, or in some other city, Hubert and Mildred were there to make people feel at home, comfortable, and an important part of the festivities.

The Alexanders are a philosophizing family: Hubert's father, Hubert himself, and his son, Tom, each responded to the vocation. Hubert's PhD was from Yale, and he spent his professorial life at the University of New Mexico from 1935 until his retirement in 1975, serving as chair from 1947 until 1965.

Hubert's abiding presence still lives on in his work as well as in his personal influence. His abiding interest is the exploration of meaning. His essential supposition rests between two contrasting poles: the naive position that meanings are the same for everybody and the relativistic stance that

meaning is related to a particular individual and that individual only. Along with Edward Sapir, Benjamin Whorf, John Austin, and Charles Morris, Hubert attempts to understand how/why meanings differ. The goal of his studies is not simply insight into the expressive processes. Rather, Hubert seeks the facilitation of communication wherein meanings are transmitted from one person to another. This work is important because he attempts to bring into a harmonious relationship linguistic studies, logic, epistemology, and aesthetics. Throughout his works, Hubert outlines the ways that a cooperative study among these disciplines can be carried out. Especially significant in this regard are his publications, *Language and Thinking* (1967) and *Meaning and Language* (1969). In the same vein, "Some Thoughts on What Empiricism Needs" (1990) is also relevant to the issue.

Hubert provides a short history of meaning in *Meaning and Language*. Herein he attempts to include data from psychology, history, and philosophy. His investigations are clear, broad, and thorough. Following Cassirer, Hubert extends his consideration of meaning into mythology, artistic achievement, and scientific symbol systems. Each sign or symbol must remain separate from that state of affairs to which it refers. Philosophers of the past – *i.e.* classical empiricists like Locke, etc. – allowed referents to become too narrow. The broader empiricism which Hubert advocates points in the direction of phenomenology. When the signifier allows the sign to show its many levels, meaning encompasses subject and object: "The referent. . . includes not only the perceived object. . . but also abstractions, colors, shapes. . . a winged pegasus, remembered actions, etc." (1969: 45). Hubert considers this move from linguistics to epistemology to include "a proper accounting of the role of the imagination" (1990: 108). As an aspect of imagination, Hubert incorporates the concept of intentionality, a component which most empiricists ignore.

The studies in logic which purport to deal with meaning also require reformulation. To Hubert, the crucial test of logic is the capacity of that discipline to adequately explore abstraction and generalization as a prerequisite for the gathering of data into classes. Even in the area of logic, however, imagination plays a prominent part. It is a way of rearranging, substituting, completing, and refining the bits and pieces of immediate experience. When logic extends beyond dry formality to include literary devices, at least one province of the imagination, logical effectiveness can be greatly increased. The uses of metaphor are especially pertinent in this regard.

The goal of philosophical thinking is awareness of the world of meaning and the utilization of that world to know, to prove, and to create. As one ascends through first-hand experience to abstraction, generalization,

and to imaginative products, creative thinking appears. The clarification of such simple ideas as numbers, shapes, and sense qualities become, through abstraction and generalization, mental formulations in which the imagination can dwell and expand. Hubert envisions the person of common sense, the scientist, the artist, and the philosopher as thus being enabled to participate in a common universe of possible meaning.

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Howard Tuttle, a past-president of this Society and former chair of the UNM Philosophy Department, put it best. Referring to Hubert Alexander, he said that this was the best incarnation of the ideal "gentleman scholar" whom he knew. I'd just add to the word "scholar" the terms "teacher" and "colleague." Nationally he will be remembered as one of the founders, and for many years a member of the board, of Phi Sigma Tau, the national philosophy honorary fraternity. Internationally he was the organizer of the 1957 Interamerican Philosophers Congress, held at Gault College during the summer of 1957, which led to the formation of the Interamerican Society of Philosophy with its regular schedule of Interamerican Congresses of Philosophy.

This Department of Philosophy at the University of New Mexico was, to all intents and purposes, his dream. He served as long-time chair, and it grew under his leadership. For years its curriculum and program manifested his dedication to philosophy and the humanities.

When did I first meet him? 1955 or thereabouts. And where? Somewhere in Latin America at a philosophy conference. Over the next twenty years we became the sort of special colleagues that work in universities far distant from each other, but meet frequently at conferences of like-minded scholars.

In December, 1973, we met on an escalator in an Atlanta hotel at the Eastern Division of the APA. He was riding up with his son Tom. I was riding down. As we passed he called out, "Would you consider coming to the University of New Mexico to teach?" I responded, as we grew further apart, "Definitely!" Two years later he retired. I replaced him, and felt greatly honored, but greatly humbled. In no way could I ever "fill his shoes."

The more I came to know this quiet, distinguished "gentleman scholar," the more intrigued I became. He had been a very popular teacher.

