

ABSTRACTS

KANT'S BEAUTY IN EMERSON'S PHILOSOPHY

Michael E Brady

Not nearly enough attention has been paid to the depth of philosophical influences apparent in the philosophy of Ralph Waldo Emerson. Besides the often noted importance of Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, there are deeper and broader influences from Kant's later aesthetic work that helped form what would later become Emerson's unique philosophy. Nowhere can this influence be more clearly seen than in the aesthetic focus that migrated directly from Kant's *Critique of Judgment* into the philosophy of Emerson.

One well known aspect of Emerson's philosophy is his perpetual focus on the beauty of Nature and its ability to communicate important truths about the world. A close textual analysis of the *Critique of Judgment* alongside the writings of Emerson will reveal many striking parallels. There are not only remarkably similar conceptions of beauty, as might be expected for that time, but there are also many formal similarities between these two thinkers that also demonstrate a strong influence.

This aesthetic influence begins an important and often overlooked trend in American philosophy. Though Emerson's tenor and focus changed from his early transcendental works such as *Nature* into the mature and noticeably more sober *The Conduct of Life*, the dominant theme of beauty as communication remained a constant. It remained an anchoring point of his philosophical ideas that would be carried forward into American philosophy and reappear in the pragmatic tradition.



HUME'S SENSIBLE KNAVE PROBLEM

John DePoe

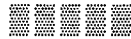
This essay presents an argument that Hume's moral theory contains a weakness in how it handles the sensible knave problem. After giving a rough characterization of Hume's moral theory and the sensible knave problem, I consider, first, Hume's response to the sensible knave problem. After judging Hume's brief response to be inadequate, I consider a recent defense of Hume against the sensible knave, which is also shown to be unable to vindicate Hume's view. The conclusion of this essay is that the best Humean response to the sensible knave problem is a conditional response, which is philosophically unsatisfying.



LOCATING THE OBJECT IN THE THIRD *CRITIQUE*

Ryan Johnson

The goal of this paper is to address one issue: the possibility of developing different forms of the aesthetic experience out of and alongside the Kantian notion of beauty. But what is unique about this book is that Kant, building on the previous *Critiques*, examines different forms of non-meaning, or of non-conceptual or non-cognitive meaning. For the aims of this paper, however, we will only focus on the first of these forms of non-meaning: beauty. The point, then, is to see whether or not it is possible to maintain the Kantian architectonics in order to theorize the changes in the definition of art. Is it possible, in short, to ground, ever so lightly and delicately, the aesthetic experience of appropriation art, of kitsch, of institutional critique, of simulation art, and, most importantly for this paper, abject art? This paper will argue that these two forms are only a few among the many different experiences of art that are possible in the twentieth and twenty-first century art world.



THE STRUCTURE AND SCOPE OF KANTIAN BELIEF

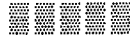
Lawrence Pasternack

According to Kant, belief (*Glaube*), opinion (*Meinung*) and knowledge (*Wissen*) are the core triad of propositional attitudes under which all others fall. “Opinion” refers to a form of holding to be true (*fürwahrhalten*) where propositions have not been strongly epistemically justified nor are firmly held. “Knowledge” pertains to propositions that have been strongly epistemically justified and are firmly held. “Belief” applies to propositions that are firmly held, though not strongly epistemically justified.

Unlike the other two attitudes, in belief there is an incongruence: it lacks epistemic justification but is nevertheless firmly held. But despite this incongruence, belief is not for Kant an illicit form of assent. Rather, it is crucial to both his philosophy of religion and his ethical theory. Having rejected all arguments for God’s existence based either empirically or from theoretical reason, he relies upon the peculiar character of belief within the sphere of practical reason to provide for assent to both God’s existence and the afterlife. Furthermore, Kant maintains that without these and other instances of belief, “we would have to regard the moral laws as empty figments of the brain” (A811/B839). The purpose of this paper is to examine Kant’s understanding of belief, particularly as it is presented in the *Critique of Practical Reason* and thereafter.

