INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY READER

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1: Knowledge and Skepticism

Philosophy[1]

Philosophy (from Greek φιλοσοφία, *philosophia*, literally "love of wisdom") is the study of general and fundamental problems concerning matters such as existence, knowledge, values, reason, mind, and language. The term was probably coined by Pythagoras (c. 570 – c. 495 BC). Philosophical methods include questioning, critical discussion, rational argument and systematic presentation. Classic philosophical questions include: Is it possible to know anything and to prove it? What is most real? However, philosophers might also pose more practical and concrete questions such as: Is there a best way to live? Is it better to be just or unjust (if one can get away with it)? Do humans have free will?

Historically, "philosophy" encompassed any body of knowledge. From the time of Ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle to the 19th century, "natural philosophy" encompassed astronomy, medicine and physics. For example, Newton's 1687 *Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy* later became classified as a book of physics. In the 19th century, the growth of modern research universities led academic philosophy and other disciplines to professionalize and specialize. In the modern era, some investigations that were traditionally part of philosophy became separate academic disciplines, including psychology, sociology, linguistics and economics.

Other investigations closely related to art, science, politics, or other pursuits remained part of philosophy. For example, is beauty objective or subjective? Are there many scientific methods or just one? Is political utopia a hopeful dream or hopeless fantasy? Major sub-fields of academic philosophy include metaphysics ("concerned with the fundamental nature of reality and being"), epistemology (about the "nature and grounds of knowledge [and]...its limits and validity"), ethics, aesthetics, political philosophy, logic, philosophy of science and the history of Western philosophy.

Since the 20th century professional philosophers contribute to society primarily as professors, researchers and writers. However, many of those who study philosophy in undergraduate or graduate programs contribute in the fields of law, journalism, politics, religion, science, business and various art and entertainment activities.

Introduction

Knowledge

Traditionally, the term "philosophy" referred to any body of knowledge. In this sense, philosophy is closely related to religion, mathematics, natural science, education and politics. Newton's 1687 "Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy" is classified in the 2000s as a book of physics; he used the term "natural philosophy" because it used to encompass disciplines that later became associated with sciences such as astronomy, medicine and physics.

Philosophy was traditionally divided into three major branches:

- Natural philosophy ("*physics")* was the study of the physical world (*physis*, lit: nature);
- Moral philosophy ("*ethics"*) was the study of goodness, right and wrong, beauty, justice and virtue (*ethos*, lit: custom);
- Metaphysical philosophy *("logos")* was the study of existence, causation, God, logic, forms and other abstract objects ("*meta-physika"* lit: "what comes after physics").

This division is not obsolete but has changed. Natural philosophy has split into the various natural sciences, especially astronomy, physics, chemistry, biology and cosmology. Moral philosophy has birthed the social sciences, but still includes value theory (including aesthetics, ethics, political philosophy, etc.). Metaphysical philosophy has birthed formal sciences such as logic, mathematics and philosophy of science, but still includes epistemology, cosmology and others.

Philosophical progress

Many philosophical debates that began in ancient times are still debated today. Colin McGinn and others claim that no philosophical progress has occurred during that interval. Chalmers and others, by contrast, see progress in philosophy similar to that in science, while Talbot Brewer argued that "progress" is the wrong standard by which to judge philosophical activity.

Historical overview

In one general sense, philosophy is associated with wisdom, intellectual culture and a search for knowledge. In that sense, all cultures and literate societies ask philosophical questions such as "how are we to live" and "what is the nature of reality". A broad

and impartial conception of philosophy then, finds a reasoned inquiry into such matters as reality, morality and life in all world civilizations.

Western philosophy

Western philosophy is the philosophical tradition of the Western world and dates to Pre-Socratic thinkers who were active in Ancient Greece in the 6th century BC such as Thales (c. 624 – c. 546 BC) and Pythagoras (c. 570 – c. 495 BC) who practiced a "love of wisdom" (*philosophia*) and were also termed *physiologoi* (students of *physis*, or nature). Socrates was a very influential philosopher, who insisted that he possessed no *wisdom* but was a *pursuer of* wisdom. Western philosophy can be divided into three eras: Ancient (Greco-Roman), Medieval philosophy (Christian European), and Modern philosophy.

