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GEIST is an academic journal sponsored by The Symposium, SJSU Philosophy Club, in cooperation with the Department of Philosophy at SJSU. The journal is focused on publishing philosophical papers by undergraduate and graduate students from both SJSU and the greater academic community.

The above is the official description of GEIST. However, I hope that GEIST lives up to its namesake and also shows the spirit behind both philosophy and those who study it. Philosophical quandaries may not be that uncommon but pursuing and trying to make sense out of it all academically is not as common. The aim is to encourage this sort of philosophical investigation in both undergraduate and graduate students as well as to share their ideas with the community.

I would like to thank all of the assistant editors for all their efforts in putting together this issue of GEIST. I also want to gratefully acknowledge all the professors on our advisory board for their reviewing, guidance, and support. We also received help from other San Jose State University students and professors with various tasks and questions. Thank you all for helping to make this possible.

We are still learning how best to put together a journal. As I mentioned last year, we will always work to improve GEIST and would appreciate any feedback.

Veritas,

-S.L.G.
ency and whether independent lines of evidence corroborate the findings. Because theories are ideas, truth is the matching of our mental constructs or representations with the world under the guidance of a certain techne.

This position is paradigmatic of ontic thinking. Another way of saying ontic is to say that this epistemology works within a “regional ontology” or within a prescribed language where the Being of these beings have been decided. In a pre-established language game a philosopher articulates the extensions of the regional ontology. By working within the given rules, the scientific philosophers maneuver within a pre-given set of terms to unfold the possible permutations of that regional ontology. To work within a regional ontology is useful. However, this view of truth does not explain how new regional Ontologies get established.

Heidegger offers us an explanation of how new ways of Being and knowing get established. He offers truth as aletheia. As aletheia, Truth is a founding act that poetically unfolds. As a founding act, it opens a clearing that presents the possibility of a new world, a new way of thinking, a new way of being, a new way of organizing ourselves as people. Aletheia is synonymous with revealing. This revelation occurs through language. Heidegger once said that language is the house of Being. Our understanding limits how we approach and regard the world. Kant showed that ideas and relations of ideas structure this understanding. In this century, philosophers recognize that words represent ideas by projecting these ideas onto the world. These ideas find themselves in speech, in books, in architecture and organization. In more ways then one, we live in our ideas. Since language is the house of Being, what reveals new possibilities are “successful descriptions” of a world. Here are some words that revealed new worlds: “We the people of the United States of America”, “We the baby boomers”, “We are the sons of earth and blood”. These are paradigmatic cases which grounds the self-knowing of a people. Another way to think of the these successful descriptions is as a “grand narrative.” Unlike a mere story, a grand narrative creatively unfolds in a living world. If a regional ontology works by perpetuating an understanding, then aletheia describes how new regions get established.

While truth as correctness or coherency are paradigms of science, Aletheia uses the creative arts as its wellspring for vitality.
Can we have a scientific understanding of art? Analytical philosophers try to do this with an analytical aesthetics. The analytic seeks to describe and define existing art. This approach is doom to find the essence of creativity as creative. Furthermore, the approach guides thinking by presupposing that there is a way we should look at artwork. These presuppositions impose upon the artwork an interpretative format. As Heidegger states the analytical approach:

“What art is should be inferable from the work. What the work of art is we can come to know only from the essence of art. Anyone can easily see that we are moving in a circle. Ordinary understanding demands that this circle be avoided because it violates logic. What art is can be gathered from a comparative examination of actual artworks. But how are we to be certain that we are indeed basing such an examination on artworks if we do not know beforehand what art is? And the essence of art can not be arrived at by a derivation from higher concepts than by a collection of characteristics of actual artworks. For such a derivation, too, already has in view the definitions that must suffice to establish that what we in advance take to be an artwork is one in fact. But selecting characteristics from among given objects, and deriving concepts from principles, are equally impossible here, and where these procedures are practiced they are a self-deception (2).”

It interprets the artwork as an art-object and not as an art that works. In defining the artwork as a thing, the interpretation hinders the artwork by placing blinders on the human, limiting the ways that the work can be. This critique of current aesthetic practices extends into a general attack on regional Ontologies. If one defines “art” by “artworks” or “Being” by “beings”, one externalizes a preconception, a prejudgment, and a prejudice.

Is the distinction between truth as correctness and as aletheia too sharp? Take the case of paradigm shifts. A paradigm can be thought of an either an exemplar, a set of practices, or a body of knowledge that defines, guides and regulates a field of research. Paradigms shift when anomalies build as evidence against the “correctness” of a certain worldview. These anomalies are gray spots that the guiding theories cannot explain. Eventually the build up of unexplained phenomena causes people to rethink their positions, and a shift in worldview occurs. The new worldview affords new
ways of seeing the world. However, does the paradigm shift the revealing of a new way of being? If it did, would that not make “correct” truth a precondition for aletheia? No. Although it is true that paradigm shifts discloses new possibilities, there is no convergence between correctness and disclosure, even at this point. Paradigm shifts occur within disciplines with well-defined techniques. The shift occurs when current techniques fail to do the work properly. A paradigm shift is only a shift between different schools of techne. Aletheia results from genius and not to method.

Heidegger’s truth reveals a truth about human being as human existence. His existentialism differs from Sartre. Sartre’s Existentialism remains trapped in the metaphysics. Heidegger writes:

Sartre expresses the basic tenet of existentialism this way: Existence precedes essence. In this statement he is taking existentia and essentia according to their metaphysical meaning, which from Plato’s time on has said that essentia precedes existentia. Sartre reverses this statement. But the reversal of a metaphysical statement remains a metaphysical statement. With it he states with metaphysics into oblivion of the truth of Being. For even if philosophy wishes to determine the relation of essentia and existentia in the sense it had in medieval controversies, in Leibniz’s sense, or in some other way, it still remains to ask first of all from what destiny of Being this differentiation in Being as Esse Essentiae and Esse essistentiae comes to appear to thinking³.

Thinking of Being in terms of existence and essence splits the world into two realms – one marked by constant change, and one marked by constant stability. Different philosophers have named one or the other world the “real”. For Plato, the real existed as the unchanging world. His motivations were epistemological. He reasoned that knowledge is of what is. For knowledge to be knowledge it must always be true. If knowledge is always true, then what counts, as knowledge must not change. Because knowledge is of what is, and knowledge does not change, then what is does not change. Since what is, is real – the real world must be immutable. While Plato calls the unchanging the form, Aristotle calls it an essence. Sartre inverts this distinction. Instead of the essences
being real, he calls the changing world of existence the real. In either case, privileging existence or essence, we remain trapped in a metaphysical framework – a two-tiered world of physics and what is above or beyond it.

The first essays reflect this metaphysical attitude by beginning with Immanuel Kant as a thinker to think with. Matt Talbert uses Kant’s moral insights to answer the question “Why is Lying Immoral?” Like Kant, Talbert shows that lying and the liar is logically inconsistent. This inconsistency creates a double standard that leads to using people as a means instead of an end. To treat someone as a means is to treat them strictly as an object, and not a person. Use-objects do not have distinct human qualities that grant them a certain level of rights, well being and freedom. If we recognize our humanity, then we must recognize others as well and not treat them strictly as objects to be used. Because lies are made for expediency sake, lying to a person reduces people to the status of objects. Like Kant, Talbert posits a set of immutable standards in order to judge actual acts. These standards ground themselves in categorical ideas, founded on logical necessity. Moreover, the faculty of reason acts as the lawgiver, legislating these standards. Reason, the categories and logic, for Kant exists outside of space and time – pure, pristine and immutable.

While Talbert works within the Kantian framework, Scott Stroud examines Kant and within a historical context. He writes an explorative piece comparing Kant’s moral system to the religious systems developed by the ancient Egyptians. Kantian and Egyptian morality both spring from an ascetic attitude. An ascetic tries to maintain order and harmony through purification. They purify themselves by shutting out distractions, temptations and other things that lead to an untidy life. Moreover, the ascetic maintains order by implementing moral laws. While the Egyptians believed that divine necessity or Maat regulated, and justified the laws, Kant placed Reason is that role. In either case, an infallible authority imposed order upon a human nature that is seen as weak, transient and corrupt.

Using Kant as a departure, we arrive to Heidegger’s existentialism. Instead of trying to map out the relationship between a fixed and a fluxed world, the existentialist seeks to understand the human condition as a being that lives in the world. Central to
existentialism are the concepts Being and Being-with. Typically, the word being has been taken as a verb – as in human being or as in beings. In this sense, being is synonymous with ‘thing’. Taken as a noun, a human being gets interpreted as a “rational animal”. Metaphysical work since Aristotle has attempted to define either the “rational” or the “animal” component of human beings. When we use being in this sense we operate ontically – we think of Being in terms of beings. However, as an infinitive verb, Being is synonymous with the existence. In this sense, the phrase “human being” refers to human existence, which Heidegger calls Da-sein. Human existence is defined by living a life. While passing through a local Barnes and Noble, I came across a postcard. It asked, “Where do you live? Do you live at home? Do you live at work? Do you live in your head? Do you live in your heart? Do you live in dreams or reality?” Here the living has nothing to do with whether you are biologically alive or not. Instead, living has everything to do with where one spends time existing. To exist means to exist in a place with its own characteristics, conditions and rules. It is this place that Heidegger calls a world. It is this sense of living-in that Heidegger calls a dwelling that is being-in-the-world.

Michael Jordan in an essay on homelessness examines this lived-in experience and concludes that we are doomed to be homeless and strange. One can be homeless in two ways. One can not be at home because one falls outside of any social circle, or one can not be at home by not being able to live in harmony of with Being and being oneself. We feel this sense of homelessness when we do not at-home with our self or our situation. We can also be homeless because we have no home at all – we have no place where we can properly live. The situation can be demonstrated by imagining an open space. Then imagine a walled city built atop this plain. Within the walls humans have built a life and a home for themselves. One is a stranger by being outside of the local life, by not fitting into any part of the city. In the extreme, one can be exiled out of the city into the open. There one is left to ones own resources. Unprotected outside of city walls, the human discovers the wider world beyond – an Earth that has no roads yet. While some can take this uncanniness as liberating freedom, most discover that they cannot live apart from others. These people run away from the openness and back into the confines that come with
being with others. Others accept the openness. They strike out and explore their freedom; some have the ability to establish a new city with a new form of life. In choosing the city the humans find themselves separated from the open. In the open humans find themselves cut off from the world they know. In either case, the humans find themselves apart from the place where they must properly live. They find themselves homeless.

Suppose we decide to leave the openness of being and enter the city walls. We find within these walls not only friends, enemies and strangers—but also of men and women. We find ourselves not only as being-in-the-world, but we live in a world where we are with others. Brian Prosser examines the Others in his response to Carlos Sanchez’s essay “Dangerous Encounters: The Other, the I, and Sociality”. Like Sanchez, Prosser examines the live-in experience of existing as an individual in a world. While friends and enemies surround Sanchez, Prosser’s has strangers. Both examine human existence from the standpoint of the subject ego, of the “I”. Existing as themselves, for themselves, both find themselves in a world surround by others. Sanchez’s existence is motivated by danger. For Sanchez, these other have the potential to be friends or enemies. One typically finds this with people who feel under siege. Prosser opens up castle gates of the self to include others that are merely strangers.

We also see others as being of a gender. Philosophers such as Sally Haslanger, recognize that unlike Sex, gender is a construct “defined in terms of social relations”. Moreover, “they function as ideals for those who stand in these social relations?.” While a sex is biologically identified, gender is not. They are norms. While gender norms may have some biological basis, they are culturally constructed ideals that normalize. As Mora states it, “to normalize is to dis-empower, to dictate identity and control actions through indirect means.” Melanie Mora examines the formation of a scientific forming of sexuality, as well as its enforcement through jurisprudence and discipline. She continues with an analysis of everyday normalizing actions after this institutional analysis. This science of sex is to be contrasted against an erotic art, which she characterizes as a care of the self. Collectively, norms establish fields of knowledge/power. These regional epistemology in time form epistemic regime. Because normative identities can be de-
fined within a region or between regions, no norm has an essential characteristic. Any definitions of norms that rely on listing characteristics are doomed to perpetuate a prejudgment.

Because we cannot define a norm without making it appear like we’re describing something essential, then Mora’s normative analysis must take a new strategy. She recognizes that norms are defined and redefined as people struggle with identity. These struggles occur along specific battle lines. Moreover, the people use specific tactics. A Foucaultian analysis of norms identifies these lines and tactics.

An example of a normative fight can be found in James Dix’s essay, as he engages in dialogue with Feminist. Here the norm is gender and the battle relates to how genders should relate to one another. He meditates Feminist tactics and concludes that these tactics fail. They fail by manipulating public opinion to create a situation where we have separated but equal worlds for men and women. This strategy accomplishes nothing but fuel hostility, confusion and recreate injustices. Dix himself offers some suggestions to solve this problem.

Of the last two essays, Dirk Bruins asks whether SETI can be used to search for God. Indirectly, this question asks whether science can be used to search for God at all. The valuable thing about this essay is that it establishes an ontological protocol for answering such a question. To answer this question, Bruins describes exactly what SETI is capable of searching for. While SETI says it searches for extraterrestrial beings, what it actually picks up are electromagnetic signals from sources within 150 light years. Unless God is electromagnetic or uses electromagnetism, God cannot be found using SETI.

As for the last essay… I meditate on the language of the call. This question is important for a Heideggerian Existentialist, because Heidegger constantly asks us to heed the call of Being. However, he provides very little analysis of what the language of the call is. At best he says that this call comes from Being and that it is a call to our conscience to be resolutely ourselves. In writing this paper, I came across a methodological problem. I needed to demonstrate a call, yet was forced to describe this call when I had to write an essay. Essays describe or argue. When I do either, I cease to call. Since I call on my readers to think a description of a
call may lead one to conclude that the knowing the description itself was sufficient for thinking. To escape this problem, I decided to write several different texts. I urge the readers to read the text three times, three different ways. On the first reading, read only the “main text” without referring to the “footnote”. On the second reading, read the “main text” and “footnotes” as you would normally read. On the third reading, read merely the “footnotes” in order. Each reading will should comment and shed light on each style of reading. The differences between the readings is the same as the difference between Metaphysics and Ontology, or the difference between a description of a human being that is a rational animal and a being-human, there; thinking.

References.

Endnotes
1 F. Nietzsche (pg. 33)
2 Heidegger Pg. 144.
3 Basic Works Pg. 232.
4 Haslanger. Pg. 86.
Another Look at Kant on Lying

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Immanuel Kant’s seemingly unequivocal condemnation of lying is one of the best known aspects of his moral thought. At the end of the *Metaphysics of Morals* he claims that lying is “the greatest violation of a human being’s duty to himself,” and that “By a lie a human being throws away and, as it were, annihilates his dignity as a human being” (MM. 6:429). The liar destroys his or her status as a person; for Kant “Such a speaker is a mere deceptive appearance of a human being” (MM. 6:429).