The first section of this paper discusses subjective and objective sufficiency, the two most important criteria Kant uses to differentiate opinion, belief and knowledge. The second section will provide a brief account of the relationship between the Practical Postulates and the Highest Good. The third section will delve into some difficulties with his conception of belief. As will be seen, his distinction between belief and knowledge is not as clear as he takes it to be. In order to preserve the core vision behind his conception of belief, I will introduce a distinction between direct versus derivative belief and argue that the former does adhere to his account of belief whereas the latter is a hybrid form of

assent that has features of both belief and knowledge. Finally, I will argue that the Highest Good and the Practical Postulates, the sole objects of belief according to Kant, are best construed as derivative belief, whereas the Fact of Reason, the propositional attitude for which Kant never names, is the sole instance of direct belief.



THE AGE OF ZEUS AND PROMETHEUS: PLATO'S *PHAEDRUS* AND THE VIRTUES

Nathan Poage

Given the recent work on the importance of godlikeness (becoming like god) for Plato's ethical and political theory [Mark McPherran, "Platonic Religion," *A Companion to Plato*, ed. Hugh Benson (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006) 244; David Sedley, "The Ideal of Godlikeness," *Plato 2: Ethics, Politics, Religion and the Soul*, ed. Gail Fine (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999) 309-328; cf. *Theaetetus* 176b], the question can be raised—likeness to which god? While in the *Republic* Plato is largely reticent about how his proposals relate to piety and the traditional pantheon of Olympian gods, in an enigmatic passage at *Phaedrus* 246e-247b, he reintroduces the Olympian gods. Though the *Politicus* situates the present age as an age abandoned by god (*Politicus* 274b-d), in this paper I show how we can provide a consistent account of the Olympian gods as representing the structure of human virtues and available goods in the age of Zeus. I conclude the paper by arguing that this interpretation shows that the *polis* allows for the perfecting of virtue in ways that are otherwise impossible.

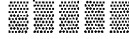


ON HUME'S PRINCIPLE OF "SYMPATHY" AND ITS CONNECTION TO "IS- OUGHT" PROPOSITIONS

Lijun Yuan

David Hume raises the metaethical "is-ought" problem. To him, there seems to be a significant difference between statements or propositions about what *is* and statements or propositions about what *ought* to be. Hume challenges inferences of an "ought" from an "is." If one cannot give an explanation of how the "ought" is supposed to follow from the "is," then one cannot derive an "ought" from an "is." The question has become one of the central questions of ethical theory, and Hume is usually assigned the position that "such a derivation is impossible," and his position is given the graphic designation of "Hume's Guillotine." It seems to me that there is a misunderstanding of the crucial principle in Hume's moral theory, that is, of *sympathy*. Sympathy is a very powerful principle in human nature as Hume observed. He does not doubt that sympathy is the chief source of moral distinctions. Because of this principle of sympathy, he agrees with the assertion that we give the same approbation to the same moral qualities in *China* as in *England*, which certainly disagrees with the judgment of "Hume's skepticism." In this paper, I will discuss the following three questions: (1) Given Hume's principle that all ideas are

derived from their correspondent impressions, that is, all concepts are derived from experience, then experience is the only criterion of meaning. According to this criterion, does the word “ought” (as the key word of morality) have any meaning? (2) What kind of relationship is there between “is” and “ought?” Why does Hume emphasize that we must note the relation between “ought” and “is” and can we get any sense from their relationship? (3) Because of the double relations of ideas and impressions, can the principle of sympathy be the base of our understanding of human nature, and, according to Hume's theory, is there some commonality in our moral judgments?



CONTRIBUTORS

Vinod Acharya is Instructor in Philosophy at Seattle University. He received his PhD in philosophy from Rice University in 2011. His primary research interests include 19th and 20th century European philosophy, especially Nietzsche, existentialism, metaphysics and Heidegger.