The Ancient era was dominated by Greek philosophical schools which arose out of the various pupils of Socrates, such as Plato who founded the Platonic Academy, and was one of the most influential Greek thinkers for the whole of Western thought. Plato's student Aristotle was also extremely influential, founding the Peripatetic school. Other traditions include Cynicism, Stoicism, Greek Skepticism and Epicureanism. Important topics covered by the Greeks included metaphysics (with competing theories such as atomism and monism), cosmology, the nature of the well-lived life (eudaimonia), the possibility of knowledge and the nature of reason (logos). With the rise of the Roman empire, Greek philosophy was also increasingly discussed in Latin by Romans such as Cicero and Seneca.

Medieval philosophy (5th – 16th century) is the period following the fall of the Roman empire and was dominated by the rise of Christianity and hence reflects Judeo-Christian theological concerns as well as retaining a continuity with Greco-Roman thought. Problems such as the existence and nature of God, the nature of faith and reason, metaphysics, the problem of evil were discussed in this period. Some key Medieval thinkers include St. Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Boethius, Anselm and Roger Bacon. Philosophy for these thinkers was viewed as an aid to Theology (*ancilla theologiae*) and hence they sought to align their philosophy with their interpretation of sacred scripture. This period saw the development of Scholasticism, a text critical method developed in medieval universities based on close reading and disputation on key texts. The Renaissance (1355–1650) period saw increasing focus on classic Greco-Roman thought and on a robust Humanism.

Early modern philosophy in the Western world begins with thinkers such as Thomas Hobbes and René Descartes (1596–1650). Following the rise of natural science, Modern philosophy was concerned with developing a secular and rational foundation for knowledge and moved away from traditional structures of authority such as religion, scholastic thought and the Church. Major modern philosophers include Spinoza, Leibniz, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, and Kant. 19th-century philosophy is influenced by the wider movement termed the Enlightenment, and includes figures such as Hegel a key figure in German idealism, Nietzsche a famed anti-Christian, J.S. Mill who promoted Utilitarianism, Karl Marx who developed the foundations for Communism and the American William James. The 20th century saw the split between Analytic philosophy and Continental philosophy, as well as philosophical trends such as Phenomenology, Existentialism, Logical Positivism, Pragmatism and the Linguistic turn.

1.1: Introduction to Philosophy and Arguments

1 Introduction to Philosophy and Arguments

Argument[2]

In philosophy and logic, an argument is a series of statements typically used to persuade someone of something or to present reasons for accepting a conclusion. The general form of an argument in a natural language is that of premises (typically in the form of propositions, statements or sentences) in support of a claim: the conclusion. The structure of some arguments can also be set out in a formal language, and formally defined "arguments" can be made independently of natural language arguments, as in math, logic, and computer science.

In a typical deductive argument, the premises *guarantee* the truth of the conclusion, while in an inductive argument, they are thought to provide reasons supporting the conclusion's *probable* truth. The standards for evaluating non-deductive arguments may rest on different or additional criteria than truth, for example, the persuasiveness of so-called "indispensability claims" in transcendental arguments, the quality of hypotheses in retroduction, or even the disclosure of new possibilities for thinking and acting.

The standards and criteria used in evaluating arguments and their forms of reasoning are studied in logic. Ways of formulating arguments effectively are studied in rhetoric (see also: argumentation theory). An argument in a formal language shows the logical form of the symbolically represented or natural language arguments obtained by its interpretations.

Formal and informal

Informal arguments as studied in *informal logic*, are presented in ordinary language and are intended for everyday discourse. Conversely, formal arguments are studied in *formal logic* (historically called *symbolic logic*, more commonly referred to as *mathematical logic* today) and are expressed in a formal language. Informal logic may be said to emphasize the study of argumentation, whereas formal logic emphasizes implication and inference. Informal arguments are sometimes implicit. That is, the rational structure – the relationship of claims, premises, warrants, relations of implication, and conclusion – is not always spelled out and immediately visible and must sometimes be made explicit by analysis.

Standard types

There are several kinds of arguments in logic, the best-known of which are "deductive" and "inductive." An argument has one or more premises but only one conclusion. Each premise and the conclusion are truth bearers or "truth-candidates", each capable of being either true or false (but not both). These truth values bear on the terminology used with arguments.

Deductive arguments

- A deductive argument asserts that the truth of the conclusion is a logical consequence of the premises. Based on the premises, the conclusion follows necessarily (with certainty). For example, given premises that A=B and B=C, then the conclusion follows necessarily that A=C. Deductive arguments are sometimes referred to as "truth-preserving" arguments.
- A deductive argument is said to be valid or invalid. If one *assumes* the premises to be true (ignoring their actual truth values), would the conclusion follow with certainty? If yes, the argument is valid. Otherwise, it is invalid. In determining validity, the structure of the argument is essential to the determination, not the actual truth values. For example, consider the argument that because bats can fly (premise=true), and all flying creatures are birds (premise=false), therefore bats are birds (conclusion=false). If we assume the premises are true, the conclusion follows necessarily, and thus it is a valid argument.
- If a deductive argument is valid and its premises are all true, then it is also referred to as sound. Otherwise, it is unsound, as in the "bats are birds" example.