In this paper I shall examine Kant’s general position on lying, focusing on what makes lying a moral wrong and how Kant employs the logic of his categorical imperative to highlight this wrong. I shall also examine the seemingly problematic position that is found in Kant’s essay “On a Supposed Right to Lie From Philanthropy.” Many readers have found Kant’s total proscription of lying here far too rigid, but I shall offer the more charitable reading of that text which certain scholars have proposed in order to bring Kant more in line with popular sentiment.

I

One of the basic principles that arises in the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant’s most widely read work of moral philosophy, is the contention that a moral evil necessarily calls forth its own practical contradiction. “What is morally evil,” Kant says, “has the property, inseparable from its nature, of being at odds with itself in its aims and destructive of them” (PP. 8:379). So an act which violates the moral law also violates the rational law of non-contradiction in so far as it attempts to instantiate a contradiction. Kant believed that he gave expression to this in the first formulation of his categorical imperative: “act only in accordance with that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it become a universal law” (Gr. 4:421).

Why does a violation of this imperative involve one in a contradiction? To understand Kant’s reasoning we must first note that, for Kant, if a law is to hold morally it “must carry with it
absolute necessity,” that is, it must apply universally (Gr. 4:389). So if one wants to judge whether a personal rule, or maxim, is morally acceptable it must be asked if the maxim can be extended universally. If the maxim cannot be thus extended without coming into conflict with the original intent of the will in creating the maxim, then the agent acting under that maxim is engaged in a practical contradiction. Such a maxim violates the categorical imperative and is morally unsuitable to be operated under.

To act morally is to act under a maxim which can also be a universal law, and when we act in violation of our moral duty, “we find that we do not really will that our maxim should become a universal law,” rather we wish to exempt ourselves from its authority (Gr. 4:424). Yet if we exempt ourselves from a supposedly universal maxim, we “find a contradiction in our own will, namely that a certain principle be objectively necessary as a universal law” and yet not bind us and therefore not be universal (Gr. 4:424). Thus we attribute to our maxim the quality of universality and non-universality at the same time.

In the *Groundwork*, Kant shows how this first formulation of the categorical imperative applies to a “lying promise.” Let us imagine, he says, a man who, because of need, borrows money which he knows that he will not be able to pay back. But to receive this (permanent) loan the fellow must, of course, pretend that he is willing and able to pay it back, that is, he must lie. To apply the categorical imperative in this case Kant says:

I ask myself: would I indeed be content that my maxim (to get myself out of difficulties by a false promise) should hold as a universal law (for myself as well as others)? And could I indeed say to myself that everyone may make a false promise when he finds himself in a difficulty he can get out of in no other way? (Gr. 4:403)

But what of a world where lying is not considered a breach of the moral law? In such a world no one would lend money if the loan were guaranteed only by a promise. Money is lent because of a conviction, on the part of the lender, that the promise of a person in need can be counted on as a meaningful statement. Under most circumstances our statements are preceded, as it were, by an im-
licit certification of their truth, that is, we expect people not to lie—this is the only reason lying “works.” Therefore, the lie Kant proposes cannot be extended universally because—in a world where one in financial difficulties is permitted (and, presumably, expected) to lie—Kant’s lie would fail to have its desired effect. Kant leaves us to know that we must not lie, “no matter how great the benefits . . . might be . . . Here is an unconditional necessitation through a command . . . of reason, which I must obey; and in the face of it all my inclinations must be silent” (MM. 6:481).

Lying, then, is immoral because it violates the rational, and thus the moral, law. But this rather abstract application of the first formulation of the categorical imperative may be somewhat less than satisfying to one who wonders why it is morally wrong to violate a law that originates in pure reason. The second formulation of the categorical imperative is perhaps useful for casting the matter in starker terms.

Kant tells us that “rational nature exists as an end in itself,” and that the individual “necessarily represents his own existence [to himself] in this way,” moreover, all other rational agents represent their existence to themselves in this way as well (Gr. 4:429). Of course, we need no incentive to regard ourselves as ends but Kant says that since it is our rationality that certifies us as such we must extend this courtesy to other rational agents. The second formulation of the categorical imperative expresses this: “So act that you use humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, always at the same time as an end, never merely as a means” (Gr. 4:429). To use the above example, one who tells a lying promise to another cannot possibly view that other as anything more than a means to the liar’s own ends. The liar has circumvented the rational process as it occurs in the other, thus reducing him or her to the status of a mere thing, and a “thing,” for Kant, can have only contingent value—things are not valuable in themselves.

In *The Metaphysics of Morals* Kant says that our only innate right is freedom, which he defines as a state of “independence from being constrained by another’s choice” (MM. 6:237). Lying is a violation of freedom since it tampers with the rational faculty of another person and thereby binds their will to our own. Insofar as we have done this we have destroyed the other’s autonomy and
freedom. A lie robs the one lied to of his or her right to give or withhold rational consent. The person lied to is deprived of his or her natural right to autonomy and for Kant it “is obvious that he who transgresses the rights of human beings intends to make use of the person of others merely as a means” (Gr. 4:430). When seen in this light it is perhaps easier to understand why Kant counted lying as so profoundly inimical to the moral life; a lie strikes at the most basic part of our humanity - the freedom which is ours through our rationality.\

II

A problem seems to arise in Kant’s doctrine on lying when we turn to the reading that is generally given to his brief essay “On a Supposed Right to Lie From Philanthropy.” Kant wrote this essay as a reply to a 1797 article by the French liberal philosopher Benjamin Constant entitled “On Political Reactions.” In his article Constant writes that “a German philosopher [Kant],” maintains “that it would be a crime to lie to a murderer who asked us whether a friend of ours whom he is pursuing has taken refuge in our house” (Quoted in Ph. 8:425). And, indeed, Kant says that to “be truthful (honest) in all declarations is . . . a sacred command of reason prescribing unconditionally, one not to be restricted by any conveniences,” every individual has, therefore, “the strictest duty to truthfulness in statements he cannot avoid, though they may harm himself or others” (Ph. 8:427 & Ph. 8:428). 3

All this is rather curious when we take into account Kant’s deeply held belief that his philosophizing in the realm of ethics did no more than render systematic that which we all know in a natural, if incipient, fashion. Yet Kant’s complete prohibition of lying offends many, if not most, people’s moral intuitions. Perhaps Kant’s reasons for taking such a hard line can be made apparent if we look more closely at what Constant was suggesting in his own article. Constant says that: “To tell the truth is a duty, but only to one who has a right to the truth” (Quoted in Ph. 8:425). So Constant is saying that our various duties are inextricably connected to the specific rights of other people; thus, “where there are no rights, there are no duties” (Quoted in Ph. 8:425). Constant says that we have no duty to tell the truth to an individual who has no right to it, and the would-be murderer in the above example has forfeited his
right to the truth since he intends to use it for bad ends.

In response to Constant, Kant states his principle that: "Truthfulness in statements that one cannot avoid is a human being’s duty to everyone" (Ph. 8:426). Yet, Kant says, it is not that I wrong him who "unjustly compels me to make . . . [a] statement if I falsify it," rather, I have failed in my more general duty to humanity (Ph. 8:426). And this in that "I bring it about, as far as I can, that statements (declarations) in general are not believed . . . and this is a wrong inflicted upon humanity generally" (Ph. 8:426). In acting under a principle which promotes lying, I work toward the destruction of rationality, communication, and human society as such. To stave off such a peril, Kant says that he will not take Constant’s principle as his own, “because the duty of truthfulness . . . makes no distinction between persons” (Ph. 8:429).

What Kant is wary of is the construction of a moral maxim that allows lying. How could such a maxim not generate a practical contradiction—it would render our communication, non-communicative? He is also at pains to avoid the construction of a maxim that would bind a duty to a prior right. Duty exists unconditionally insofar as human beings are not perfectly rational and must actively compel themselves to do their duty in the face of their opposing inclinations, and Kant will not sanction a maxim that renders duty subordinate to subjective considerations.

Kant’s main preoccupation in “On a Supposed Right to Lie,” and in the realm of practical philosophy in general, is the maintenance of an apparatus for the construction of the general maxims under which we ought to perform our duties. It is not, therefore, Kant’s prime motive to tell us how to act in individual situations. The heading of section VI of the second part of the Metaphysics of Morals tells us that “Ethics does not give laws for Actions . . . but only for Maxims of actions” (MM. 6:388). Given this, we can understand why Constant’s suggestion that we should construct a maxim that seems to require lying would be so offensive to Kant and why this suggestion would demand such a vigorous rejection.4

Another way of approaching this problem, if we wish to reconcile Kant with popular sentiment on this issue, is to examine why his contention in “On a Supposed Right to Lie” strikes so many people as unjust.5 Why is it that Kant’s conclusion here is so
widely offensive, especially if we are inclined to be charitable with regard to Kant’s belief that his moral theory closely mirrors the process of ordinary ethical decision making?

If Kant were completely intransigent on the question of lying we might suppose that he has simply ignored the possibility of a conflict of duties, namely, that our duty not to lie might come into conflict with a clear duty to, for instance, protect the innocent. Now Kant says little about protecting the innocent from unjust persecution but he does say that we are bound to act beneficently toward others, “the happiness of others is . . . an end that is also a duty” (MM. 6:393). But this is a “wide” duty, that is, we have some latitude in our manner of carrying it out.

Of course, we might want to require an act of beneficence in conditions where the need is great, and where an individual is able to offer such aid as can meet this need. If we can save a life by a small word or deed then we have a duty to perform this deed. In such a case, an act of beneficence ought not be considered discretionary.

Now if a “wide” obligation (one that can be fulfilled in many different ways according to the judgment of the actor), conflicts with a “narrow” duty (one that impinges on our actions categorically, usually as a prohibition) the tension is easily resolved. We must simply act according to our narrow obligation—that is, we must do what we are unconditionally obligated to do—there will be another time when we can act on our wide duty. But what to do when two narrow obligations seem to be mutually contradictory but both, since they are narrow, impinge on us categorically? What do we do if we feel that we have a categorical duty, say, to save a life, but this, for some reason, comes into conflict with our categorical duty not to tell a lie?

First, it is necessary to note that, for Kant, there can, strictly speaking, be no conflict in our duty. In a very real sense we have only the duty to live in accordance with the rational, moral law. As Kant says, duty is that “necessity, which reason lays directly upon a human being, of acting in conformity with its law” (MM. 6:481-482). Any conflict, therefore, between rationally generated maxims is only apparent. If it is our duty to act under one maxim, then to act under a contradictory maxim, far from being necessitated, is actually prohibited. Thus, “two rules opposed to each other cannot
be necessary at the same time, if it is a duty to act in accordance with one rule, to act in accordance with the opposite rule is not a duty but even contrary to duty” (MM. 6:224).

Each obligation is in some way “grounded” in our duty, but when obligations come into conflict we will find that, with regard to these grounds, “one or the other . . . is not sufficient to put . . . [us] under obligation . . . so that one of them is not a duty” (MM. 6:224). The “stronger ground of obligation prevails” (MM. 6:224). Thus, it is at least conceivable that a person might tell a lie, but that the action would still conform to their duty. In this case we would not say that such a person has ignored his or her obligation to refrain from lying because, in fact, he or she was not, at that time, obligated not to lie.

While we do not have separate duties which come into conflict with each other it is clear that there will be times when rules seem to pull us in different directions. It is, presumably, our faculty of judgment which we must use to make decisions concerning the strength of the grounds of our various obligations. As Kant says, judgment, “sharpened by experience,” is used when dealing with moral laws “to distinguish in what cases they are applicable” (Gr. 4:389).

But what of Kant’s alleged rigor, for which he has received so much disapproval? I think that, given the above reading, Kant’s doctrine is not so repellant, even as it appears in “On a Supposed Right to Lie From Philanthropy.” Kant is not so rigorous as to have us follow our “duty” even though immorality should arise from doing so. But Kant is, of course, rigorous. He would hold us to our duty, because it is our duty, in many circumstances when we might wish to take an easier path—by telling a lie, or through some other expedient.

Notes

¹For all quotations from Kant I have relied on Mary Gregor’s translations as found in Mary J. Gregor (ed. & trans.), *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant, Practical Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). The pagination given internally here, and in Gregor’s edition, is the
standard one found in the Royal Prussian (German) Academy of Science’s *Kant’s Gesammelte Schriften*. I have abbreviated the titles of Kant’s works as follows: *Metaphysics of Morals* (MM.), *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (Gr.), *Critique of Practical Reason* (Pr.), *Toward Perpetual Peace* (PP.), and “*On a Supposed Right to Lie From Philanthropy*” (Ph.).

Given Kant’s vehemence on the subject of veracity, it is perhaps curious to find him deliberating on how much of our secret selves it is necessary to divulge in the context of social relationships (MM. 6:472-473). Kant even suggests that when we would rather not tell the truth we may resort, not to lying to be sure, but to “simple silence, mental reservations, noncommittal answers, evasions, and equivocations” (Roger Sullivan, *Immanuel Kant’s Moral Theory* [Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 1989], p. 172). Of course we are not obliged to reveal the full contents of our mind to everyone we meet, but if part of the problem with telling a lie is that it is a form of non-communication in the guise of communication, then an equivocation could easily be just as wrong as a lie. Even “simple silence,” at the wrong time, could be a violation of our duty. Certainly we are sometimes required to volunteer information that no one has asked for. As we shall see, the solution to this problem lies in the fact that, for Kant, a significant burden is placed on the faculty of judgment in the application of the moral law.

3Christine Korsgaard in “The Right to Lie: Kant on Dealing with Evil,” (Philosophy and Public Affairs 15 [Fall 1986]: pp. 325-49) cites examples in Kant’s published lectures where he suggests another direction than the one taken in “On a Supposed Right to Lie.” For example, Kant says that “if I cannot save myself [from unjust violence] by maintaining silence, then my lie is a weapon of defense,” (quoted in Korsgaard, p. 338, from Kant’s Lectures on Ethics.)

4A similar argument can be found in Sullivan, *Moral Theory*, pp. 173-77 (see note 4) and, in a less developed form, in Robert J. Benton, “Political Expediency and Lying, Kant vs. Benjamin Constant,” The Journal of The History of Ideas 43 (1982):
pp. 135-44. Benton says that, to Kant, Constant’s essay would have appeared as “an exercise in political opportunism . . . . Thus, a major theme of . . . [Kant’s] essay is an attack on mere expediency in political theory and an attempt to show how truly principled action is both necessary and possible” (p.139).

5Certainly not everyone is eager to do this. See Wolfgang Schwarz, “Kant’s Refutation of Charitable Lies,” Ethics 81 (1970/71): p. 66. Schwarz not only defends a “literalist” reading of Kant, but also defends Kant’s supposed position as the only moral one.