Two of his courses attracted around two hundred students a semester: "Language and Thought," and "Humanities," a two semester sequence. He received a grant to televise the Humanities course and it was broadcast state-wide for home credit. What a course it was! Cutting edge, it integrated Philosophy, Religion, and the Arts, and was truly multi-cultural in its coverage. Hubert believed in the study of philosophical traditions beyond the European and Anglo-American, and for many years this department enjoyed a national reputation for the breadth of its curriculum in this regard. Somehow he became interested in Latin American philosophy and introduced what was probably the first course in this area to be offered in this country. I owe my present position to this interest of his. He had many friends among the philosophers of Latin America, and received complimentary subscriptions to many of the philosophy journals published in Latin American countries.

From an early age, influenced by his father who was one of the founders of the American Philosophical Association, Hubert became interested in Native American philosophies and cultures, and had some early experience in archaeological excavation of sites in New Mexico.

He is perhaps best known for his interest in the Philosophy of Language, an interest that was much wider than is found in current courses in that area. At least two of his books were classified by the Library of Congress as falling appropriately in the Linguistic rather than Philosophy section of libraries.

Do we have one of those rarities here: a Renaissance Man? Yea, verily! And with a passion for Philosophy of Art and Aesthetics. When D.H. Lawrence's widow, Frieda, deeded their mountainside "ranch" to the University of New Mexico, Hubert was the first member of the faculty to find a use for this new property, and established the Aesthetics Institute which held an annual workshop there. He invited outstanding Aestheticians to join students for a week in the Taos mountains to discuss issues in the Philosophy of Art, a tradition which has continued for forty-five years. But the passion for the arts included not only discussion, it included active participation in at least one of the arts. In their home there are twin Baby Grands, and he and Mildred regularly performed together.

It is very fitting that this library be dedicated his memory. May we keep that memory – and Hubert's dedication to Philosophy in its broadest sense – alive!

Ted Sturm

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Deconstruction and Pragmatism

Chantal Mouffee, ed.

New York: Routledge, 1996

ISBN 0-415-12170-1 (paper)

6 x 9; ix + 88

Perhaps this is a style emerging in the twentieth century: a philosophy of the collective and not the imprint of a single mind upon a page. Mouffee's *Deconstruction and Pragmatism* is a transcription of a symposium held at the College International de Philosophie in Paris on May 29, 1993. The stated purpose and primary focus of the symposium poses Derrida's deconstruction against Rorty's pragmatism to discuss the nature of a non-foundationalist theory of democracy: "The idea was to examine their points of convergence as well as their respective insights" (p. 2). As one might suppose, the differences between the two are abundant. Additionally, two other proponents of the deconstructive technique were invited, Simon Critchley and Ernesto Laclau. The structure of the work is in the framework of a position - response - dialogue. It is also clear that the editor of the collection, Chantal Mouffee, comes from a decidedly deconstructive background. Thus, it seems in many ways that the symposium is decidedly one-sided and, indeed, Derrida does get the last word. Moreover, the selection of Richard Rorty as the "champion of pragmatism" probably makes many a pragmatist shudder. Regardless of one's temperamental response to the main agonists in this little book, the exchange between these five individuals is, nevertheless, challenging, engaging, entertaining, probative, and insightful.

In many ways the entire agenda here has been set by Rorty's *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity*, wherein a distinction is made between the public and the private, *i.e.*, the public liberal or the private ironist. Rorty, generous in his praise of Derrida as world-disclosing ironist, maintains that Derrida's work, as private ironist, has no public usefulness and is removed from any political life in a liberal society. The responses, including that of the editor Mouffee herself, are vigorous defenses of the Derridean position as ethically sound, concerned with justice, and of practical political concern.

Critchley defends the ethical significance of deconstruction, and maintains that Derrida is a public thinker who emphasizes justice and responsibility with resonant ethical and political implications. It is charged that Rorty's overly simplified, black and white distinction between the public and the private ignores the delicate textures interwoven between them, and that Derrida's "experience of the undecidable" is an important thread in that

embroidery. Thus, Rorty denounces "any attempt to articulate the quest for individual autonomy with the question of social justice" (p. 2). Laclau more directly claims political relevance for two dimensions of deconstruction: undecidability and decision. Laclau sees the open undecidability of elements within the social realm as revealing the contingent nature of various political institutions. By uncovering these open structures, deconstruction is important for democratic theory because it allows societies to radically alter many of their trends and arrangements. Thus, as Mouffee claims, "undecidability and decision are constitutive of the decision which makes a possible a political society" (pp. 2-3). For deconstruction to manufacture its political effects, Laclau argues that a theory of hegemony is required, which implies a decision made in the midst of indecision. The main contenders in this debate, however, remain Richard Rorty and Jacques Derrida.