Inductive arguments

- An inductive argument, on the other hand, asserts that the truth of the conclusion is supported to some degree of probability by the premises. For example, given that the U.S. military budget is the largest in the world (premise=true), then it is probable that it will remain so for the next 10 years (conclusion=true). Arguments that involve predictions are inductive, as the future is uncertain.
- An inductive argument is said to be strong or weak. If the premises of an inductive argument are *assumed* true, is it probable the conclusion is also true? If so, the argument is strong. Otherwise, it is weak.

- A strong argument is said to be cogent if it has all true premises. Otherwise, the argument is uncogent. The military budget argument example above is a strong, cogent argument.

Deductive

A *deductive argument* is one that, if valid, has a conclusion that is entailed by its premises. In other words, the truth of the conclusion is a logical consequence of the premises—if the premises are true, then the conclusion must be true. It would be self-contradictory to assert the premises and deny the conclusion, because the negation of the conclusion is contradictory to the truth of the premises.

Validity

Deductive arguments may be either valid or invalid. If an argument is valid, it is a valid deduction, and if its premises are true, the conclusion must be true: a valid argument cannot have true premises and a false conclusion.

An argument is formally valid if and only if the denial of the conclusion is incompatible with accepting all the premises.

The validity of an argument depends, however, not on the actual truth or falsity of its premises and conclusion, but solely on whether or not the argument has a valid logical form. The validity of an argument is not a guarantee of the truth of its conclusion. Under a given interpretation, a valid argument may have false premises that render it inconclusive: the conclusion of a valid argument with one or more false premises may be either true or false.

Logic seeks to discover the valid forms, the forms that make arguments valid. A form of argument is valid if and only if the conclusion is true under all interpretations of that argument in which the premises are true. Since the validity of an argument depends solely on its form, an argument can be shown to be invalid by showing that its form is invalid. This can be done by giving a counter example of the same form of argument with premises that are true under a given interpretation, but a conclusion that is false under that interpretation. In informal logic this is called a counter argument.

The form of argument can be shown by the use of symbols. For each argument form, there is a corresponding statement form, called a corresponding conditional, and an argument form is valid if and only if its corresponding conditional is a logical truth. A statement form which is logically true is also said to be a valid statement form. A statement form is a logical truth if it is true under all interpretations. A statement form can be shown to be a logical truth by either (a) showing that it is a tautology or (b) by means of a proof procedure.

The corresponding conditional of a valid argument is a necessary truth (true *in all possible worlds*) and so the conclusion necessarily follows from the premises, or follows of logical necessity. The conclusion of a valid argument is not necessarily true, it depends on whether the premises are true. If the conclusion, itself, just so happens to be a necessary truth, it is so without regard to the premises.

Some examples:

- *All Greeks are human and all humans are mortal; therefore, all Greeks are mortal.* : Valid argument; if the premises are true the conclusion must be true.
- *Some Greeks are logicians and some logicians are tiresome; therefore, some Greeks are tiresome.* Invalid argument: the tiresome logicians might all be Romans (for example).
- *Either we are all doomed or we are all saved; we are not all saved; therefore, we are all doomed.* Valid argument; the premises entail the conclusion. (Remember that this does not mean the conclusion has to be true; it is only true if the premises are true, which they may not be!)
- *Some men are hawkers. Some hawkers are rich. Therefore, some men are rich.* Invalid argument. This can be easier seen by giving a counter-example with the same argument form:
- *Some people are herbivores.* Some herbivores are zebras. Therefore, some people are zebras. *Invalid argument, as it is possible that the premises be true and the conclusion false.*

In the above second to last case (Some men are hawkers...), the counter-example follows the same logical form as the previous argument, (Premise 1: "Some *X* are *Y*." Premise 2: "Some *Y* are *Z*." Conclusion: "Some *X* are *Z*.") in order to demonstrate that whatever hawkers may be, they may or may not be rich, in consideration of the premises as such. *(See also, existential import).*

The forms of argument that render deductions valid are well-established, however some invalid arguments can also be persuasive depending on their construction (inductive arguments, for example). *(See also, formal fallacy and informal fallacy).*

Soundness

A sound argument is a valid argument whose conclusion follows from its premise(s), and the premise(s) of which is/are true.