6The reading I will give here is substantially similar to that in Sullivan, Moral Theory, pp. 173-77 (see note 4). Jules Vuillemin too seems to move around a similar point in “On Lying: Kant and Benjamin Constant,” Kantstudien 73 (1982): pp. 413-424. See especially p. 422.
Moral Theory and Practice: Cross-Cultural Analogues in Kantian and Ancient Egyptian Moral Philosophy

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“He wants to tidy up the room, and I’m in the way. I am uncleanliness and disorder.”
-Ivan Ilych, from Leo Tolstoy’s The Death of Ivan Ilych

Introduction

One of the important ideas that Immanuel Kant introduces in his conception of duty is the abstract nature of the moral law; from this “pure” notion rational individuals are able to derive specific behaviors and maxims for action (Beck, 1963). While contemporary philosophers are quite cognizant of Kant’s significance (Stumpf, 1993), virtually no research has been conducted on a moral system that shares uncanny similarities to Kant’s work—that of the ancient Egyptians. This paper seeks to extend comparative philosophical research into the unexamined area of cross-cultural analogues between ancient Egyptian moral philosophy and Kantian moral philosophy. The Egyptian concept of maat and its application will be demonstrated to have important links with Kant’s work—initially, the similarity maat shares with Kant’s conception of moral law shall be examined. Then a textual analysis of the “Declaration of Innocence” from the Egyptian Book of the Dead will be undertaken to establish a correlation between Kantian and Egyptian applied moral law. This paper does not make the claim that Kant’s work is unoriginal; on the contrary, it attempts to strengthen his ideas by placing them in a larger cross-cultural context ranging over 5000 years.

Analogous Concepts of Natural and Moral Law

The analogous relation between Kant’s conception of moral law and the Egyptian idea of maat will now be elucidated. First, Kant’s conception of moral law as indicated in the Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals (referred to as Foundations) and the Critique of Practical Reason (referred to as CPrR) shall be discussed, and then its relation to maat shall be explored. In the Foundations, Kant argued that “everything in nature works according to laws” and that humans are not exempt from this rule (1985, p.
In the same paragraph he stated “Only a rational being has the capacity of acting according to the conception of laws, i.e., according to principles. This capacity is will” (p. 29/[413]). Thus, in Kant we have a law-governed universe, with humans acting on principles (potential laws) just like everything else. Since laws are absolute, humans must choose a determining principle that can truly stand as a universal law, i.e. one that could logically determine the wills of all other rational beings without contradiction. Thus, Kant indicated in the second formulation of the categorical imperative in *Foundations* “the imperative of duty can be expressed as follows: Act as though the maxim of your action were by your will to become a universal law of nature” (1985, p. 39/[422]). This same idea is evident in the following version of the categorical imperative in *CPrR*: “So act that the maxim of your will could always hold at the same time as the principle giving universal law” (Kant, 1993, p.30/[31]). The fundamental insight is that humans should act on principles that could be (and therefore logically are) “universal law.”

Of course, Kant is not claiming that the laws of the physical world are to be equated with the law that determines one’s will in the strictly causal and descriptive sense. On the contrary, Caygill (1995) indicates that “Theoretical knowledge [for Kant] is concerned with ‘what is’ according to the causality of natural laws, while practical knowledge is concerned with what ought to be according to the causality of the laws of freedom” (p. 275). Instead, moral law holds a determinant necessity in the practical sense over what humans *should* will if they are to uphold their nature as rational beings. Not every human wills and acts in a moral fashion, thus it is safe to assume that this moral law does not act with the same physical and causal necessity as the law of gravity, for instance. Instead of necessarily influencing objects, Kant draws attention to the universal nature of both the moral law and laws of nature (governing the physical world). He illustrates this point in an analogical fashion in *Foundations* when he writes, immediately before the “natural law” formulation of the categorical imperative, “The universality of law according to which effects are produced constitutes what is properly called nature in the most general sense (as to form), i.e., *the existence of things so far as determined by universal law*” (p. 39/[422], emphasis added). Thus, the moral
law is compared to a natural law in so far as it brings the elements of universality, non-contradiction, and order to a rational being’s will.

It is our ability to allocate value and to act on the categorical imperative that led Kant to postulate the idea of the “kingdom of ends.” It is in this realm that we all are both legislators and legislation-followers. Kant indicated in the *Foundations* the entwined nature of morality and the kingdom of ends:

> Morality, therefore, consists in the relation of every action to that legislation through which alone a realm of ends is possible. This legislation, however, must be found in every rational being. It must be able to arise from his [or her] will, whose principle then is to take no action according to any maxim which would be inconsistent with its being a universal law and thus to act only so that the will through its maxims could regard itself at the same time as universally lawgiving (p. 52/[434]).

That which motivates us to action needs to be a maxim that could hold for all; it must be instantiated as a universal law of nature similar to gravity (in regard to its necessary effects, albeit on the will instead of physical objects). Kant discerned in the idea of a kingdom of ends and the categorical imperative an illustration of how a maxim could become universal law, enabling an *ordered, harmonious* kingdom of ends to function as it should.

It is this last idea that provides a basis from which to compare the idea of Kant’s idea of the moral law and the moral law of *maat*. Both Kant and the ancient Egyptians realized that moral law was a subset of universal law that mandated willful harmony with one’s world and being (i.e. as a willing and acting being). Ashby (1998) indicates that *maat* “implies harmony with the universe” (p. 18). The ancient Egyptians believed that to achieve this harmony was to apply (will) the principle of *maat* in the myriad of moral situations they were faced with. In order to uphold the universal nature of moral law, one must attempt to will it in a consistent fashion (i.e., produce actions and principles that are in accord or harmony with it). According to Baines (1991), the principle of *maat* was seen as the element of order and truth in the world, as opposed to the concept of *izfet*, which translates as disorder or chaos.
The Egyptians saw it as morally virtuous to let oneself be determined by *maat*, and as the sage Ptah-hotep stated, “long-lived is the man whose rule of conduct is in accordance with *maat*” (Morenz, 1996, p. 115). Morenz (1996) states “the worshipper proclaims God’s works [*maat*] in the manner which seems right to *him* [the individual], as a member of Egyptian society” (p. 4). Here we observe a strikingly similar theme to a key element in Kantian morality; the separation between abstract “rules” of the will and the actions that flow from them. *Maat* became a general norm to guide the actions of the ancient Egyptians; in a comparative spirit, one could label it as a “universal law” or “maxim” due to its abstract character. As opposed to simple divine commandments, this underlying basis of Egyptian morality was conceptual and formal in nature, thus leading one to notice obvious similarities to the formal categorical imperative.

One may object that basing actions on *maat* is similar to acting a certain way because God commanded it (Korsgaard, 1998). Regardless of the place of God in the Egyptians’ and Kant’s system, the important element is essentially the same—the focus on natural law. Kant recognized the similarity between moral law and natural law in his epistemological explanation in the *Foundations* that “A realm of ends is thus possible only by analogy with a realm of nature” (p. 57([439])). Clark (1998) argues that “*mayet* [*maat*]—is probably the earliest approach to the concept of ‘Nature’ as understood in Western thought. It marks a break with the old mythical cosmology where the processes of nature were understood in terms of legend and ritual symbol” (p. 143). While not as sophisticated or analytical as the Kantian idea of moral law or the kingdom of ends, the basic emphasis on harmony and absolute law is the same. Morenz (1996) indicates that “*maat* is right order in nature and society...This state of righteousness needs to be preserved or established in great matters as in small. *Maat* is therefore not only right order but also *the object of human activity*. *Maat* is both the task which man sets himself and also, as righteousness, the promise and reward which await him on fulfilling it” (p. 113, emphasis added). Here we have the ideas of the foundation of human moral action and self-legislation being associated with *maat*. The individual then applies this abstract concept in a deontological fashion to conform his or her actions to the universal order or law.
Textual Correlation of Applied Moral Law

An important aspect to both the Kantian and Egyptian moral systems was the application of the abstract moral law to everyday life. While maat and Kant's moral law have been shown to be very similar in abstract form, the issue of analogues in applied ethics must be examined. This paper now addresses the following research question:

Will Egyptian moral rules (applications of maat) be classifiable on Kant's division of possible duties (from the Metaphysics of Morals)?

This division covers duties to oneself, to others, to subhuman beings (animals, etc.), and superhuman beings (God, gods, etc.) (Kant, 1996). While Kant denied two parts of this division (duties to subhuman beings and superhuman beings), the complete classification will be used to highlight similarities and differences with Egyptian moral philosophy. This division, from the Metaphysic of Morals (referred to as MM), concerns the "beings in relation to whom ethical obligation can be thought" (Kant, 1996, p. 169/6:412).

Ancient Egyptian moral instructions and maxims abound in their literature. While the "Instruction" genre and other sources of literature contain moral maxims (Clark, 1998; Erman, 1995; Simpson, 1973), this initial survey will instead focus on what has been claimed to be the seminal moral text: the Book of the Dead (Morenz, 1996). Silverman (1991) indicates that this book of funerary texts was widely available to both the royalty and the public. The important part of this text for testing the above hypothesis is Chapter 125, which is also known as the "Declaration of Innocence" (Faulkner, 1997). In this chapter, the deceased individual is confronting the gods of the afterlife and proclaims his or her innocence. This chapter is particularly good for comparative analysis because the moral application of maat is done in a "perfect" manner, which is the ideal state of action and virtue in which the deceased would prefer the gods see him or her as occupying. From these ideal actions/inaction, we can derive the moral maxims that Kant figures into his classification of duty. This classification of duty was graphically correlated with the statements from the second stanza of the "Declaration of Innocence" for the purposes of this paper. The results of this textual analysis can be found...
in chart form in the Appendix. The translation of Chapter 125 to be used is by Lichtheim (1976). While the confines of this paper prevent an adequate analysis of all parts of the declaration and the Kantian text that correlates with them, a few preliminary remarks can be made.

In regard to “duties to oneself,” three significant correlations are apparent. The first coincides with the declarations from the deceased of “I am pure, I am pure, I am pure!” This is very similar to the ideals expressed in the *Foundations* and in the *CPrR*. In these two works, Kant indicated that while humans cannot be holy wills (morally perfect agents), they should attempt to always will maxims in line with the universal law that these holy wills would follow (Kant, 1985; Kant, 1993). In the *MM*, Kant argued that humans have a duty to increase their moral perfection, indicating:

> This perfection consists subjectively in the *purity* or one’s disposition to duty...Here the command is ‘be holy’...Here the command is ‘be perfect’...a human being’s striving after this end always remains only a progress from one perfection to another (1996, p. 196/[6:446]).

Also, the declaration of “I have not copulated or defiled myself” suggests the maxim of sexual control and natural function. These themes are offered by Kant in the *MM*; he followed the “natural use” argument by indicating “sexual love is destined by it [nature] to preserve the species; in other words, ...[this] is a natural end” (1996, p. 178/[6:424]). Kant also pointed out that humans have a duty, similar to the stated declaration, to prevent the “making [of] himself [or herself into] a plaything of the mere inclinations and hence a thing” (1996, p. 175/[6:420]). Both Kant and the Egyptians seem to recognize both the animal nature of humans and their purely moral nature; thus, duties arise both to our animal-self and the self that is capable of conceiving of the moral order of the world (the purely moral being).

The last four statements of “I have not increased or reduced the measure,” “I have not cheated in the fields,” “I have not added to the weight of the balance,” and “I have not falsified the plummet of the scales” espouse the maxim of not lying or cheating. Kant indicated in the *MM* that:
The greatest violation of a human being's duty to himself [or herself] regarded merely as a moral being is the contrary of truthfulness, lying...By a lie a human being throws away and, as it were, annihilates his [or her] dignity as a human being (1996, p. 182/[6:429]).

An interesting aspect to notice is that these Egyptian declarations contain no mention of the consequences of untruthfulness; this is very similar to Kant's observation that "in ethics [duties of virtue], ...no authorization is derived from harmless [in regard to intentional untruths]" (1996, p. 182/[6:429]). A definite correlation exists between the duties to oneself imposed by the categorical imperative and the idea of maat.

"Duties to other beings" includes more declarations than any other section; this is to be expected since moral law primarily governs human interactions. The first two statements and the last eight all indicate the presence of a maxim of benevolence. Through the negation of malicious behaviors, the deceased is proclaiming to the gods that he or she has recognized others as worthy of respect and love through not causing them harm and hardship. Again, consequences for the deceased person are not mentioned; presumably, even malicious behaviors that would have benefited him or her would still be condemned and abhorred. Gregor (1964) points out the Kantian analogue in that "these duties to others include not only our pursuit of their happiness but also duties of respect [i.e. their autonomy]" (p. xxxiv). By not maligning servants (and presumably others), the Egyptian maintains the moral order and avoids the Kantian vice of "immediate inclination...to bring into the open something prejudicial to respect for others"(1996, p. 212/[6:466]). Through disavowing the maxim that allows one to intentionally harm others, the Kantian vice of maliciousness is avoided. Kant indicates in the MM that "Malice, the direct opposite of sympathy, is likewise no stranger to human nature; but when it goes so far as to help bring about ills or evil it makes hatred of human beings visible and appears in all its hideousness" (1996, p. 207/[6:459]). The correlation that appears between the Kantian ideals of duties to others and the instantiations of maat is the idea of moral equivalence of human beings. At a base level, even the servants of Egyptian society had a moral right to protection from malicious actions.
The order of the world, maat, is such that humans must treat each other as respected and loved moral agents. As Gregor (1964) indicates, "in fulfilling our duties of virtue to others we are striving to realize an "intelligible" or moral world, in which love and respect are analogous to the forces of repulsion and attraction in the physical world" (p. xxxv). By upholding this kingdom of ends, Kant recognized a similar idea to maat; the truly moral world that we all putatively aim for is rule governed and is a part of nature.

An important aspect readily evident in these two sections is the bifurcation between the previously mentioned "abstract" idea of maat and the challenge posed to each Egyptian to instantiate it through his or her actions. Hornung (1982) argues that "this state [of order] is always being disturbed, and unremitting effort is necessary in order to recreate it in its original purity. Like the injured and perpetually healed ‘eye of Horus,’ maat therefore symbolizes this pristine state of the world" (p. 213). Both the Kantian and Egyptian response enshrine order and virtuous perfection in their application of moral law.

The last two categories, "duties to subhuman beings" and "duties to superhuman beings," are excluded from a pure science of ethics by Kant (1996). While space limitations prevent exploration of and possible argumentation against this exclusion, a few comments can be made concerning these Egyptian declarations and their relation to the Kantian system. The seven declarations concerning the treatment of subhuman beings could be indicative of the application of maat to all members of the physical world. The Egyptians seemed to recognize a place for plants, environmental features, and animals in the order of the world. An interesting conjecture could be made about the extension of moral law to these members of the world by analogy with the applicability of physical laws; unfortunately, this issue must rest unexplored in this paper.

The category of “duties to superhuman beings” threatens to leave the province of practical reason and migrate into speculative metaphysics. While it is hard to reconcile these declarations with the view of religion presented by Kant in the MM, one can again notice the emphasis on order that the application of the moral law of maat had for Egyptian moral philosophy. Just as there was an order “below” humanity, there
was an order above—the souls of the departed, gods, unknown energies, etc.—that must be maintained (Morenz, 1996). Another exceptional feature of these declarations is the utterance of “I have not done what the god abhors.” This is crucial because it prevents the previous categories of declarations, and with it much of Egyptian moral philosophy, from being heteronomous elements that are commanded by a god. This supports the analysis earlier in the paper that one upholds maat not out of fear of God/gods, but instead out of knowing one’s position in the moral fabric of the world.