The structure of the symposium starts with Rorty roughing out a position with respect to Derrida and deconstruction. Rorty responds to characterizations of Derrida, "as a cynical despiser of common sense and traditional democratic values," and "the philosopher who has transformed our notions of language and the self" (p. 13). On this latter view, Derrida has undermined our traditional ways of understanding ourselves and texts, and created a method which helps us see what these texts are really about. Rorty finds both views lacking. Rorty claims that Derrida is in fact a sentimentalist who admires those whom he deconstructs. Rorty finds him to be a romantic, humanist utopian and a rich and imaginative ironist. However, Derrida to have done Rorty finds little to enhance our understanding of literature or to have done anything to aid leftist politics. What is Derrida's relation to pragmatism? Rorty claims origins for pragmatism in Darwinian naturalism. Thus, on this view, Derrida and pragmatism have a great distrust of the binary oppositions of Western metaphysics, a distrust of other-worldly Platonic realms, and a conviction that mind-vs.-body, objective-vs.-subjective polarizations need to be cleansed from a view of the world as having an intrinsic, ineluctable nature or of having various other kinds of God-surrogates.

Rorty sees similarities in an attempt to rid of a useless and misleading picture of language, but he does not understand why Derrida has a suspicion of pragmatism's empiricism and naturalism as pseudo-metaphysical; nor does he understand why Derrida slips into *transcendental* talk. Rorty sees Derrida as sharing Dewey's utopian hopes, but cannot see how deconstruction contributes to those hopes. Rorty divides philosophers into two camps: philosophers of public purpose (Mill, Dewey, Rawls), and philosophers of private purpose (Nietzsche, Heidegger, Derrida). Though Rorty may find this latter group interesting and valuable he sees them as

contributing little to philosophy or to having a relation to ethical and political interests. Derrida's work is a work of self-expression and self-creation, a work of his private relation to those figures who have meant the most to him, but completely devoid of importance in the political sphere.

Derrida claims he is guilty of Rorty's charge of being very sentimental and believing in happiness. He states that happiness has "an altogether determinant place in his work." He further maintains that the purpose of the symposium is to exchange arguments that are as clear, univocal, and as communicable as possible. This should alert critics of deconstruction and Derrida. He believes that deconstruction has been defamed by its critics who claim that deconstructionists avoid arguments or dislike arguments. Of course, there is the matter of questioning the protocols of argumentation, the contexts involved, the competence of the arguers, the language of the discussion, *etc.*, which certainly brings the conversation around to more familiar deconstructive techniques. However, Derrida's discourse within Mouffee's *Deconstruction and Pragmatism* is most concerned with the distinction between the private and the public.

Despite his adherence to a view of singularity in his work, either in the public or the private sphere, he claims the private is not defined by the singular. His works, *Glas* and *La Carte postale*, are performative problematizations of the private/public distinction: *Glas* looks at a performative elaboration of the private in relation to Hegel's treatment of the relation of the family and civil society to the state; the very text of *La Carte postale* illustrates the undecidability of the distinction between the private and the public. In *La Carte postale*, where Derrida speaks of the secret, a process co-extensive with the experience of singularity, the secret is irreducible to the public realm (which is to say irreducible to publicity and politicization). However, he maintains that this secret is the basis on which the public and the political realms can remain open.

Now, if I am able to cut through the Derrida-speak, I understand him to be claiming the following. Derrida's ideas of singularity revolve around the notion that there is an irreducible "my" experience that is not *in-itself* identifiable. Additionally, the secret, in that it is coextensive with the experience with singularity, is itself an experience that is shared with others in the private and public realm. This secret is the non-reductionist openness of the undecidable. Since there is nothing in the public or private world which is absolutely determined, this ambiguity of the indeterminable makes democratic society possible. Democracy is only possible on the basis of its impossibility to be closed, and its closure is impossible because the singularity of the secret, in common with all others, keeps society open to its alterity, its capacity for being otherwise. Derrida finds the relation between

deconstruction and pragmatism both unnecessary and untenable. Rorty criticizes deconstruction for being an unstable and empty motif, and Derrida agrees! From this perspective, deconstruction would be politically neutral, as opposed to Dewey's pragmatism (with which Rorty identifies), which firmly makes its shelter in the democratic tent. However, Derrida insists that it is deconstruction's a-politicality which allows a reflection on the nature of the political. Derrida maintains that, "It is because we act and we live in infinitude that the responsibility with regard to the other (*autrui*) is irreducible" (p. 86). It is the inescapable responsibility to the other that has Derrida inclining toward the democratic. But, of course, the issue remains undecided.