Inductive

Non-deductive logic is reasoning using arguments in which the premises support the conclusion but do not entail it. Forms of non-deductive logic include the statistical syllogism, which argues from generalizations true for the most part, and induction, a form of reasoning that makes generalizations based on individual instances. An inductive argument is said to be *cogent* if and only if the truth of the argument's premises would render the truth of the conclusion probable (i.e., the argument is *strong*), and the argument's premises are, in fact, true. Cogency can be considered inductive logic's analogue to deductive logic's "soundness." Despite its name, mathematical induction is not a form of inductive reasoning. The lack of deductive validity is known as the problem of induction.

Defeasible arguments and argumentation schemes

In modern argumentation theories, arguments are regarded as defeasible passages from premises to a conclusion. Defeasibility means that when additional information (new evidence or contrary arguments) is provided, the premises may be no longer lead to the conclusion (non-monotonic reasoning). This type of reasoning is referred to as defeasible reasoning. For instance we consider the famous Tweedy example:

Tweedy is a bird.

Birds generally fly.

Therefore, Tweedy (probably) flies.

This argument is reasonable and the premises support the conclusion unless additional information indicating that the case is an exception comes in. If Tweedy is a penguin, the inference is no longer justified by the premise. Defeasible arguments are based on generalizations that hold only in the majority of cases, but are subject to exceptions and defaults. In order to represent and assess defeasible reasoning, it is necessary to combine the logical rules (governing the acceptance of a conclusion based on the acceptance of its premises) with rules of material inference, governing how a premise can support a given conclusion (whether it is reasonable or not to draw a specific conclusion from a specific description of a state of affairs). Argumentation schemes have been developed to describe and assess the acceptability or the fallaciousness of defeasible arguments. Argumentation schemes are stereotypical patterns of inference, combining semantic-ontological relations with types of reasoning and logical axioms and representing the abstract structure of the most common types of natural arguments. The argumentation schemes provided in (Walton, Reed & Macagno, 2008) describe tentatively the patterns of the most typical arguments. However, the two levels of abstraction are not distinguished. For this reason, under the label of “argumentation schemes” fall indistinctly patterns of reasoning such as the abductive, analogical, or inductive ones, and types of argument such as the ones from classification or cause to effect. A typical example is the argument from expert opinion, which has two premises and a conclusion.

Major Premise: Source E is an expert in subject domain S containing proposition A.

Minor Premise: E asserts that proposition A is true (false).

Conclusion: A is true (false).

Each scheme is associated to a set of critical questions, namely criteria for assessing dialectically the reasonableness and acceptability of an argument. The matching critical questions are the standard ways of casting the argument into doubt.

CQ1: Expertise Question. How credible is E as an expert source?

CQ2: Field Question. Is E an expert in the field that A is in?

CQ3: Opinion Question. What did E assert that implies A?

CQ4: Trustworthiness Question. Is E personally reliable as a source?

CQ5: Consistency Question. Is A consistent with what other experts assert?

CQ6: Backup Evidence Question. Is E's assertion based on evidence?

If an expert says that a proposition is true, this provides a reason for tentatively accepting it, in the absence of stronger reasons to doubt it. But suppose that evidence of financial gain suggests that the expert is biased, for example by evidence showing that he will gain financially from his claim.

By analogy

Argument by analogy may be thought of as argument from the particular to particular. An argument by analogy may use a particular truth in a premise to argue towards a similar particular truth in the conclusion. For example, if A. Plato was mortal, and B. Socrates was like Plato in other respects, then asserting that C. Socrates was mortal is an example of argument by analogy because the reasoning employed in it proceeds from a particular truth in a premise (Plato was mortal) to a similar particular truth in the conclusion, namely that Socrates was mortal.

Other kinds

Other kinds of arguments may have different or additional standards of validity or justification. For example, Charles Taylor writes that so-called transcendental arguments are made up of a "chain of indispensability claims" that attempt to show why something is necessarily true based on its connection to our experience, while Nikolas Kompridis has suggested that there are two types of "fallible" arguments: one based on truth claims, and the other based on the time-responsive disclosure of possibility (see world disclosure). The late French philosopher Michel Foucault is said to have been a prominent advocate of this latter form of philosophical argument.

In informal logic

Argument is an informal calculus, relating an effort to be performed or sum to be spent, to possible future gain, either economic or moral. In informal logic, an argument is a connexion between

1. an *individual* action
2. through which a *generally accepted* good is obtained.