Conclusion

The Egyptians inhabited a hostile desert environment, much different from the life that Kant knew, that radically affected their moral philosophy and religious thought (Shafer, 1991; Silverman, 1991). Their concept and myth of maat was descriptive of the moral law that humans were obligated to follow (Lesko, 1991; MacKenzie, 1994). It is this idea of order and moral law that this paper has claimed to be similar to Kant’s conception of the moral law. The analogues between Egyptian and Kantian moral philosophy have been demonstrated by first examining the abstract conception of moral law. While Kant had more analytically sophisticated and articulated concepts to use and oppose (i.e., the developed problem of subjectivity), both he and the ancient Egyptians were attempting to discuss the same aspect of existence—what constituted a moral determination of a human’s will? Both conceptual schemes arrive at a solution that stresses order and universality in the will that has ready analogues in the universality and order imposed by natural laws on the physical world. The similarities in practical application of this law have been explicated by an exploratory textual analysis of the “Declaration of Innocence” as compared to Kant’s categorization of duty in the Metaphysics of Morals. Budge (1995), a noted Egyptologist, stated “the Egyptians possessed, some six thousand years ago, a religion and a system of morality which...stand second to none among those which have been developed by the greatest nations of the world” (p. viii). It is quite a feat of the human mind that such ancient ideas can be so correlated with modern thought.
Appendix: Duty Comparison*

To Oneself

I have not known what should not be known [falsity]
I have not copulated or defiled myself
I am pure, I am pure, I am pure, I am pure!
I have not increased or reduced the measure
I have not cheated in the fields
I have not added to the weight of the balance
I have not falsified the plummet of the scales

To Subhuman Beings

I have not mistreated cattle
I have not deprived cattle of their pasture
I have not snared birds in the reeds of the gods
I have not caught fish in their ponds
I have not held back water in its season
I have not damned a flowing stream
I have not quenched a needed fire

To Other Beings

I have not done crimes against people.
I have not done any harm
I did not begin a day by exacting more than my due
My name did not reach the bark [boat] of the mighty ruler
I have not robbed the poor
I have not maligned a servant to his master
I have not caused pain
I have not caused tears
I have not killed
I have not ordered to kill
I have not made anyone suffer
I have not taken milk from the mouth of children
To Superhuman Beings

I have not sinned in the place of truth [a temple]
I have not blasphemed a god
I have not done what the god abhors
I have not damaged the offerings in the temples
I have not depleted the loaves of the gods
I have not stolen the cakes of the dead
I have not diminished the aura
I have not neglected the meat offerings
I have not detained cattle belonging to the god
I have not stopped a god in his procession

*Chart structure taken from *The Metaphysics of Morals* (Kant, 1996); Declarations taken from Chapter 125 of *Book of the Dead* (Lichtheim, p. 124-126, 1976).

References


Although Heidegger's primary focus from his early to his later works was to decipher the meaning of Being, Heidegger's analysis of the human condition reveals a pessimistic aspect of his philosophy that is often overlooked. Heidegger's analysis of human existence is based on an underlying assumption that man is inherently incapable of sustaining an authentic existence within the truth of Being. Though the requirements to achieve authenticity can be momentarily fulfilled, the feeling Heidegger described as "Unheimlichkeit" (Homelessness) significantly inhibits man from being able to sustain an authentic existence. According to Heidegger, there is no escaping the feeling or mood of homelessness. This becomes evident when we take into consideration the different contexts in which Heidegger used this term. In *Being and Time*, homelessness is experienced when Dasein opens itself up to the truth of Being. However, in Heidegger's later works such as, *Building Dwelling Thinking* and *Man Poetically Dwells*, the feeling of homelessness is experienced when man closes himself off from the truth of Being.¹ Heidegger's circular description of the feeling of "Homelessness" leads to the conclusion that man is inherently condemned to live an inauthentic existence.

In this essay, I will support the above claims by giving a detailed analysis of the different ways in which Heidegger used the term "Unheimlichkeit". In the first half of the essay I will focus on the first meaning of the word and in the second half of this essay I will discuss the latter. It is my hope that this analysis will bring to light the fact that Heidegger is asserting that a sustainable authentic existence is beyond our grasp. From Heidegger's pessimistic view, man is condemned to be forever homeless.

My search for the meaning of the Heideggerian term "Homelessness" proved to be a difficult and challenging task. I have found not one, but two different ways in which Heidegger claimed we experience the feeling of homelessness. The first meaning of the term homelessness, as noted above, is found in Heidegger's early work titled, *Being and Time*. Here, it appears
that the feeling of homelessness is a result of Dasein’s authentic existence. Anxiety, which throws Dasein towards an authentic existence, causes Dasein to face death. Heidegger stated ‘In anxiety one feels uncanny...... here uncanniness also means “not-being-at-home”.’ Being-toward-death (living authentically) is the cause of Dasein’s feeling of uncanniness or homelessness. Therefore, if Dasein opens itself to ‘Being’ by becoming authentic, then Dasein is condemned to be “Homeless”.

The first meaning of the term ‘Homelessness’ is directly referred too in specific passages within the text. In Being and Time, Heidegger Stated;

.... the everyday publicness of the ‘they’, which bring tranquilized self-assurance... Being-at-home, with all of its obviousness ... into the everydayness of Dasein. On the other hand, as Dasein falls, anxiety brings it back from its absorption in the ‘world’. Everyday familiarity collapses. Dasein has been individualized as Being-in-the-world. Being-in enters into the existential ‘mode’ of the ‘not-at-home’.

According to Heidegger, Dasein feels ‘at home’ in the realm of the ‘they’ or common man. This world allows Dasein to escape its fundamental characteristic Heidegger termed, Being-towards-death. The realm of the common man offers Dasein an opportunity to escape the uneasy feeling associated with death and lead, in essence, a deathless life. In the ‘they’, death does not implicitly belong. Death is present, but it is viewed in terms of the ‘one’ and not the ‘many’. In this world, Dasein develops a sense of security and ‘homeness’. However, because Dasein is denying its essential characteristic of Being-towards death, Heidegger claims Dasein is living an inauthentic life.

Although Dasein has a feeling of “homeness”, it is denying its own self in its inauthenticity. This causes Dasein to have a feeling of what Heidegger calls, “Anxiety”. In this mode, the familiarity and tranquillity of the realm of the ‘they’ begins to become meaningless. The feeling of anxiety, according to Heidegger, throws Dasein into itself. Although Dasein feels anxiety of its own ‘self’ (existing authentically), the anxiety, at the same time, reveals Dasein’s ‘self’. The revealing is the understanding and acceptance of Dasein’s essential characteristic; death. The anxiety of death causes Dasein to have a feeling of what Heidegger calls,
"Unheimlichkeit". This term refers to a feeling of uncanniness, uneasiness, as well as, "Homelessness". Therefore, anxiety forces Dasein to face death and become authentic. By opening itself to Being, Dasein is thrown out of its home. The authentic existence is an existence of homelessness.

However, being outside the secure home of common man causes Dasein to flee from its ‘self’. Everyday Dasein flees death, because to die, is to feel uneasy. Heidegger calls this ‘fleeing’ “Falling”.

Lost in the ‘they’, can dwell in tranquilized familiarity. When in falling we flee into the “at home” of publicness, we flee in the face of the “not-at-home”; that is, we flee in the face of the uncanniness which lies in Dasein. 4

In falling, Dasein turns away from its authentic existence in order to relieve the feeling of homelessness. However, anxiety throws Dasein back toward it. This feeling exists within Dasein itself and is something it can never really escape from. “Anxiety, as a basic state of mind, belongs to Dasein’s essential state of Being-in-the-world.... the mode of a state of mind”. 5 Anxiety forces Dasein to be both at home and homeless at the same time. According to Heidegger, there is no remedy for this existential state. Therefore, in this sense, if Dasein opens itself to the truth of Being, it is condemned to be “Homeless”

The second meaning of the term “Homelessness” is found in Heidegger’s later works titled, Building Dwelling Thinking, Letter on Humanism, and....Man Poetically Dwells... In these works it appears that the meaning of homelessness is related to the notion of Dwelling. If man dwells authentically, he understands his place in the neighborhood of Being and feels at home. Man’s feeling of ‘homeness’ is a result of understanding his place within the one-ness of the fourfold (earth, sky, divinities, and mortals). Acknowledging the fourfold allows man to understand the truth about Being. “Dwelling is the basic characteristic of Being”. 6 Therefore, man’s homelessness is a result of man’s denial of this essential characteristic. Unlike the former meaning discussed, in this context homelessness is a result of man closing himself off from Being by dwelling improperly. Existing in the realm of the ‘self-centered’ common man or the ‘They’ denies the ultimate realities
of the world. This, in essence, denies man’s proper place on earth as a mortal and denies the truth of Being.

To understand the complete ramifications of the second meaning of the term “Homelessness”, it is necessary to first state Heidegger’s definition of the term. This will allow a process of working back towards the cause. In Heidegger’s essay titled, *Letter on Humanism*, “Homelessness” is defined as follows;

Homelessness so understood consists in the abandonment of Being by beings. Homelessness is the symptom of oblivion of Being. Because of it the truth of Being remains unthought. The oblivion of Being makes itself known indirectly through the fact that man always observes and handles only beings (LH p. 242) 7

According to Heidegger, man is homeless because man does not think in terms of Being. Man lives in such a way that he denies the truth of Being. Therefore, in order to relieve the feeling of homelessness, man must acknowledge the fundamental question of Being and open itself up to it. The way in which man is able to achieve this is explained by Heidegger in the following passage.

Thinking builds upon the house of Being, the house in which the jointure of Being fatefuly enjoins the essence of man to dwell in the truth of Being. This dwelling is the essence of Being-in-the-world. 8

According to Heidegger, dwelling (Being-in-the-world) is the fundamental characteristic of man that enables him to open himself to the truth of Being. The key to relieving homelessness resides in the way in which man dwells on earth. Therefore, an analysis of the meaning of dwelling will lead to the cause and remedy of homelessness.

The meaning of the word dwelling, according to Heidegger, is discovered through an analysis of Language. The German word ‘bauven’, which means to build, also implies to dwell. Dwelling consists of building, cultivating, residing, and giving care. Care involves, in this sense, ‘letting be free’. This freedom implies a sense of ‘safeguarding from mischief and threats’. To be ‘safeguarded from’, implies to be spared. According to Heidegger, to be spared implies a sense of taking care of or being taken care of.

To dwell, to be set at peace, means to remain at peace within the free, the preserve, the free sphere that safe-
guards each thing in its essence. The fundamental character of dwelling is this sparing. It pervades dwelling in its whole range. That range reveals itself to us as soon as we recall that human beings consist in dwelling and, indeed, dwelling in the sense of the stay of mortals on the earth.\(^9\)

If man is properly dwelling then he is sparing everything within the openness to Being. Everything, in this sense, means the world. Proper dwelling allows things to be the way they are; a product of the fourfold. To spare a thing, implies to spare the fourfold; earth, sky, gods, and mortals. Therefore, dwelling can be defined as being open to the world in a manner in which man understands the ultimate realities of the world.

Things, whether man made or natural, are results of the interplay between the fourfold. By sparing things, man is opening himself to the world of earth, sky, gods and mortals. According to Heidegger, it is ‘things’ that are responsible for showing the realities of the world to us, therefore, by sparing things, we spare these ultimate realities. Heidegger claims that if man spares things under the influence of the fourfold then man will live in the neighborhood of which everything begins. “Mortals are in the fourfold by dwelling”\(^{10}\) This neighborhood, the neighborhood of Being, is the foundation for man’s feeling of “Homeness”.

However, existing in the neighborhood of Being can only be attained by sparing things. Unfortunately, according to Heidegger, modern man does not exist in this neighborhood. Therefore, man is essentially homeless. Modern man lives in a world that is considered to be a man made world. The things of modern man do not reflect the fourfold, from which everything comes, but reflects the self-centered happiness of man. The modern world suppresses things in such a way that they are not allowed to be what they essentially are; fundamental realities of the world. When these fundamental realities are denied, man becomes homeless. Not for lack of a house, but because he does not properly spare. Not properly sparing things is a result of not dwelling in the proper sense of Dwelling.

Although Heidegger claims that modern man is essentially homeless, there does seem to be, unlike the first meaning, a remedy that will allow man to be at home. Existing within the neighborhood of Being is realized through dwelling properly. By spar-
ing things, the ultimate realities of the world are revealed to us and we can become ‘at home’ in their neighborhood. The process in which this movement can occur is in thought itself. The problem, according to Heidegger, is that “dwelling is not experienced as Man’s Being; Dwelling is never thought of as the basic characteristic of a human being.” Therefore, if man changes his thinking, by opening itself to the fundamental question of Being, by caring for, and saving the earth, then man can become at home within the ultimate realities of the world. If man thinks about Being instead of beings, man will reside in the neighborhood of Being which is the foundation of homeness.

If the above explanations of the meanings of the term “Homelessness” are correct, one is left with the question, “what did Heidegger intend to imply with his opposing descriptions of the feeling of homelessness?” The first type of homelessness is described as being a result of opening oneself to Being, whereas, the second type is a consequence of closing oneself off from Being. The first implies that the realm of the common man is home while the latter implies that the neighborhood of Being is home. However, in both cases man is condemned to be homeless. In the first case, by accepting it’s Being-towards-death, Dasein frees up it’s possibilities and becomes authentic. However, the feeling of homelessness drives Dasein back towards the community and once again becomes lost in the “they”. In the second case, Heidegger alludes to a remedy for the phenomena of homelessness, but it remains unclear how changing one’s thinking about Being will bring about an authentic existence. If we are “thrown” into a man made world, changing the way we think about Being will not change that fact. Furthermore, the very nature of the type of thinking Heidegger is alluding to is beyond what I can put into words. Therefore, since man cannot escape the feeling of homelessness, man must be inherently condemned to be homeless. The Being of Dasein, by its very nature, is destined to be inauthentic.
Endnotes

1 In Being and Time, Heidegger refers to Man as Dasein, however, in his later works Dasein is replaced with man. Therefore, in reference to his later works, like Heidegger, I will use the word man instead of Dasein.

2 The word “uncanniness” is derived from the German word “Unheimlich” which also means uneasiness and “not-at-home”. The word can also be referred to as “Unheimlichkeit” which means Homelessness. By adding the ending “Keit”, the word changes from an adjective to a noun, which changes the meaning. Heidegger makes this transition often, so in the first part of this paper I am going to use the word Unheimlichkeit instead of Unheimlich.