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Michael Brady Michael Brady is a PhD candidate at Southern Illinois University Carbondale. His primary interest is American pragmatism and the philosophy of biology. He is currently tracing out the influence of evolution in the work of William James, C.S. Peirce, and John Dewey.

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Justin Ho received his MA from Rice University and his JD from U.C. Berkeley School of Law. He is currently working as an associate at Cooley LLP.

Ryan Johnson is a PhD candidate at Duquesne University where he is writing a dissertation on Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura* and the ontology of Gilles Deleuze. His previous work has focused mostly on questions of ontology, aesthetics, and the history of materialism in 18th and 19th century European philosophy. Ryan has recently published an article entitled "Machinery, Monstrosity, and Bestiality: An Analysis of Repulsion in Kierkegaard's *Practice in Christianity*" in *The Heythrop Journal*.

Michael Morales received his MA from San Francisco State University in the fall of 2010 with a thesis titled "Context-dependence in Scientific Representation." His main interests are at the intersection of epistemology, metaphysics, and the philosophy of science. He is currently an Instructor at the City College of San Francisco.

Lawrence Pasternack is Associate Professor of Philosophy at Oklahoma State University. Much of his work has focused on Kant's philosophy of religion, with publications in *Kant-Studien*, *Religious Studies*, *Faith and Philosophy* and elsewhere. The abstract included in this volume is of an earlier version of a paper that has since appeared in *Kant-Studien*. He is currently finalizing his monograph on Kant's *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*.

Nathan Poage is Professor of Philosophy at Houston Community College. He is currently working on his dissertation at the University of St. Thomas on Aristotle, Avicenna, and Aquinas on the subject matter and principles of metaphysics.

Chris Shrock is a PhD student at Baylor University. He is interested in Thomas Reid, perception, and epistemology.

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Jenessa Strickland is a graduate student in philosophy at University of California, Santa Barbara. Her philosophical interests are moral psychology, virtue ethics, and early modern history of philosophy, and her current research is on situationist criticisms of Aristotelian virtue ethics.

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THE NEW MEXICO-WEST TEXAS PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

60th Annual Meeting

Houston Community College-Northwest College

March 27-29, 2009

March 27

Friday: 2:00-6:00. Remington 1

Lee Stauffer (New Mexico Highlands University), Moderator

- 2:00 Nathan Poage (Houston Community College-Central College), "The Age of Zeus and Prometheus: Plato's *Phaedrus* and the Virtues"
Comments: Lee Stauffer (New Mexico Highlands University)
- 3:00 Michael Ducey (Texas Tech University), "Recategorizing Metaphor under Grice's Conversational Maxims"
Comments: Eric Gilbertson (Auburn University)
- 4:00 Justin Ho (Rice University), "Can the Condition of Being Terminally Ill Coerce Persons into Enrolling in Research?"
Comments: Michael Barnwell (Niagara University)
- 5:00 Chris Shrock (Baylor University), "Reid, Aristotle, and Color"
Comments: Tad Bratkowski (Southern Illinois University Carbondale)

Friday: 2:00-6:00. Remington 2

Craig Hanks (Texas State University-San Marcos), Moderator

- 2:00 Roksana Alavi (South Texas College), "Identity, Stereotyping, and Voluntary Oppression"
Comments: Audrey McKinney (Texas State University-San Marcos)
- 3:00 Michael Brady (Southern Illinois University Carbondale), "Kant's Beauty in Emerson's Philosophy"
Comments: Ravi Doshi (Southern Illinois University Carbondale)
- 4:00 Tad Bratkowski (Southern Illinois University Carbondale), "Emerson's Idealism: Its Basis and Departure from Kant"
Comments: Paul Wilson (Texas State University-San Marcos)
- 5:00 Bruce Buchanan (Southern Illinois University Carbondale), "Emerson on Temperament"
Comments: Cathal Keane (The University of Houston-Downtown)