Ex :

1. You should marry Jane (individual action, individual decision)
2. because she has the same temper as you. (generally accepted wisdom that marriage is good in itself, and it is generally accepted that people with the same character get along well).

1. You should not smoke (individual action, individual decision)
2. because smoking is harmful (generally accepted wisdom that health is good).

The argument is neither a) *advice* nor b) *moral or economical judgement*, but the connection between the two. An argument always uses the connective because. An argument is not an explanation. It does not connect two events, cause and effect, which already took place, but a possible individual action and its beneficial outcome. An argument is not a proof. A proof is a logical and cognitive concept; an argument is a praxeologic concept. A proof changes our knowledge; an argument compels us to act.[]

Logical status

Argument does not belong to logic, because it is connected to a real person, a real event, and a real effort to be made.

1. If you, John, will buy this stock, it will become twice as valuable in a year.
2. If you, Mary, study dance, you will become a famous ballet dancer.

The value of the argument is connected to the immediate circumstances of the person spoken to. If, in the first case,(1) John has no money, or will die the next year, he will not be interested in buying the stock. If, in the second case (2) she is too heavy, or too old, she will not be interested in studying and becoming a dancer. The argument is not logical, but profitable.

World-disclosing

World-disclosing arguments are a group of philosophical arguments that are said to employ a disclosive approach, to reveal features of a wider ontological or cultural-linguistic understanding – a "world," in a specifically ontological sense – in order to clarify or transform the background of meaning and "logical space" on which an argument implicitly depends.

Explanations

While arguments attempt to show that something was, is, will be, or should be the case, explanations try to show *why* or *how* something is or will be. If Fred and Joe address the issue of *whether* or not Fred's cat has fleas, Joe may state: "Fred, your cat has fleas. Observe, the cat is scratching right now." Joe has made an *argument that* the cat has fleas. However, if Joe asks Fred, "Why is your cat scratching itself?" the explanation, "...because it has fleas." provides understanding.

Both the above argument and explanation require knowing the generalities that a) fleas often cause itching, and b) that one often scratches to relieve itching. The difference is in the intent: an argument attempts to settle whether or not some claim is true, and an explanation attempts to provide understanding of the event. Note, that by subsuming the specific event (of Fred's cat scratching) as

an instance of the general rule that "animals scratch themselves when they have fleas", Joe will no longer wonder *why* Fred's cat is scratching itself. Arguments address problems of belief, explanations address problems of understanding. Also note that in the argument above, the statement, "Fred's cat has fleas" is up for debate (i.e. is a claim), but in the explanation, the statement, "Fred's cat has fleas" is assumed to be true (unquestioned at this time) and just needs *explaining*.

Arguments and explanations largely resemble each other in rhetorical use. This is the cause of much difficulty in thinking critically about claims. There are several reasons for this difficulty.

- People often are not themselves clear on whether they are arguing for or explaining something.
- The same types of words and phrases are used in presenting explanations and arguments.
- The terms 'explain' or 'explanation,' et cetera are frequently used in arguments.
- Explanations are often used within arguments and presented so as to serve *as arguments*.
- Likewise, "...arguments are essential to the process of justifying the validity of any explanation as there are often multiple explanations for any given phenomenon."

Explanations and arguments are often studied in the field of Information Systems to help explain user acceptance of knowledge-based systems. Certain argument types may fit better with personality traits to enhance acceptance by individuals.

Fallacies and nonarguments

Fallacies are types of argument or expressions which are held to be of an invalid form or contain errors in reasoning. There is not as yet any general theory of fallacy or strong agreement among researchers of their definition or potential for application but the term is broadly applicable as a label to certain examples of error, and also variously applied to ambiguous candidates.

In Logic types of fallacy are firmly described thus: First the premises and the conclusion must be statements, capable of being true or false. Secondly it must be asserted that the conclusion follows from the premises. In English the words *therefore*, *so*, *because* and *hence* typically separate the premises from the conclusion of an argument, but this is not necessarily so. Thus: *Socrates is a man, all men are mortal therefore Socrates is mortal* is clearly an argument (a valid one at that), because it is clear it is asserted that *Socrates is mortal* follows from the preceding statements. However *I was thirsty and therefore I drank* is NOT an argument, despite its appearance. It is not being claimed that *I drank* is logically entailed by *I was thirsty*. The *therefore* in this sentence indicates *for that reason* not *it follows that*.