3 Ibid. H. 189

4 Ibid. H. 189

5 Ibid. H 189


8 Ibid., pg. 259-60


10 Ibid., pg. 252

11 Ibid., pg.350
The Ethics of Resistance

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The intention of this paper is to connect Foucault’s ethics, which is an aesthetics, to his idea of resistance. Resistance to what? Resistance to normalization which penetrates our most personal relations. The first part of the paper will aim to reflect a deep skepticism of practices accepted as continuous and progressive truths; by looking at how we have come to inherit these practices, and the effects they might have on the individual. History brings light to our current power relations, which must be understood as the means of resistance. These power relations, via judiciary and disciplinary powers can de-emphasize our ability to make ethical choices independent of authoritative norms. I will analyze power through the two-fold explanation explored in Two Lectures focusing on the specifics of our era. The second section will aim to reveal ethics as the relationship you have to yourself within the power/knowledge matrix. Resistance can then be seen as a truly unique understanding of choices made against a backdrop of the normalizing society. In the final analysis resistance emerges as the art of self-fashioning and care of the self.

The assumptions that we are making progress, and that the sciences have authoritative knowledge are challenged by Foucault’s early work. He examines the practices of psychology and medicine, and scrutinizes the methods of the prisons, popular culture and the nuclear family. He suggests that these act as terminals of power, shaping the personalities, preferences, and practices of human beings. In a sense, one could say that to normalize is to disempower, to dictate identity and control actions through indirect means. For example within the nuclear family role models dictate to the children what the preferences and habits will be. The male child will prefer blue jeans and play with trucks. The female child will prefer pink dresses and play with Barbie.

Foucault painstakingly constructs a historical account of madness, the clinic, and the prison to reveal the haphazard way, which our practices come to be given authority in the form of institutions. The power to treat people resides within these establish-
ments because they seem to have special knowledge. Let me begin with an example given in the Birth of the Clinic. As a woman, this particular example will allow me to elaborate many aspects of the power/knowledge relationship interpreted in the early works on history that leave so many readers wondering what Foucault is doing. We have the beginning formations of a patient who is merely a site for medical conditions. The attempt is to alleviate the condition, regardless of the person. The patient is soon to disintegrate, replaced by a subject to which study, statistics and analysis apply; a subject to make normal according to this very science:

Towards the middle of the eighteenth century, Pommé treated and cured a hysterical by making her take ‘baths, ten or twelve hours a day, for ten whole months’. At the end of this treatment for the desiccation of the nervous system and the heat that sustained it, Pommé saw ‘membranous tissues like pieces of damp parchment... peel away with some slight discomfort, and these were passed daily with the urine; the right ureter also peeled away and came out whole in the same way’. The same thing occurred with the intestines, which at another stage, ‘peeled off their internal tunics, which we say emerge from the rectum’ (BCxi).

The first thing that strikes me about the passage is that the woman has no name, in fact she is simply ‘a hysterical’. This type of reduction leads me to assume that the physician does not recognize a patient, but merely a condition. There does not seem to be a substantial link between excessive soaking and an actual cure for anything. How are we even to imagine that a human would be treated like this? I have assumed ‘cured’ means damaged more severely. The power/knowledge complex is served, for we now know the result of severe bathing. The individual has their personal power taken away; they are treated to make them fit the norm.

Clearly, the physician is experimenting on the patient. How is this supposed cure scientifically related to hysteria? Well, the knowledge of the physician is reduced to a sort of rhetoric, a discourse. Whatever rationalization made sense at the time, the history of the clinic shows the early operation of power/knowledge. A person goes to the doctor to be made normal by the power/knowledge of the medical practices. We actually volunteer to be sub-
jected to this form of authority by going to the doctor and saying, “I am not normal”.

Later, in the History of sexuality, we learn that women are predisposed to hysteria. As a woman, I know not to come across as anything less than a rational and productive citizen. This is not because I fear that I will be soaked in hot water until I forget that I am hysterical and realize that now. Instead, my intestines are peeling and coming out of my rectum. These days, I will be given a pill that makes me appear normal when I am not vomiting and having mild side effects like migraine headaches and loss of memory. The power relation exists just as it did when women were soaked. Only the appearance of the power relation has changed. Medicine is just one example of power/knowledge. As medicine progresses, it becomes more and more clear what is “normal.” Authority is exercised over the individual in an attempt to make them fit these norms.

This is in fact, a history of the medical clinic. How does it function in the normalization of a population? The relation has many layers. The doctor gathers statistical information on what is common and what is not, and simultaneously dispenses prescriptive measures for the patient. A certain heart rate is considered normal, temperature, hours of sleep, digestive time, when someone does not fit the norm, efforts begin right away to make them right. Western medicine assumes that everybody has essentially the same body. The clinic is only one example of normalizing technologies. The early works reveal several assumptions that we make about power, and perhaps more importantly, that we are never outside of power/knowledge relations. When power/knowledge takes an office, such as a doctor or politician, it becomes a power terminal, these terminals are all around us. Normalization appears as a dominant theme, surfacing with bourgeois ethics aimed at maintaining mass production. It seems specific to our era that power/knowledge is so precisely aimed at controlling and dictating actions of individuals and entire populations. Foucault says:

I don’t think anyone can find any normalization in, for instance, the stoic ethics. The reason is, I think, that the principle target of this kind of ethics, was an aesthetic one. First, this kind of ethics was only a problem of personal choice. Second, it was reserved for a few people in the population; it was not a question of giv-
ing a pattern of behavior for everybody. It was a personal choice for a small elite (E 254).

Foucault does not aim to turn us back to some glorious time in history that has answers for us in a normative sense. He questions where ideas come from, and where they go. In identifying the aim of the stoic ethic, and its method, one might want to make similar consideration about our own system. Foucault associates the normalizing society that we are in now with a specifically new type of power, disciplinary power. This power is directed at the body, and at limiting the possibilities of the body as a source of self-expression and self-creation. It is the limitations that are placed on the body specifically that disconnect us from ourselves. In other word, every aspect of my most personal self relations, how I care for my body, how I seek pleasure—all of these can be dictated to me by my family, my doctor, my peers, advertisements, the guard... This leaves little room for me to decide how I will express myself through my body. Again, Foucault’s historical pictures are not meant to give a prescription, prescriptions are precisely what he intends us to resist.

The two-fold analysis of power will allow us to analyze and integrated structure in two parts. The word structure must be clarified so that it is not understood as fixed or definite but rather in a state of constant adaptation. It is configured and described as if it where a very efficient and mobile mechanism of control in a great conspiracy. Yet we find that it is anonymous. There is no great conspirator, but the omnipresence of power is evident in every relation. It controls, dictates, defines and predicts. Some of Foucault’s early work casts a heavy shadow of doubt on freedom, and presents a determined and bleak picture with no identity for the individual. I will analyze power as judiciary and disciplinary.

Judiciary power has a long lineage. It surfaces as assumptions like natural rights, leading to contractual authoritative agreements like our collective sovereignty. Laws tell us what is acceptable, unacceptable and forbidden. There is no self-reflection or self-fashioning invoked in the mechanisms of law as a subject of it. We are not invited, or encouraged to speculate and act freely. Our laws specifically still bear the make of monarchs. We still relate to the power of the state as it were above us, forcing and dominating our behavior. On the basis of this relation we miscon-
true power altogether. This form of power seemingly only dictates only represses. In every interaction and every choice that one might be faced with, it can seem as though there is already a law dictating it to us, and no actual choice to be made. Foucault will challenge us to accept power in a whole new way, that allows for choice, self-fashioning and transformation.

Disciplinary power in its current form is particular to more recent societies. Discourses and practices that belong to disciplinary power are evident in every aspect of our daily lives. The psychiatrist that prescribes shock treatment and the bodily discipline developed in a student who faces forward and holds his urges to move around are both examples of the disciplinary aspect of normalizing power. The aim is to create a useful productive body of workers who do not waste time or vital energy. This directly intends to limit and regulate sexual activity.

Modern society, then, from the nineteenth century up to our own day, has been characterized on the one hand, by a legislation, a discourse, and organization based on public right, whose principle of articulation is the social body and the delegative status of each citizen, and, on the other hand, by a closely linked grid of disciplinary coercion whose purpose is in fact to assure the cohesion of this same social body (PK 106).

We are in a sense, fitted into the power/knowledge matrix as a conductor with a limited range of possibilities apparent, yet there are always hidden aspects to power. What myths does Foucault aim to dispel about power relations? Power does not only dominate as a monarch might. Power does not come from the town down in a repressive fashion, but rather goes from the bottom up. Power relations exist everywhere, and they are not rigid or fixed. Our personal, everyday lives should reflect a sense of this power, and exercise of choice. In our most intimate relations we should not feel the presence of the state as a dictator to which we own loyalty:

For centuries we have been convinced that between our ethics, our personal ethics, our everyday life, and the great political social and economic structures, there were analytical relations and that we couldn’t chant anything, for instance, in our sex life or our family life,
without ruining our economy, our democracy, and so on. I think we have to get rid of this idea of an analytical or necessary link between ethics and other social or economic or political structures (E 261).

Personal relations are most closely connected to the omnipresence of power, or its transformative element. We need to understand power as being all around us from moment to moment. No relation, no thought exists outside of the matrix, but Foucault’s aim is to change our inherited view of power as repressive to a relationship of transformation. We need to distinguish the terminal forms power takes form the omnipresence of power. Terminals operate over a given domain, they are intentional and they have a purpose. They might begin with an assumption that leads to an office or bureaucracy that is a support in the network of power. An example might be as simple as an assumption based on the right to private property. Assume more specifically, that each person has the right to own a car, a regulating agency such as the DMV comes into practice, to regulate and maintain the assumed right. At the same time, we enter into the labyrinth of power even deeper. The Panopticon probes in further with seemingly innocuous questions that we are required, by law, to answer. Make, model, year, forms of insurance, driving tests, all of these lead us to disclose our information such as income or color preference. Furthermore we are disciplined to stand in line, to follow procedure. Terminal forms of power appear to be mere mechanisms of law and discipline, which do not so directly relate to transformation, but they can be transformed. If everyone who drives a car refused to stand in this line, went through with getting tickets, and finally resorted to riding a bike—the state would lose enough money that some sort of reform would be made. Terminals are receptive, because power is at the bottom, in the people.

The fact that each terminal is a separate entity is an illusion. It may appear that the doctor’s office and the DMV are separate, but on the deeper level of power relations there exists no space between them that is part of the network. Resistance then, is as deeply imbedded in the network as is knowledge, ultimately residing in the actions of each individual. If power is everywhere, so is the potential for resistance. Subjects of power/knowledge must dissolve the notion that resistance goes against or overthrows power
and liberates. This has no meaning. You cannot get outside of power - it is inconceivable. How would the question of existence even be formed outside of a discourse? How would one contemplate the meaning of self, or being outside of the field of relations and outside of a language game? If one attempts to answer either question, an assumption about being that precedes existence is made; a metaphysic is invoked.

I have always been somewhat suspicious of the notion of liberation, because if it is not treated with precautions and within certain limits, one runs the risk of falling back on the idea that there exists a human nature of base that, as a consequence of certain historical, economic, and social processes, has been concealed, alienated, or imprisoned by mechanisms of repression (E 282).

Our notion of power as repressive melts away when it is associated to the possibility of resistance - but why must we give up this wild notion of liberation and what is left of resistance without it? One must overcome this way of thinking. There is not black or white, that is to say extreme repression, or absolute liberation. Neither of these is the case in reality. Without multi-faceted power relations there is simply nothing. Any conception of a utopian state assumes universals and that would marginalize those who had a different idea.

The idea of liberation is very dangerous. While it can be used to promote assumptions about human nature, assumptions about human nature are precisely what fuels the mechanisms of power, whether as repressive or as resistance. The idea of normalization as the means to the ends of a liberated and ideal society is the most dangerous possibility. The mechanisms of power will never be overcome, diffused, or gotten rid of, as I could not form a meaningful sentence without them. In the mean time, the ideal is used as a mechanism of ultimate repression. An assumption of a universalizable human nature contradicts the elements of self-fashioning as a true ethics possible only in a field of power/knowledge relations:

Taking care of oneself requires knowing [connaître] oneself. Care of the self is, of course, knowledge [connaissance] of the self-this is the Socratic-Platonic aspect- but also knowledge of a number of rules of ac-
ceptable conduct or of principles that are both truths and prescriptions. To take care of the self is to equip oneself with the truths: This is where Ethics is linked to the game of truth (E 285).

Now what have we left of the notion of resistance? Well, since it is bound to power, it must take place in relation. The second part of the requirement listed above entails that we become aware of how the power/knowledge mechanisms function in our society. The first requirement seems lost to our day and age.

What could the Socratic-Platonic mean to the post-modern world? I venture two responses that may seem separate but are very integrated. First, the regimens of the care of the self. The presentation of these ideas in the History of Sexuality, Volume Three; Care of the Self discusses regime of the self. It is as though care of the self is a ritualistic process, a religious process. The body is treated with complete respect, as the inhabitant realizes that the body is the primary root of the existence. The second way of explaining this relation to the self is as a process of inquiry, much like Socrates investigated philosophical matters, so we are to investigate the care of the body (this includes pleasure of). Are not the original ventures of philosophy concerned with the good life? Certainly the good life, first and foremost, requires a healthy and cared for body. The care of the self on the one hand, had that Socratic-Platonic element, the element that does not change, although it may appear to. Let me liken this to the omnipresence of power so that I may claim it is directly relevant to us today. The second part of the requirement seems to refer to the terminals of power in play within the context of the specific era, and even further, with the station of the individual. The way in which the individual appears to appeal to the norms, the ability to go along with the program or prescription determines the status. This links the ethical subject to the social context and power/knowledge matrix in an active sense. In our time, discipline of the body plays the most effective role. More precisely our relation to our body and how we choose to use it define who we are; “The logic of sex is the key to personal identity in our time. Our sexuality reveals to us ourselves, and our desire to have this secret self-knowledge revealed drives us to engage in discourse on our sexuality” (Gutting 149). The care of the self is a very private matter. The care of the
self as resistance carries a communal connotation. Once we change the primary way in which we relate to the self, the way in which we relate to others is supposed to follow—it is an unfolding process.

It is within the power/knowledge relationship dominantly misconstrued as repressive power (form top down), that the individual becomes an object—something that is formed and created by an outside influence. I apply the same criteria to the self as we do the objects: limited purpose, permanent characteristics, one-sided relations, and a creator, or keeper that governs. I am so saturated in this rhetoric that the relation of the self to the self is permeated with it.

We have hardly any remnant of the idea in our society that the principal work of art which one must take care of, the main area to which one must take care of, the main area to which one must apply aesthetic values in oneself, one’s life, one’s existence (E 271).

It is with this relation that resistance must begin. At first a very personal and individual relation of resistance, once everyone is doing it, we can begin to take this new way of relating into public. It is first personal because our sexuality is ultimately our own secret, we may choose to hide it, discipline and conform it, or we may flaunt it in order to liberate others who have a similar secret. It begins with simple realizations. I am not the woman propagated by pornography, nor am I the hysterical woman. Although, I believe that what the rational episteme interprets as hysterical is more clearly understood as Dionysian, and so I enter the Appollonian discourse to invert the it.