Friday: 7:00pm-10:00pm Registration and Reception—Remington Ballroom

March 28

Saturday: 8:00am-12:00pm Remington 1

Roksana Alavi (South Texas College), Moderator

- 8:00 Jerry Green (TexasTech University), "The Democratic Foundations of Political Liberalism"
Comments: Stuart Rosenbaum (Baylor University)
- 9:00 Thomas Urban (Community College-Northwest College), "Reward, or Punishment?"
Comments: Lee Stauffer (New Mexico Highlands University)
- 10:00 Michael Barnwell (Niagara University), "Trolley Cases and Being 'In the Realm'"
Comments: Justin Ho (Rice University)
- 11:00 John Haddox (The University of Texas at El Paso), "Francisco Romero's Philosophy of the Person and the Family"
Comments: Michael Matthis (Lamar University)

Saturday: 8:00am-12:00pm Remington 2

Hamner Hill (Southeast Missouri State), Moderator

- 8:00 Ryan Caldwell (Soka University of America), "Power and the 'Rationalization' of Rationality or the Cultural Logic of Abu Ghraib"
Comments: Susan Goll (Houston Community College-Southwest College)
- 9:00 Dan Stiver (Hardin-Simmons University), "Which Good? Whose God?"
Comments: Jerry Green (Texas Tech University)
- 10:00 Jo Ann Carson (Texas State University-San Marcos), "Berkeley's Occasionalism"
Comments: Tim Maddox (Hardin-Simmons University)
- 11:00 Brian Harding (Texas Women's University), "Is Machiavelli's Discussion of the Eternity of the World Averroistic?"
Comments: Jo Ann Carson (Texas State University-San Marcos)

Saturday: 8:00am-12:00pm Remington Board Room

Paul Wilson (Texas State University-San Marcos), Moderator

- 8:00 Lawrence Pasternak (Oklahoma State University), "The Structure and Scope of Kantian Belief"
Comments: Thomas Urban (Houston Community College-Northwest College)
- 9:00 John DePoe (University of Iowa), "Hume's Sensible Knave Problem"
Comments: Michael Morales (San Francisco State University)
- 10:00 Michael Morales (San Francisco State University), "Stroud's Humean Skepticism"
Comments: Ron Wilburn (University of Nevada, Las Vegas)
- 11:00 Lijun Yuan (Texas State University-San Marcos), "On Hume's Principle of Sympathy"
Comments: John DePoe (University of Iowa)

Saturday: 1:00pm-5:00pm Remington 1

Josh Weisberg (The University of Houston-Downtown), Moderator

- 1:00 Eric Gilbertson (Auburn University), "Fixity without Necessity?"
Comments: Dave Beisecker (University of Nevada, Las Vegas)
- 2:00 T. Ryan Byerly (Baylor University), "Eliminativism and Reference"
Comments: Marie De Billie (The University of Texas at El Paso)
- 3:00 Michael Linville "E. Y. Mullins as Pragmatist: A Variety of [Fundamental] Religious Experience"
Comments: Dan Stiver (Hardin-Simmons University)
- 4:00 J. Michael McKeon (Rogers State University), "On the Meaning of 'Succession'"
Comments: Brian Harding (Texas Women's University)

Saturday: 1:00pm-5:00pm Remington 2

William Springer (The University of Texas at El Paso), Moderator

- 1:00 Lee Stauffer (New Mexico Highlands University), "Evolution and Creationism"
Comments: Peter Hutcheson (Texas State University-San Marcos)
- 2:00 Dan Flores (El Paso Community College), "Hardy-Weinberg Equilibrium Demonstrates the Limiting Power of Natural Selection"
Comments: Lamont Rodgers (Tulane University)
- 3:00 DustinTune (Rice University), "Perception, Action, and the Material World: Brandom and Rouse on the Normative Authority of Scientific Practices"
Comments: Luis Diaz (The University of Texas at El Paso)
- 4:00 Jenessa Strickland (Colorado State University), "Pitcher and Aydede: Is Pain a Perception?"
Comments: William Springer (The University of Texas at El Paso)