Elliptical arguments

Often an argument is invalid because there is a missing premise—the supply of which would render it valid. Speakers and writers will often leave out a strictly necessary premise in their reasonings if it is widely accepted and the writer does not wish to state the blindingly obvious. Example: *All metals expand when heated, therefore iron will expand when heated.* (Missing premise: iron is a metal). On the other hand, a seemingly valid argument may be found to lack a premise – a 'hidden assumption' – which if highlighted can show a fault in reasoning. Example: A witness reasoned: *Nobody came out the front door except the milkman; therefore the murderer must have left by the back door.* (Hidden assumptions- the milkman was not the murderer, and the murderer has left by the front or back door).

1.2: A Lesson in Thinking - The Trolley Problem

The trolley problem is a thought experiment in ethics. The general form of the problem is this: There is a runaway trolley barreling down the railway tracks. Ahead, on the tracks, there are five people tied up and unable to move. The trolley is headed straight for them. You are standing some distance off in the train yard, next to a lever. If you pull this lever, the trolley will switch to a different set of tracks. However, you notice that there is one person on the side track. You have two options:

1. Do nothing, and the trolley kills the five people on the main track.
2. Pull the lever, diverting the trolley onto the side track where it will kill one person.

Which is the most ethical choice?

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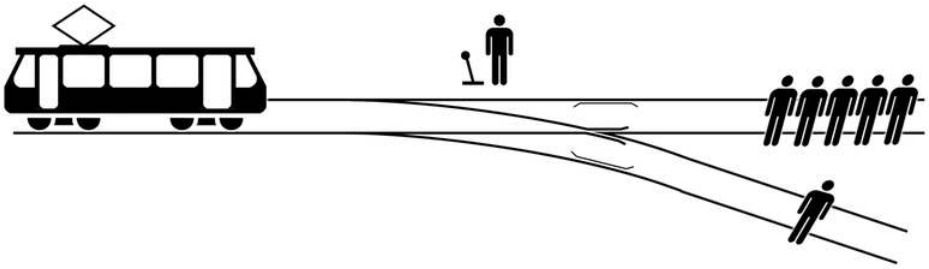

: should you pull the lever to divert the runaway trolley onto the side track?

The modern form of the problem was first introduced by Philippa Foot in 1967, but also extensively analysed by Judith Thomson, Frances Kamm, and Peter Unger. However an earlier version, in which the one person to be sacrificed on the track was the switchman's child, was part of a moral questionnaire given to undergraduates at the University of Wisconsin in 1905, and the German Hans Welzel discussed a similar problem in 1951. Outside of the domain of traditional philosophical discussion, the trolley problem has been a significant feature in the fields of cognitive science and, more recently, of neuroethics. It has also been a topic in popular books dealing with human psychology. The problem is also discussed with regards to the ethics of the design of autonomous vehicles.

Overview

Foot's original structure of the problem ran as follows:

Suppose that a judge or magistrate is faced with rioters demanding that a culprit be found for a certain crime and threatening otherwise to take their own bloody revenge on a particular section of the community. The real culprit being unknown, the judge sees himself as able to prevent the bloodshed only by framing some innocent person and having him executed. Beside this example is placed another in which a pilot whose airplane is about to crash is deciding whether to steer from a more to a less inhabited area. To make the parallel as close as possible it may rather be supposed that he is the driver of a runaway tram which he can only steer from one narrow track on to another; five men are working on one track and one man on the other; anyone on the track he enters is bound to be killed. In the case of the riots the mob have five hostages, so that in both examples the exchange is supposed to be one man's life for the lives of five.

A utilitarian view asserts that it is obligatory to steer to the track with one man on it. According to simple utilitarianism, such a decision would be not only permissible, but, morally speaking, the better option (the other option being no action at all). An alternate viewpoint is that since moral wrongs are already in place in the situation, moving to another track constitutes a participation in the moral wrong, making one partially responsible for the death when otherwise no one would be responsible. An opponent of action may also point to the incommensurability of human lives. Under some interpretations of moral obligation, simply being present in this situation and being able to influence its outcome constitutes an obligation to participate. If this is the case, then deciding to do nothing would be considered an immoral act if one values five lives more than one.

1.3: Theaetetus

3 Theaetetus

Theatetus[4] (selected parts)

Thaeat. = Theaetetus

Soc. = Socrates

Theod. = Theodorus

Theaet. I am eager enough, Socrates, if that would bring to light the truth.

Soc. Come, you made a good beginning just now; let your own answer about roots be your model, and as you comprehended them all in one class, try and bring the many sorts of knowledge under one definition.

Theaet. I can assure you, Socrates, that I have tried very often, when the report of questions asked by you was brought to me; but I can neither persuade myself that I have a satisfactory answer to give, nor hear of any one who answers as you would have him; and I cannot shake off a feeling of anxiety.