As we begin to cultivate a self that does not always fit the molds prescribed by the society, we resist normalization. The thing about resistance is that it cannot really be pinned down, defined and linked to a specific reference point for all of time. Resistance in our era may not resemble the resistance of another period. If the aim of the dominant paradigm is to normalize, mass produce, and consume, resistance means at first to identify with the marginalized populations, and to resist buying things in order to define yourself by your possessions. The adoption of the notion of the self as a creative process presents one with choices rather than prescriptions. It opens the possibilities of being. If one believes that power trickles from the top down, and relates to the self as a closed ob-
ject, the result will only reinforce the mechanisms of normalization. Through his criticism of medicine, the asylum, the penitentiary, and the discipline of bodies (which are always sexual), Foucault uncovers a process “that he came to call ‘normalization,’ a narrowing and impoverishment of human possibilities” (Gutting 143). Foucault suggests that we have options, that we need not limit our bodies and therefore our identities to what is prescribed.

Foucault offers four aspects of self-relation. The first is ethical substance or moral aspects of behavior. This ethical substance has changed through time. It seems to be very relative; something that one comes to in addressing the situation not through rationality, but through feelings. The second aspect is situational. We, as subjects are called upon or invited to act morally. We are given circumstances that call on us to consider our possibilities and take action. This aspect of relating to the self ties the self to the surrounding and to politics. Whenever we take action, we involve others. The third aspect is the practice of molding the ethical substance through action. This is a formation or practice of ethics, but also of self. Any action is, in this sense ethical. We either create ourselves, or we act in a way, which is benign. The fourth aspect is the overall design, perhaps a form or a mode. I like to formulate it as the projection of the project of the self. (E 264).

By living according to the prescriptions of the normalizing society we play a role in enforcing these roles, and ultimately fail to recognize and relate to the self. I am, in a sense, a power not only unto myself, but also to those around me. If I react in shock or disgust at someone who expresses them in an abnormal way, I essentially am part of the normalizing technology. There is a sense in which I am obligated to encourage others to exercise their options and identify with them as a free person.

It seems that individuals actually do power the mechanisms of normalization. Each of us makes a primary choice. You can go with the program, represent, reinforce and perpetrate the network. Although, it seems that no one is really normal, no one really identifies purely with the normal types set out by the system. This is in fact, partly why it works to repress-by playing on feelings of guilt and abnormality; certain tendencies may be hidden. If what ever ‘it’ is kept hidden, other people will not find reflection in the community, and they will hide “it” to. This is a closing of being start-
ing with the self and carried out through ones relations. If, on the other hand I recognize my own homosexual tendencies are not reflected in the society, and I nurture these feelings anyway, and let people know about them, then I provide a point of validation for other homosexual people. This provides an opening, a choice.

It seems as though once a person took on the task of self-fashioning, their relations would invoke and inspire those around them. It seems that it is time to work out an Ethics that is not based on any assumptions about human nature, because those who do not identify with those assumptions are sacrificed. At one point or another, everyone would find that they could not relate to the assumptions of human nature because the human being is not fixed, but rather in process. An Ethics of Aesthetics of the self has a lot to offer to a normalized society. The ability to tune into ones own feelings and identity and form these from a position of power, wherein the context is merely the backdrop and support system. Aesthetics of the self offers a much greater margin of personal freedom than following the prescriptions enforced by the society. It also allows the possibility of playing an active role in opening the possibilities of ethical being to others.

B  Foucault, Michel. The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception.

E  Ethics Volume One: Subjectivity and Truth.
   Paul Rabinow, editor.

HS1  The History of Sexuality, Volume One: An Introduction.


Coming, as I do, from that part of society that had been and perhaps still is most favored, saying anything at all on topics such as this may not be worth much. As Donna Haraway observes, the dominant perspective is blind to what it has subjected. But it is just because of this point that I’d like to offer a few words of encouragement. Let me take as a starting point these two perspectives, acknowledging that they are not monolithic representatives of their respective species. Then, in supposing the goal toward which we all are seeking in this area is to remove all dominant and subjected perspectives on values and to reach a point where we all share a human perspective on them, I will contend that this can be reached without requiring anything of the dominant perspective other than the granting of political equalities.

In consideration of this objective, what I will be discussing is a journey, though it will not be one in which I will bring out details of the scenery along the way. It is a journey because, like all journeys, it must begin from where we are today, even as we recognize that some path led us there. In effect, what I would like to do is to characterize how the journey has to be represented. I think we are to some degree already on that journey, but that there is sufficient confusion in the paths to take that the best we can say is that we are inefficiently advancing to our goal. Even so, the path I am advocating will not be seen as a “short-cut,” since, even if we could adopt it, it will take some time to implement and, in any case, practical concerns may limit the options. So what kind of pathway am I talking about? In the area of human values, I advocate advancing the cause of the women’s separatist movement, and, at the same time, I advocate maintaining pressure on the political side of the movement toward full integration and accommodation.

I begin with an observation that many in my dominant position have heard, though perhaps with less stridency than in earlier times, from feminists, which is: “men have to change.” By this is meant that times have changed, and certain attributes with which men are endowed, such as physical strength, simply are no
longer needed. Violence is no longer acceptable. Men need to change their ways, adopting new patterns of responses to daily challenges. But more than this, these feminists mean to change men’s attitudes about themselves, and about those women who cater to men, and for men to draw upon other qualities that will put some balance in their systems of values. Indeed, some have gone so far as to think that men ought to adopt values traditionally acceptable only to women.

Because of the orientation of at least this part of the women’s movement, we see pressure on the advertising and entertainment industries to portray men in other than traditional ways, less dominant than they’d been in earlier times. The idea behind this is that a consistent image can over time make substantial changes in attitudes. These institutions, unless checked by pressure from feminism, would tend to reinforce old traditional values just because of the dominant position that men hold in those industries. Furthermore, as we hear from time to time, “studies have shown” that these industries have great influence over the attitudes that members of society have toward others. If, for example, a woman is being portrayed as submissive toward a man this is taken to mean that viewers would come to find it acceptable for a woman to be submissive toward a man.

It is here that I begin to interject my doubts about this “political correctness” theory of manipulation of attitudes. While I suspect it can have some success, it’s not clear to me that it will be a lasting one, or that it will achieve the right outcome. If, in order to change men’s attitudes, men need to be cast as sheep under the influence of women’s manipulation, my sense is that this may only resurrect latent stereotypes regarding women’s manipulative skills. The message delivered by the media will not necessarily be the message that is received. Indeed, it is because these messages are seen as “political correctness,” delivering them loses all their force with respect to changing attitudes. The messages will have to be made with greater subtlety to have their effect. However, this “psychological” approach to attitude change brings with it the danger that men will revolt as they begin to see through it. If, to counter this, such messages are backed by legislation, men may wind up being under siege in fear of some lawsuit or damage to reputation all in the name of having standards of political correctness. I see
this form of handling men as at least highly inefficient in achieving the goal of establishing basic human values. What is needed instead is a complete rethinking of the entire edifice that is our mutual system of values.

So how would I begin the journey? Well, I think it has to begin within each of us, but at present, men have no inclination or reason to do so. At present, the situation is such that men patronize women and women have learned to expect this treatment, or if they do not they merely get upset with men that do. To counter this, women have to turn the tables. Collectively, and separate from men, women have to establish a foundation of values on which every aspect of our lives is to be oriented. To accomplish this, women ought not to care a whit about what men have to say. There is just no need for women to receive acknowledgement or recognition from men about their ideas at all. Women, in working out their own systems of values, ought to do it in the same way that men did when they worked out theirs — merely assume that these values are the values of the entire society. What is important outright is what women themselves come up with — without consultation with men. Women ought to abandon all efforts at integration of ideas.

This may be too strong a position to take in that women may want to extract from what men have said about values just so that they can select or reject from them, but the objective here is to establish a firm foundation on which all human values can be developed. Such a task taken up on this journey is not limited to any particular interest area. Everything has to be considered — including the entire panoply of human values: ethics, aesthetics, economics, politics, social, personal, familial, communal, spiritual. This ought to be done even if it means creating separate women-dominated organizations for each of them. There is just no reason to worry about what men think is important because, in this part of the women’s movement, men are but objects of consideration towards which a set of systematic accounts is being developed. Women should resist the temptation to have men recognize their achievements. Seeking recognition is the source of the problem. It has the effect of giving men the opportunity of reviving their own dominant position. The thrust of all this is that what is needed to achieve the goal is to develop a dominant women’s perspective from what is now only a subjected one. As this progresses and
women begin to draw upon the best ideas from other women, they will no longer need to consult with men. Then, in the course of time, men will come to take notice of this state of affairs.

Of course, as this is happening, women, like men, will become just as patronizing as men are. Power, even if it is only based on what is perceived as superiority of ideas, does tend to corrupt. All the worst that derives to men’s attitudes would show up in women as well, despite any historical roots of genuine inquiry. Indeed, I think this ought to happen, or at least it ought to begin to happen. This “equality of patronization” will have the effect of creating an equality of men and women overall, I believe. This is because patronization itself and the sins accruing to attitudinal shifts of this sort will be diminished, just because it will be seen as a human fault, not just a man’s. That is, while patronization will not disappear, since I believe it is a human characteristic, its importance will be undermined by its not being strictly paternal.

As indicated above, this strategy is not supposed to reduce the effort within the political side of the movement that demands equality in public office, the workplace, or in places of power in society. I should imagine it might even help in defining the issues within this part of the movement. The essential point is that there should be no let up until full political equality is achieved. Where I believe women go wrong is to assume that the media and entertainment worlds are instruments of power over and above these other areas. While I would grant that there is some power exercised by these sectors of society, I believe they are more likely to be followers than leaders. For the most part, they merely magnify the values already present in targeted sectors of society and are subject to being transformed as the target changes. I think a good case can be made for applying pressure to those groups who target impressionable youths and children, but otherwise I think it better to leave folks alone. By focusing on their own contributions to the human endeavor, women will cause the media to follow suit. If women want to target attitudes and values that folks hold within these industries, I suggest they establish their own network the purpose of which would be to address human interests but in such a way that it is not “message driven” in the manipulative sense that I think is unproductive. Instead, it should be a forum for the discussion of human values, as elucidated by women.
In conclusion, the consciousness-raising efforts of the women's movement to change men, I believe, are misguided, when they do so by way of manipulation. Women ought to focus their efforts on developing their own separate systems of values, at least until the day in which there exists an equality of attitude toward the other sex. Instead of pushing men, such a strategy drags men to this better world in their wake.
INTRODUCTION

There are three obscure problems with the topic question at hand. First is the problem of interpretation. Is the question asking: “Should scientists who are searching for extraterrestrial intelligence take God into account?” or is it asking: “Can the search for extraterrestrial intelligence (SETI) find God?” I interpret the question in the latter sense. To forgo the second problem, and to prevent a diversion into proofs for God’s existence, it is assumed that God exists. The third problem is coming up with an agreeable definition of God. This problem presents too formidable a task. Instead, I will first determine the characteristics that a being, which SETI is capable of detecting, must necessarily possess—this I will call a SETI being. Next, the necessary characteristics of a SETI being will be compared with the more “popular” characteristics often ascribed to God. By examining the problem in this way the reader is also able to compare the characteristics of his or her “personal” God with those of a SETI being. In the end, if the characteristics of a SETI being are indeed attributable to God, or to the reader’s “personal” God, then the answer to the topic question must be yes, God should be a factor in the scientific search for extraterrestrial intelligence. The answer will be no if the characteristics of a SETI being are not attributable to God. However, the final answer, as we shall see, is more complicated than a simple yes or no.

A SETI BEING

The SETI Institute funds and runs Project Phoenix, whose goal “is to discover evidence of extraterrestrial civilizations through detection of microwave signals generated by their technology” (SETI). Conveniently listed on the SETI website are “the characteristics of the Targeted Search System,” which include (SETI):
“search for artificial signals that have a narrow bandwidth (<300 Hz) may be highly polarized drift in frequency by less than $10^{-9}$ Hz/sec/Hz may be continuously present or pulsed

search the ‘Microwave Window’ from 1 GHz to 3 GHz

observe approximately 1000 sun-like stars within a distance of 150 light years” (SETI).

In summary, a SETI being (1) lives near a sun-like star that is (2) within 150 light years from Earth, (3) broadcasts microwaves between 1 GHz and 3 GHz with a (4) highly polarized frequency that are (5) continuous or pulsed. Are these characteristics comparable with those of God?

GOD

Characteristics “popularly” ascribed to God include omnipotence, omnipresence, omnipotent and omniscience. At first sight these characteristics seem vastly different than those of a SETI being. After all, God’s characteristics are about power, spatial position, benevolence and knowledge, and a SETI being’s characteristics are about very specific microwaves coming from very specific locations. The characteristics seem incomparable and the answer to the topic question seems to be no, God should not be a factor in the scientific search for extraterrestrial intelligence.

Before jumping to this hasty conclusion, however, note that it is possible for a being to possess both the most often ascribed characteristics of God, as well as, those of a SETI being. In short, the two sets of characteristics are not mutually exclusive. Given God’s characteristics of omnipotence, omnipresence, omnibenevolence and omniscience, God could very well live or be near a sun-like star that is within 150 light years from Earth, broadcast microwave signals between 1 GHz and 3 GHz with a highly polarized frequencies that are continuous or pulsed. Since this is the case, God should be a factor in the scientific search for extraterrestrial intelligence because, strange and as implausible as it seems, logical reasoning proves that a being can both be God and a SETI being at the same time.
LOGICAL?

The argument thus far has been deductive, and has yielded an answer in the affirmative. But what does this answer, following this type of reasoning, really mean? What it means is that there is no logical inconsistency in supposing that if we ever receive extraterrestrial signals, they could come from God. It shows that SETI is indeed capable of finding God. This logical answer, however, is not very satisfying. It does not answer the more interesting question: “Is SETI likely to find God?” I argue that, even though it is logically possible for SETI to find God, SETI is not likely to do so, and therefore God should not be a factor in the search. Two lines of reasoning are presented: the absurdity argument and the beyond human recognition argument.

THE ABSURDITY ARGUMENT

This argument boils down to the question: “Why would God contact humanity (or choose to be discovered) through SETI?” A key assumption of this question is that it is possible for people to have contact with God. Many religious people, most notably mystics, would argue that they have had experiences of contact with God, and that the question is moot. For skeptics, however, the question is not moot. Even the most stubborn atheist, when for argument’s sake accepts (not only God’s existence, but also) the assumption that contact with God is possible, will agree that it would be utterly absurd for God to use SETI as the Holy Messenger. Furthermore, any theist, who has not had contact with God, is likely to hold the same position. If God chose to be discovered or to contact humanity, She or He would not do so through SETI.

THE BEYOND HUMAN RECOGNITION ARGUMENT

Even if we were to receive radio signals from God, would SETI be able to recognize them? Recall that SETI only searches for signals with logical patterns. (How else would they be recognizable?) But why should we assume that God’s radio signals, if She or He transmits them, are logically organized into recognizable patterns? Mystics, who claim that they have had contact with God, allege that their experiences are recognizable, but do not follow a logical pattern; instead, they are paradoxical and illogical (Stace). If we define reception of radio signals from God as con-
tact, then based on mystics’ experiences, we cannot with good rea-
son assume that the signals will follow a logically recognizable
pattern. These signals would therefore not be recognizable. For
all we know, SETI has been staring God straight in the face all this
time and doesn’t even know it!