There is much to recommend this book. Rorty's direct and uncomplicated openness with regard to issues and his strong option for democracy, despite its rather piecemeal construction, is refreshingly unencumbered by western philosophy, metaphysics, and hyper-abstraction. This disturbs some, but still allows for at least a difference in insight. Derrida, and his defenders, also offer something worthwhile in a rich and ethical sense, in that they opt for democratic principles, positions of morality and ethicality, and for justice. These elements of political theory and the "ornaments of the soul" should at least bring a modicum of comfort to the critics of deconstruction and Rortian pragmatism.

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Resisting Texts: Authority and Submission in Constructions of Meaning
Peter L. Shillingsburg
Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997
ISBN 0-472-10864-6 (cloth)
6 x 9; vi + 256 + bib. refs. + index

Peter Shillingsburg's *Resisting Texts* questions the history, concepts, and forms of judgment we find in scholarly, critical editing. What makes this an interesting exploration for philosophers of literature and criticism is its angle of approach, namely through the relations of reader to text. Happily, this orientation broadens the discussion from its focus on editorship, to include other timely concerns of textual meaning which we find couched in the aftermath of the postmodernist/deconstructionist movement of contemporary literary theory. In this way, Shillingsburg does his readers a service by providing a practical account of what is otherwise, in modern thought and writing, an often confusing discourse on the instability of meaning.

A scholarly editor in his own right, Shillingsburg is currently General Editor of *The Thackeray Edition*, the first new collection of the works of Thackeray in over 70 years. By correlative interests, *Resisting Texts* traces its beginnings to a conference of the Society for Critical Exchange held at Miami University of Ohio in March, 1987, a time when serious thinkers, including Shillingsburg, were already beginning to question the direction of post-modernist thinking. The title of his introduction, "Is There Anything to 'Get Straight,'" sums up the dilemma he and other scholars were facing. If meaning is so unstable as to preclude any definition of common objective import, there *really* is nothing to "get straight." Conventional rules for the production of scholarly, critical editions are not only rendered subjectivist according to the specific private agendas of editors, but also ultimately useless, so far as the idea of developing *bona fide* critical editions is a real possibility.

Resisting Texts presents itself as a history and plausible solution to this dilemma. Historically, Shillingsburg brings us to the thought that it is within the act of reading itself that the disclosure of a text's actual meaning is uncovered. In other words, no text is complete until brought into a conscious relation with the thinking and judgment of its readers. Accordingly, the so-called *authority* of the text is contingent on the authority of its readers. Even the author of a text finds his or her best self-understanding to be gathered as a reader of what has been written. The only remaining question is whether one who is editing a critical edition of a text

must factor the multiplicity of these possible readings into the critical fabric of his or her concept of *the critical edition*.

Clearly, a scholarly editor of Shillingsburg's stripe must in turn regard his own understanding of the Thackeray corpus to be an essential element for making practical decisions relative to the idea of producing a dependable, enduring, scholarly resource. What Shillingsburg calls *Submission* to this understanding of the text, to the authority of readership and the availability of artifactual evidence for the written text's evolving body, leads him to a notion of critical editorship that goes well beyond any submission to conventional rules of objectivity. His use of the term submission is not conventional and is tied directly to his title *Resisting Texts*. The texts to be resisted are those strictly construed, artifactual presentations of written product, primary and secondary, including all unpublished and published variants. By this, the true *critical edition* becomes an artifactual presentation that allows multiple readings or "new completions" of that artifactual work to continue without further impedance. The dependable, enduring scholarly source is gauged by its capacity to serve as a goldmine of ideas for further, future development.

As a practical matter, the reading and by inference "completion" of any text by the individual reader involves the act of reading. As a completion, one finds a form of creativity in Shillingsburg's analysis that relates to an act that is peculiar to the reader and concepts of the reader, not relative to either the artifactual text, or to its primary author, or to concepts of that author. It comes as no surprise that the real possibility of this creativity and its cultivating benefit for our determinations of meaning turns on a lack of relation. What is surprising is Shillingsburg's use of an act to mark the difference between scholarly editors who might produce an artifact of dependable and enduring benefit, and those who merely follow the conventional rules of critical objectivity, all of which are relative to the text, provided the text can be clearly defined.

Resisting Texts is a very readable book that recalls the very idea of scholarly editorship it presents. Its own multi-faceted presentation is helped along by a careful mix of history and serious questioning about the practical side of editorship. This allows the reader to imaginatively glean a richer understanding of the issues that postmodern and deconstructionist theorizing have created for anyone who would consider what a text means. *Resisting Texts* is a helpful, clarifying resource that marks a departure from both conventional concepts of objectivity and the traps of de-centered subjectivist hermeneutics. I recommend it to philosophers and to anyone

else who harbors a serious regard for our definition of critical, practical meaning.

Thomas Urban
Lamar University

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