Soc. These are the pangs of labour, my dear Theaetetus; you have something within you which you are bringing to the birth.

Theaet. I do not know, Socrates; I only say what I feel.

Soc. And have you never heard, simpleton, that I am the son of a midwife, brave and burly, whose name was Phaenarete?

Theaet. Yes, I have.

Soc. And that I myself practise midwifery?

Theaet. No, never.

Soc. Let me tell you that I do though, my friend: but you must not reveal the secret, as the world in general have not found me out; and therefore they only say of me, that I am the strangest of mortals and drive men to their wits' end. Did you ever hear that too?

Theaet. Yes.

Soc. Shall I tell you the reason?

Theaet. By all means.

Soc. Bear in mind the whole business of the mid-wives, and then you will see my meaning better:-No woman, as you are probably aware, who is still able to conceive and bear, attends other women, but only those who are past bearing.

Theaet. Yes; I know.

Soc. The reason of this is said to be that Artemis-the goddess of childbirth-is not a mother, and she honours those who are like herself; but she could not allow the barren to be mid-wives, because human nature cannot know the mystery of an art without experience; and therefore she assigned this office to those who are too old to bear.

Theaet. I dare say.

Soc. And I dare say too, or rather I am absolutely certain, that the mid-wives know better than others who is pregnant and who is not?

Theaet. Very true.

Soc. And by the use of potions and incantations they are able to arouse the pangs and to soothe them at will; they can make those bear who have a difficulty in bearing, and if they think fit they can smother the embryo in the womb.

Theaet. They can.

Soc. Did you ever remark that they are also most cunning matchmakers, and have a thorough knowledge of what unions are likely to produce a brave brood?

Theaet. No, never.

Soc. Then let me tell you that this is their greatest pride, more than cutting the umbilical cord. And if you reflect, you will see that the same art which cultivates and gathers in the fruits of the earth, will be most likely to know in what soils the several plants or seeds should be deposited.

Theaet. Yes, the same art.

Soc. And do you suppose that with women the case is otherwise?

Theaet. I should think not.

Soc. Certainly not; but mid-wives are respectable women who have a character to lose, and they avoid this department of their profession, because they are afraid of being called procuresses, which is a name given to those who join together man and woman in an unlawful and unscientific way; and yet the true midwife is also the true and only matchmaker.

Theaet. Clearly.

Soc. Such are the mid-wives, whose task is a very important one but not so important as mine; for women do not bring into the world at one time real children, and at another time counterfeits which are with difficulty distinguished from them; if they did, then the, discernment of the true and false birth would be the crowning achievement of the art of midwifery-you would think so?

Theaet. Indeed I should.

Soc. Well, my art of midwifery is in most respects like theirs; but differs, in that I attend men and not women; and look after their souls when they are in labour, and not after their bodies: and the triumph of my art is in thoroughly examining whether the thought which the mind of the young man brings forth is a false idol or a noble and true birth. And like the mid-wives, I am barren, and the reproach which is often made against me, that I ask questions of others and have not the wit to answer them myself, is very just-the reason is, that the god compels-me to be a midwife, but does not allow me to bring forth. And therefore I am not myself at all wise, nor have I anything to show which is the invention or birth of my own soul, but those who converse with me profit. Some of them appear dull enough at first, but afterwards, as our acquaintance ripens, if the god is gracious to them, they all make astonishing progress; and this in the opinion of others as well as in their own. It is quite dear that they never learned anything from me; the many fine discoveries to which they cling are of their own making. But to me and the god they owe their delivery. And the proof of my words is, that many of them in their ignorance, either in their self-conceit despising me, or falling under the influence of others, have gone away too soon; and have not only lost the children of whom I had previously delivered them by an ill bringing up, but have stifled whatever else they had in them by evil communications, being fonder of lies and shams than of the truth; and they have at last ended by seeing themselves, as others see them, to be great fools. Aristeides, the son of Lysimachus, is one of them, and there are many others. The truants often return to me, and beg that I would consort with them again-they are ready to go to me on their knees and then, if my familiar allows, which is not always the case, I receive them, and they begin to grow again. Dire are the pangs which my art is able to arouse and to allay in those who consort with me, just like the pangs of women in childbirth; night and day they are full of perplexity and travail which is even worse than that of the women. So much for them. And there are -