... all attempts of the logical intellect to comprehend
these mystical [experiences] lead only to insolvable
paradox (Stace, 200).

CONCLUSION

Logical reasoning leads us to believe that God should be a
factor in the scientific search for extraterrestrial intelligence. Upon
closer examination however, it seems absurd for God to use SETI
as the Holy Messenger, and God’s radio signals, if She or He in-
deed transmits them, will probably not be recognizable. My final
answer, therefore, is that God should not be factor in the scientific
search for extraterrestrial intelligence.
References


Endnotes
1 From a Christian perspective the answer to this interpretation of the question must be yes, God should be a factor in the scientific search for extraterrestrial intelligence. The Holy Bible makes several references to the heavens being filled with angles and other intelligent creatures. For example, see Hebrews 12:22 and Revelation 5:11. I realize that this may be a literal a reading of the scriptures. Nonetheless, it is a possible interpretation.

Furthermore, the fable of the Tower of Babel is noteworthy. The people, who all spoke one language, built a city and a “tower with its top in the heavens” (Meeks, Gen 11:4). God objected that the people where too powerful and “nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them” (Meeks, Gen 11:6). So He thwarted their efforts by confusing their language and scattering them “over the face of all the earth” (Meeks, Gen 11:9). These references show at least some support for the case that the heavens are filled with intelligent beings, and that God frowns upon the search for him. Clearly SETI scientists should take this into consideration.

2 I realize that just as artificially generated information sources on Earth require the cooperative activity of many people, so by analogy we might well expect this to be true of any artificially produced extraterrestrial information. However, considering the essay topic, the singular for of being is used since God by assumption is singular.

3 By personal, I mean both the standard definition of personal, as in, one’s own, as well as the reader’s or any other religion’s definition of what God is or might be.

4 The Targeted Search System “is a transportable SETI system that is used in conjunction with existing radio telescopes for high sensitivity SETI observations. It is composed of several subsystems, each responsible for one aspect of the signal processing and controlled by sophisticated software for highly automated operation” (SETI). The operations
are “highly automated to minimize operator interaction and increase the quality and uniformity of the search” (SETI).

If the characteristics of the reader’s “personal” God do not agree with the discussed “popular” characteristics, then the reader is encouraged to do his or her own analysis and determine whether or not their God’s characteristics are mutually exclusive with the characteristics of a SETI being. In most, if not all cases, the answer will be no; the sets of characteristics are not mutually exclusive, and therefore, God should be a factor in the scientific search for extraterrestrial intelligence.
Thinking as Commemorative

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How does one commemorate a thinker who answers the call to thinking, who asks what is called thinking, who calls on you to think? One commemorates a composer by playing his songs. Can one play a thought like one plays a song? Can one record then

1 The Language of a Call to Thinking.
2 In Being and Time, the authentication for the potential-for-being comes as a call for conscience. The call is a type discourse that does not require conceptualism. As a logos, the call illicit a response to form a dialogue between the One and the Other. If the One finds itself always limited to being what it is, then the Other lies in the open. The call that calls into the open is not conceptual because it does not delineate, define, limit and dictate an Idea. Nor does it dictate the response. Not delineating, an open call does not excluded, and suppress. The call, as a discourse, that does not master what it calls forth.

3 For a call, to be a call, the call comes from a voice. Not a universal voice, but the single voice that calls, when it calls. This voice, once heard can be recognized even with name or face. Who calls for the end of philosophy and the beginning of philosophy? Who calls for us to think? If distinct faces are forgotten then so much the better. To constantly stand before your work and describe its workings is an affront to mastery. When heard properly the thinker’s thoughts can be found echoing in others works. Citations become irrelevant, as a true Master disappears into their works and into the works of their followers.

A master who calls forth our thinking sets before us a task, but does not require a specific response. Tasks?

4 All tasks? To formulate a generality that captures all tasks would be to conceptualize. This concept, this generalization, because it applies to all really does not apply wholly to any particular. If we can’t conceptualize the task, what tasks are we faced with this call? In this case, the call comes from the need to commemorate; to commemorate a thinker who wishes us to be-with him. The call we hear is the call for us to think with the thinker. If we answer this call and we think with the thinker, then we’ve answered the call to thinking.
replay a thought and call this thinking? Surely one does this when one *talks about* the thinker, and the thoughts that he thought. While

5 Thinking links with talking. Logos becomes central towards thinking. In Being and Time, Logos can be understood as “discourse”, “reason”, “judgement”, “concept”, “definition”, “ground” or “relationship”, Heidegger explicitly defines logos as “a letting-be-seen”. As an assertion, the Logos reveals beings, and lets them be seen. It lets see, by first calling forth a certain type of being. It does this by framing beings. A being is something that is. A framed being is a something seen as something. By gathering these framed beings a thinker discloses a certain way of being in a world. What is that? A cup of coffee? An admixture of caffeine and oils? Commodity? Investment? Inventory? The names that we label *that*, point to different worlds that *that which is* belongs to. A cup of coffee belongs to the everyday, admixtures to chemistry, commodities, investments and inventories to the world of moneymakers and producers of goods. Framed within an idea, wrapped within a practical world we use words to assert truths about the things we find in these human worlds. The assertion, this “concept of Logos” only explains the Logos of apophansis – of the correspondence between words and world, fitted within a coherent conceptual scheme. This is not what we desire presently, because the logos that we are faced with now is a call. As a call, the logos does not frame, however it still reveals the Being of beings. What is the Logos of this call? Perhaps this is not the proper way to pose the question concerning the Logos of the call. To ask for a what, is to ask for a definition. Once a definition is called for, we are forced to delineate and conceptualize. We should not ask for a “concept” when we should not to hark to a concept. If we cannot “conceptualize” with our Logos, how does ways can our Logos work?

Typically in philosophy, when one seeks to understand a thinker one conceptualizes their thoughts using assertions. Assertions mainly describe. Assertions can be thought of as either synthetic or analytical. A synthetic proposition asserts about states of affairs. If synthetic propositions correspond to these states of affairs then those assertions are true. Analytical propositions are true because the ideas in these propositions cohere – they fit together in a way that does not lead to a contradiction. Both synthetic and the analytic propositions form the basis for propositional truth. Unfortunately, proposition reveal beings only by describing. The “is” of apophansis is not the “ought” of exhortation. Propositions do not prescribe ways of being nor do fundamentally engage thinking.
the thinker’s thoughts may provide fertile grounds for your thoughts, 
this approach yields no fruitful thoughts. In talking about the 
thinker, we cease to think about the thoughts. Instead of thinking 
we gossip. What do we prove when we talk about the thinker except that they are human. Perhaps to think is to talk about the thoughts themselves. Yet again though, this talking about takes us away from the grounds that give to thinking. Instead of drawing upon ourselves, our home, and our ground – the present ground we inherit and find ourselves standing upon in our thoughts we cast our eyes to distant shores hidden by the misty past. In talking

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6 We should give pause and listen to the “unfruitfulness” of our direction. In one sense our “unfruitful” labors resonates with a main metaphor found in Heidegger’s Memorial Address to Conradin Kreutzer. Heidegger meditates on thinking as pomology. Pomology is the science of growing fruit. Is thinking like growing fruit? We can say that certain issues provide fertile ground for thought. We can say that we can plant seeds of thought in people’s minds, that take root, blossom and bear results. Moreover, we can use this metaphor to suggest what thoughtlessness entails. Heidegger’s pomology shows us that the task of his thinking at-hand is the task of showing his people, their home ground. This is necessary, because his people have grown rootless. This rootlessness has turned the German people from a robust nation of blood and earth, into one that has grown thoughtless. His meditation grows from this metaphor, eventually bearing a conclusion that shocks us. His people have grown technological, and thus lost their connection with the Earth and to each other. Technological thinking is thinking that reduces all being into concepts. Concepts capture being by providing general definitions that describe what something is. For a general concept to describe, it must exclude the particular characteristics of the individual members of the class it names. The technological thinker thinks only in terms of concepts. Doing so they are closer to their thoughts than to the Earth that gave rise to that concept. Alienated from the grounds that give rise to concepts, the technological thinker grows bloodless. I mention this, not to say that we should think of the Logos of the call as pomology. To say that Heidegger’s meditation is like growing fruit, is to confuse the meditation with what it bore. Instead, I evoke it to remind my readers that language does not always speak directly. As a pomology, language does not assert. Instead it fosters, houses and grows. Metaphorical thinking shows us an indirect logos. Is our call to thinking an indirect way of speaking?
about we review the past and forget that the living must live and that the problems of life must not be talk about but be thought through. Talking about, relives, and thus relieves the living from the onus of thinking\(^7\). In talks about thinking, the talker hopes that by review, the thinker will somehow speak to them from the past\(^8\).

\(^7\) If it were an indirect Logos, how would this indirectness show itself? Clearly a Logos must gather, and in this gathering new possibilities open for human beings. To gather is to bring together elements. Besides the gathering of concepts, a logos can gather mnemonically through alliteration. “To relive, is to relieve the living” reminds us that to think with the thinker means that we cannot take the monuments that he has left behind as being the final answer. This is especially true for a thinker who thinks not for answers, but for questions. For a question to be a question, the question must be forever open for renewed questioning. This turns the questioning into something that pertains to the questioner. Since a questioner is always a living questioner, a questioner that relies on answers supplied ready-at-hand does a great disservice to questioning. Because of this, we must always bring ourselves to the present - to the here and now if we take the task of thinking with any amount of authentic resolution. When I call on you to think, I do not call on you to think about another’s thoughts.

\(^8\) One form of inauthentic thinking arises from us trying to re-gather the thinker’s thinking. This Logos is clearly not the logos we seek for when we try to hear the call to thinking. This Logos does not articulate anything new. Moreover it creates a strange paradox. This Logos of talking about is commentary. Cliff notes, footnotes and other’s gossips and chatter are forms of commentary. A commentary presupposes that what it comments on is both complete and incomplete. The “main” text is complete, in the sense that its thoughts are self-contained and that they deserve attention. In its self-containness, it begs for us to expound. By commenting, perhaps we can gain deeper insight onto the thinker’s thinking. Perhaps we can illuminate the text. This will to knowledge calls for secondary readers to supplement the main text. A supplement replaces the main text not by proof or disproof. Instead it vies for our attention, until the reader cannot tell which text is more insightful – the “hard” main text, or the much easier to understand “supplement”. Soon the supplement replaces the main text as something more useful then the main text. This disservice is a disservice because it takes the reader one step further way from the thinker. Instead of thinking with the thinker, we think about another’s thoughts.
But in the *talking about*, we do not hear the call for thinking. When we *talk about* thinking, we do not thing. Instead we descend into an unthinking thoughtlessness that merely remembers. In the *talking about*, we do nothing but re-view; driving forward looking through the rearview mirror.

Can we think with a thinker that calls on us to think? Perhaps we can think the thinker’s thoughts by outlining the thoughts. To reconstruct a thought one needs to know the constructive argument. Arguments themselves do not speak to being, but tries to capture them into a descriptive language. To reconstruct a construct is to have a mirror show an image. Perhaps if we must observe the thinkers thoughts when we mirror their thinking. In observing, we pull important passages, concepts, and re-construct the thoughts. This reconstruction is a type of thinking, for it forces the living to synthesize, and thus create anew. A new thought? New because it is not identical with the old. But this newness is not the newness of a baby’s birth, but the newness found when one deforms. De-form. To de-form means to translate. If thinking is poetry then concepts are prose. From poetry to prose, de-formation occurs. In the translation the poetics that is the poetry ceases and becomes the poesis of prose. To prose a poem is to pose the poem anew. How do we thinking with a thinker, who thinks not on the thinker. Moreover, through the translations, improvements, modifications and exegesis the thinker’s thoughts are lost. The greatest disservice occurs because we ourselves cease to think.

What calls forth thinking must be heard. More then listening, to hear means to heed. When called upon to think, we keen our ears to the calling and move closer to the task. To move closer, to move far and away to a focused center or towards its extremities is to move within a horizontal structure. This way of moving hints of a way that is not conceptual. To conceptualize is to take a birds-eye view of a frozen landscape. To move horizontally means that we cannot oversee the entire landscape. Instead we must address the landforms, monuments, and obstacles as they occur to us in our thinking towards. At this point, what obstacles face us, in our mediations on the Logos of calling?

One obstacle we’re faced with is the very form of our expression. The expression, I speak of is that found in prose. To write prose is to write an essay. Essays gather themselves around a thesis. It gathers specifically assertions that only have one meaning. Form takes
about thoughts, nor ideas, but of thinking with other thinkers? How
do we think the thinking that thinks not by directing itself towards
thoughts, but in the gathering that gathers around thinking thinkers?
To gather means to congress, or to pick up. When we think
with thinkers, we join into the articulation of thinking and not merely
pick up the pearls of frozen wisdom.

If thinking articulates living thoughts then to think about
is to commemorate. We should give thanks. Thanking means lis-
tening. In thanking we pay homage. Homage acts to translate by
forcing us to move away from our native thoughts, and closer to
the thinker. To pay homage we read. In reading we re-gather the
priority over material issues, when writers must write within a standard
unfriendly to their thoughts. Essays control the articulation of speech—
a poiesis that has been alloyed with a preconceived format. To make
this format pre-eminent is to preordain literalness, concepts, assertions
and commentary. If were aware of the transforming powers of moving
from one Logos to another, we would balk. But mostly, this translation
never occurs to us. We think our words are transparent representations
of the world. Instead, they are re-presentations that create new worlds.
Take for example the translation between poetry and prose. In school,
the way a poem is mastered, is if one can write about it. To write about
a poem, one has to dissect it along conventional lines of theme, meter,
rhyme, motif, and trope. Hacked to pieces, the poems gets reconsti-
tuted into a literal format. Nuance gets lost if it has to be explained in
blunt terms. Rhyme withers and dies with words that are metered along
logical lines. In short, the prose destroys the poem, by posing it. The
American Heritage dictionary defines pose as (i) to hold a particular
position, (ii) to affect a particular mental attitude, (iii) to represent
oneself as something other then oneself, (iv) to place in a specific
position, (v) to propound or assert, (vi) and to puzzle or confuse. It is
in the first five senses of the word, the pose that ruins poetry. It is the
in the last sense that the frozen pose becomes deconstructively un-
stable. It is this last sense that gives us hope to understand the Logos of
a call.

Have we moved, closer towards understanding the language of the
call? Nowhere was this logos explicitly defined, not in the main text,
nor in the “supplement” of the footnote. Having not place, having no
concept, having no definition, have you understood the call to thinking
any better? Have you understood the call to thinking with the thinker
any better? Have you learned how to think meditatively?
beings that the thinker has gathered in his logos. As we re-gather, we find ourselves regarding the thinker and find ourselves confronted by the gathering of beings that the thinker has gathered. In this gather of thought a world forms – a home world that grounds the thinker and provokes him to answer a thought provoking call. Only when we stand with the thinker, do we hear him responding to the call that calls upon his thinking. With the thinker, listening to the call to his thinking, we compose our thoughts in the new landscape. The new fades into familiarity; familiarity becomes a new home. Finding a home away from home, we give thanks to his thinking. We commemorate.