Saturday: 1:00-5:00 pm Remington Boardroom

Michael Matthis (Lamar University), Moderator

- 1:00 Hamner Hill (Southwest Missouri State University), "Law and Post-Autistic Economics"
Comments: Bruce Buchanan (Southern Illinois University Carbondale)
- 2:00 Tim Maddox (Hardin-Simmons University), "Slave Ideology Today: A Ricoeurian Investigation"
Comments: Jolanta Best (Houston Community College-Northwest College)
- 3:00 Jeffrey Gordon (Texas State University-San Marcos), "The Question of the Meaning of Life"
Comments: John Haddox (The University of Texas at El Paso)
- 4:00 Jolanta Best (Houston Community College-Northwest College), "Max Scheler's Phenomenology of Values"
Comments: Charles Hinkley (Alamo Community College)

Saturday: 1:00pm-4:00pm Remington Conference Room

Special Session: Philosophy Student Colloquium

John Symons and Thomas Urban, Moderators

- 1:00 Christopher Graves (The University of Houston-Downtown), "Deconstructing Marxism's Opposition between the Bourgeoisie and Proletariat"
Sean Sessel (Rice University), "On Free Will and the Meaning of Life"
- 2:00 Nathaniel Whitehead (Houston Community College-Northwest College), "Heidegger's *Being and Time*: A Critique through a De-construction"
Stephen Hubbard (Texas A&M University), "Heidegger and Death"
- 3:00 Ryan Ashley Caldwell (Soka University of America), Justin Ho (Rice University), John Symons (The University of Texas at El Paso), Thomas Urban (Houston Community College-Northwest College) "Philosophy's Future: The Academy and Beyond"

Saturday:

5:00pm-6:00pm Business Meeting, Remington Boardroom

John Symons (The University of Texas at El Paso), President
Ron Wilburn (University of Nevada, Las Vegas), Vice President
Peter Hutcheson (Texas State University-San Marcos), Secretary-Treasurer
Glenn Joy (Texas State University-San Marcos), Editor, *Southwest Philosophical Studies*

7:00pm-10:00pm Banquet and Presidential Address; Remington Ballroom

John Symons, The University of Texas at El Paso

March 29

Sunday: 8:00-12:00pm Remington 1

Thomas Urban (Houston Community College-Northwest College), Moderator

- 8:00 William Brant (Texas State University-San Marcos), "The Cynical Structure of Political and Cultural Ideology"
Comments: Roksana Alavi (South Texas College)
- 9:00 Sharin Elkholy (The University of Houston-Downtown), "Authenticity and *Mitda-sein*: on an Intersubjectivist Model of the Self in Heidegger's *Being and Time*"
Comments: Michael Linville
- 10:00 Ryan Johnson, "Locating the Abject in the Third *Critique*"
Comments: Ron Wilburn (University of Nevada, Las Vegas)

- 11:00 Casey Rentmeester (University of South Florida), "The Need for Basic Rights—A Critique of Nozick's Entitlement Theory"
Comments: Craig Hanks (Texas State University-San Marcos)

Sunday: 9:00am-12:00pm Remington 2

John Symons (The University of Texas at El Paso), Moderator

- 9:00 Brian Prince (Rice University), "A Metaphysical Monstrosity: The Form of the Soul"
Comments: Nathan Smith (Houston Community College-Northwest College)
- 10:00 Vinod Acharya, "On the Peculiar Role of Sight in the Appreciation of Nude Sculptures Covered by Wet Drapery (in Herder's *Sculpture*)"
Comments: J. Michael McKeon (Rogers State University)
- 11:00 Nelson Ramirez-Santa (University of St. Thomas), "The True and False are in the Soul"
Comments: Dan Stiver (Hardin-Simmons University)

End of Conference

Special Thanks to Our Host Institution,
Houston Community College-Northwest College
Houston, Texas

Local arrangements: Thomas Urban