Have you learned to call, listen, heed and respond? If you have to “look” for this answer, then my Logos has fallen on deaf ears.
I.

I read with interest Carlos Sanchez’s article “Dangerous Encounters: The Other, the I, and Sociality” (printed in this journal, Spring 1999).¹ I agree with the article’s motivation: the violence and general belligerence, that often seem to pervade our social relations and that manifest themselves - sometimes “shockingly” - in the events portrayed by our Nightly News, signify a need to reflect on the deeper structure of sociality. I also agree with one of the article’s basic assumptions: simply approaching another human being with a naïve expectation of friendliness, without regard for the variety of human capacities (some of them violent), occasions a “danger of misunderstanding our relationships to others.”² Every moment of meeting between two persons is, at root, open-ended and every presumption about the character of such moments is risky. Unfortunately, I think Sanchez’s attempt “to show that the Other is to be taken as fundamentally dangerous”³ fails to avoid such misunderstanding. In fact, I believe Sanchez’s elaboration of this suggestion fosters a misunderstanding of Otherness that is similar to the misunderstanding caused by naïve expectations of friendliness. To approach a potential friend as an enemy can be as calamitous as approaching a potential enemy as a friend. What is more, Sanchez’s discussion misinterprets the structure of sociality found in Ortega y Gasset’s Man and People.
II.

Sanchez does a fine job of describing Ortega y Gasset’s theory of intersubjectivity. Most important to the present discussion is that part of Ortega y Gasset’s theory which describes a spectrum of intimacy that defines the “environment of humanity” in which other persons appear to us. As Sanchez makes clear, an essential feature of humanness is the potential reciprocity of action that exists between me and other humans. Ortega y Gasset’s “spectrum of intimacy” is simply a function of the actualization of this human reciprocity. That is, when I encounter another human being and act toward her, I may provoke a response that begins establishing a history of actual reciprocation between us. For Ortega y Gasset this is the beginning of sociality — the action that establishes “we-ity.” As the history of reciprocation continues to develop between me and the Other, she becomes more particular to me: “an individual whom I cannot confuse with any other, for whom I can substitute no other.” Thus she attains her “You-ness” in relation to me. This You-ness — the individuality and particularity of the Other — grows with the development of our extended history of reciprocation, and my intercourse with her thereby develops an increased sense of intimacy. Of course, the history of reciprocity that I develop with any one person is unique. With some I have more history, and thus a more intimate relationship. With others there is little sense of intimacy at all. In this way we can establish a “spectrum of intimacy” for all persons with whom I come into contact.

It is important to notice, however, that a human being first enters my consciousness in a pre-social context. That is, the very first contact I have with any particular human being is an encounter that is prefaced by no actual history of reciprocal action between us. This point of initial contact is (to use Ortega y Gasset’s words) “the extreme case of zero intimacy.” At the zero-point of intimacy the only knowledge I have of the Other’s relationship to me is an intuition of her potential reciprocity. However, the specific form that this reciprocity will take is yet to be determined. I cannot know it until it has been provoked by some action upon her. Consequently, the only knowledge I have of the potential relationship between us is defined completely by generalizations that I have formed from relationships with other people. Ortega y Gasset puts it this way:
Of the pure other, at the zero point of intimacy, I have no direct intuition beyond... the sight of his body, of his gestures, of his movements, in all of which I believe that I see a Man, but that is all.... To this I add something that is not direct intuition of him, but the general experience of my intercourse with men, a collection of generalizations concerning my instinctive intercourse with many who were closer to me, hence something purely conceptual, or let us say theoretical - our generic idea of Man and the human.

The problem, when this very generalized idea of humanness is the only knowledge we have of a person, is that the total of human intercourse implies a vast variety of human possibilities. This variety includes positive, negative and sometimes contradictory capacities. Consequently, our “theoretical” picture of Otherness is quite vague and gains a valid interpretation only through an actual (as opposed to theoretical) process of reciprocal intercourse.

An important point here is that past interactions with other human beings reveal that a particular human being, in general, may represent a potential enemy (for some of my past acquaintances have become my enemies) – or, she may represent a potential friend (for many of my past acquaintances have become friends). Danger lies in the fact that we cannot know in advance which of the two – friend or foe – a person at the zero-point of intimacy will turn out to be. What is more, if I am unprepared for the possibility of her being an enemy, I could end up being waylaid by this potential source of harm. The problem with Sanchez’s account is that he blurs the distinction between potential enemies and actual enemies.

III.

Granted, in the face of potential danger it is in my best interest to be wary. Sanchez is correct to suggest that such wariness may relieve the shock of violent behavior and, perhaps, even better prepare us to find solutions to such violence. However, though “wariness” may be prudent in the face of potential enemies, it is likely that I would do better to be more aggressively defensive toward someone with whom I have developed a history of reciprocity that reveals them to be an actual enemy, with a history of
actual violence. Until such a history has been established, even though Sanchez is right to suggest that someone should not be immediately categorized as friendly, he is equally wrong to suggest that that person should be categorized as an enemy. Where Sanchez presumes a dichotomy of either friend or enemy, Ortega y Gasset offers a trichotomy of friend, enemy or stranger. At the zero point of intimacy another person is simply a stranger with whom I face the challenge of establishing intimacy. The fear inspired by the vast potentiality of a stranger does not warrant the same response that may be inspired by an actual enemy.

The difference, within Ortega y Gasset’s structure of sociality, between strangers and enemies may be a subtle one. Confusion may be fostered by Ortega y Gasset’s consistently describing the stranger as “dangerous”. However, the danger in strangers is of a different character than the danger of an enemy. To assume they are not different is a mistake. At the heart of the difference is the fact that, by virtue of the purely theoretical knowledge we have of the stranger, the perception of danger that we detect in her is a theoretical danger. Not so with an enemy. The danger of an enemy is non-theoretical: it has been demonstrated by her reciprocating my action upon her with violence, or some action that is “against” me.

The key here is a distinction between theoretical and non-theoretical dangers. What creates this distinction is the question of whether any intimacy has been established between myself and the other. As explained above, the stranger is a zero-point of intimacy. There is no history of reciprocal action that defines the nature of our relationship and that legitimately narrows our expectation of what kind of intimacy may be established between us. As Ortega y Gasset puts it: “The pure [and unknown] Other is in fact provisionally and equally my possible friend or my potential enemy.” Thus, as far as I am capable of knowing at the point of initial meeting, the stranger is as much my friend as she is my enemy. Consequently, Sanchez is wrong to suggest that Ortega y Gasset’s theory of intersubjectivity compels us to “divide my social relations between those with friends, with whom I have somehow become intimate, and enemies, those distanced from the center of my primordial sphere, and which I know nothing about except that they represent a totality of human potential.” If Sanchez
intends to follow Ortega y Gasset faithfully, he cannot equate ‘friends’ with ‘intimacy’ and ‘enemies’ with ‘non-intimacy’ (or, as Sanchez puts it, ‘[distance] from the center of my primordial sphere”).

Apparently, Sanchez forgets that, for Ortega y Gasset, the word ‘enemy’ refers to an actualized form of intimacy between two persons. By forgetting this, when Sanchez “divides” up his social relations, he allows himself to mistakenly categorize strangers – those who are true non-intimates – as enemies. Thus, his reformulation of Ortega y Gasset’s structure of sociality becomes a world that consists only of friends and “enemies” rather than Ortega y Gasset’s own trichotomous structure consisting of friends, enemies and strangers. In Ortega y Gasset’s theory friends and enemies are both a type of intimate relationship. To assume that the stranger (about whom “I know nothing ... except that they represent a totality of human potential”) is an enemy is to presume an intimacy that simply does not exist (yet) between me and the other. This is precisely the same mistake that is committed by assuming that the stranger is a friend. The stranger is in fact neither friend nor enemy; or we might rather say, as Ortega y Gasset suggests above, she is equally friend and enemy.

IV.

I believe the real lesson to be learned from Ortega y Gasset’s theory is that we should make no presumption about whether the unknown person, with whom I still face the challenge of developing intimacy, is a friend or enemy. Instead, I should face up to the openness of the initial encounter and be prepared to respond to whatever reciprocation the stranger offers. Though Sanchez states that his intention was to “not engage in outlining a humane diplomacy” the unfortunate effect of his misapplication of Ortega y Gasset’s theory is that he does seem to encourage a phenomenological xenophobia. In Sanchez’s interpretation strangers become enemies and are precluded from the expectation of friendly reciprocation.

It is true that the theoretical danger of a genuine stranger implies real consequences for how we go about establishing relationships: we should be wary to the extent that we accept the full scope of the challenge of intimacy. This challenge may lead to a
violent outcome, or it may lead to a peaceful one. In any case, the stranger and I are responsible — together — for the dynamic process of reciprocation that will ultimately determine the nature of a more intimate relationship that may develop between us. For my part, I must bear this responsibility with the expectation that, if I wish to avoid enemies, I will have to work at creating an intimacy of trust and friendliness. I cannot simply assume that the Other is, or will inevitably become, a friend. Perhaps this is all that Sanchez wanted to suggest in his article. Unfortunately, he seems instead to imply that antagonism, like that which I would be tempted to show toward my enemies, is the best way to deal with the fear inspired by the vast human potentiality that a stranger represents.

Endnotes


2 see ibid., p. 55.

3 ibid., p. 57.

4 see ibid., pp. 58-59.


6 ibid., p. 146.

7 ibid., p. 147.

8 ibid., p. 153.

9 ibid., p. 151.

10 ibid., p. 150 [italics added].
11 Sanchez, p. 60.

12 ibid., p. 56.
PLATO'S BEARD

Reflections

SJSU Department of Philosophy students, faculty, and alumni

This is an open section for thoughts, ideas, and interests both in and on Philosophy. The first issue featured primarily answers to questions but this year we've also thrown in some humor.

What is Education?

Education is the process of learning how to make decisions and discover fact.
- Wayne Yuen, SJSU Undergraduate

Education is the medium by which the systems of knowledge acquisition and differentiation are passed down through the generations, not limited to the formal schooling of teachers, but also encompassing the relationships of friends and family.
- Gary Buzzell, SJSU Undergraduate

What is the role of philosophy in education?

Philosophy is the field that provides a rigorous study of how we learn and how we can make better decisions through critical thinking and logic. It also helps us weed out beliefs from facts.
- Wayne Yuen, SJSU Undergraduate

Who is your favorite philosopher and why?

My favorite philosopher is Epicurus, because he was wise enough to see the connection between desires and our behavior, elevating hedonism as something practical.
- Wayne Yuen, SJSU Undergraduate

My favorite philosopher is Heraclitus, for we think, or thought alike.
- Gary Buzzell, SJSU Undergraduate
What is a philosophy of technology and why do we or do we not need one?

Philosophy is concerned with issues of enduring importance to humankind. What is the right thing to do? What can we know? What is beautiful? These are lasting questions that have been raised through the centuries and, in various forms, addressed by all human cultures and traditions. Nonetheless, they are questions raised, understood and assessed with respect to the conditions of a given time and place. Socrates and Confucius engaged philosophical issues by addressing the conditions within which they lived. In the last two hundred years we have come increasingly to live in a world that is the product of our own technological powers. The world in which we now live cannot function nor can it be conceived apart from our technologies. In our day, what we do, how we come to know, and the ways we express beauty transpire in a world in which technology is essential not incidental. This fact of the current human foundation calls upon us to re-ask all of the central questions of philosophy.

Philosophy of technology addresses issues of enduring importance to humankind given the essentially technological character of the current human condition. Philosophy of technology would seem to be a necessity, given both the traditions of our discipline and the conditions of our age.

- S. Noam Cook, SJSU Professor

Philosophical Humor

Q: How many Zenos does it take to screw in a lightbulb?
A: It can’t be done! First, you would have to screw it in half way, then another, then another, etc.

Q: How many Platonists does it take to screw in a light bulb?
A: The one true one of course. But many can bask in the light.
Q: How many existentialists does it take to change a light bulb?
A: Two—one to bemoan the darkness until the other redefines something else as light.

Q: How many Heraclitians does it take to change a light bulb?
A: None—its already changing.

Q: How many solipsists does it take to change a light bulb?
A: All of them.

Q: How many Epicureans does it take to change a light bulb?
A: None—they take advantage of the darkness!

First Date

A boy is about to go on his first date, and is nervous about what to talk about. He asks his father for advice. The father replies: “My son, there are three subjects that always work. These are food, family, and philosophy.”

The boy picks up his date and they go to a soda fountain. Ice cream sodas in front of them, they stare at each other for a long time, as the boy’s nervousness builds. He remembers his father’s advice, and chooses the first topic. He asks the girl: “Do you like potato pancakes?” She says “No,” and the silence returns.

After a few more uncomfortable minutes, the boy thinks of his father’s suggestion and turns to the second item on the list. He asks, “Do you have a brother?” Again, the girl says “No” and there is silence once again.

The boy then plays his last card. He thinks of his father’s advice and asks the girl the following question: “If you had a brother, would he like potato pancakes?”

Rules

Philosophy is a game with objectives and no rules.
Mathematics is a game with rules and no objectives.
A Philosopher’s Alphabet

A is for Anaxagoras, Anaxarchus, Anaximander, Anselm, Aquinas, Aristotle,
and Augustine
B is for Bacon, Bentham, and Berkeley
C is for Carnap, Cicero, and Camus
D is for Democritus, Descartes, Dewey, and Diogenes
E is for Epictetus, Epicurus, Erasmus, and Euclid
F is for Ferrier, Fichte, and Foucault
G is for Galileo, God, and Gorgias
H is for Hegel, Hempel, Heraclitus, Hobbes, Hume, and Husserl
I is for Iamblichus, Ibn, Ingarden, and Inge
J is for James, and Jung
K is for Kant, Kierkegaard, and Kuhn
L is for Leibniz, Locke, and Lucretius
M is for Machiavelli, Mill, and Melbranche
N is for Nagel, and Nietzsche
O is for Oken, Olivi, and Oman
P is for Paley, Parmenides, Plato, Platonus, and Pythagoras
Q is for Quine
R is for Reichenbach, Rousseau, and Russell
S is for Sartre, and Spinoza
T is for Thales, and Thoreau
U is for Ueberweg, and Unamuno
V is for Vasubandhu, Vitoria, and Voltaire
W is for Wittgenstein
X is for Xenophon and Xenophanes
Y is for Young
Z is for Zeno
We welcome papers on any philosophical topic. We will also gladly accept commentaries on the essays contained in this issue of GEIST to be included in Reflections.

To submit a paper, please send a hardcopy and a softcopy of your paper with a cover page. All papers should be double spaced, 12-point font, approximately 5 to 10 pages in length, and marked clearly with the applicant’s last four digits of their social security number. The cover page should contain the applicant’s name, school affiliation, undergraduate or graduate status, phone number, mailing address, email address and last four digits of social security number. Only one paper per applicant will be reviewed.

The deadline for submissions: February 1, 2001.

Please send submission directly to:

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