others, Theaetetus, who come to me apparently having nothing in them; and as I know that they have no need of my art, I coax them into marrying some one, and by the grace of God I can generally tell who is likely to do them good. Many of them I have given away to Prodicus, and many to other inspired sages. I tell you this long story, friend Theaetetus, because I suspect, as indeed you seem to think yourself, that you are in labour-great with some conception. Come then to me, who am a midwife's son and myself a midwife, and do your best to answer the questions which I will ask you. And if I abstract and expose your first-born, because I discover upon inspection that the conception which you have formed is a vain shadow, do not quarrel with me on that account, as the manner of women is when their first children are taken from them. For I have actually known some who were ready to bite me when I deprived them of a darling folly; they did not perceive that I acted from good will, not knowing that no god is the enemy of man-that was not within the range of their ideas; neither am I their enemy in all this, but it would be wrong for me to admit falsehood, or to stifle the truth. Once more, then, Theaetetus, I repeat my old question, "What is knowledge?"-and do not say that you cannot tell; but quit yourself like a man, and by the help of God you will be able to tell.

Theaet. At any rate, Socrates, after such an exhortation I should be ashamed of not trying to do my best. Now he who knows perceives what he knows, and, as far as I can see at present, knowledge is perception.

Soc. Bravely said, boy; that is the way in which you should express your opinion. And now, let us examine together this conception of yours, and see whether it is a true birth or a mere, wind-egg:-You say that knowledge is perception?

Theaet. Yes.

Soc. Well, you have delivered yourself of a very important doctrine about knowledge; it is indeed the opinion of Protagoras, who has another way of expressing it, Man, he says, is the measure of all things, of the existence of things that are, and of the non-existence of things that are not:-You have read him?

Theaet. O yes, again and again.

Soc. Does he not say that things are to you such as they appear to you, and to me such as they appear to me, and that you and I are men?

Theaet. Yes, he says so.

Soc. A wise man is not likely to talk nonsense. Let us try to understand him: the same wind is blowing, and yet one of us may be cold and the other not, or one may be slightly and the other very cold?

Theaet. Quite true.

Soc. Now is the wind, regarded not in relation to us but absolutely, cold or not; or are we to say, with Protagoras, that the wind is cold to him who is cold, and not to him who is not?

Theaet. I suppose the last.

Soc. Then it must appear so to each of them?

Theaet. Yes.

Soc. And "appears to him" means the same as "he perceives."

Theaet. True.

Soc. Then appearing and perceiving coincide in the case of hot and cold, and in similar instances; for things appear, or may be supposed to be, to each one such as he perceives them?

Theaet. Yes.

Soc. Then perception is always of existence, and being the same as knowledge is unerring?

Theaet. Clearly.

Soc. In the name of the Graces, what an almighty wise man Protagoras must have been! He spoke these things in a parable to the common herd, like you and me, but told the truth, his Truth, in secret to his own disciples.

Theaet. What do you mean, Socrates?

Soc. I am about to speak of a high argument, in which all things are said to be relative; you cannot rightly call anything by any name, such as great or small, heavy or light, for the great will be small and the heavy light-there is no single thing or quality, but out of motion and change and admixture all things are becoming relatively to one another, which "becoming" is by us incorrectly called being, but is really becoming, for nothing ever is, but all things are becoming. Summon all philosophers-Protagoras, Heracleitus, Empedocles, and the rest of them, one after another, and with the exception of Parmenides they will agree with you in this. Summon the great masters of either kind of poetry-Epicharmus, the prince of Comedy, and Homer of Tragedy; when the latter sings of Ocean whence sprang the gods, and mother Tethys, does he not mean that all things are the offspring, of flux and motion?

Theaet. I think so.

Soc. And who could take up arms against such a great army having Homer for its general, and not appear ridiculous?

Theaet. Who indeed, Socrates?

Soc. Yes, Theaetetus; and there are plenty of other proofs which will show that motion is the source of what is called being and becoming, and inactivity of not-being and destruction; for fire and warmth, which are supposed to be the parent and guardian of all other things, are born of movement and friction, which is a kind of motion;-is not this the origin of fire?

Theaet. It is.

Soc. And the race of animals is generated in the same way?

Theaet. Certainly.

Soc. And is not the bodily habit spoiled by rest and idleness, but preserved for a long time by motion and exercise?

Theaet. True.

Soc. And what of the mental habit? Is not the soul informed, and improved, and preserved by study and attention, which are motions; but when at rest, which in the soul only means want of attention and study, is uninformed, and speedily forgets whatever she has learned?

Theaet. True.

Soc. Then motion is a good, and rest an evil, to the soul as well as to the body?

Theaet. Clearly.

Soc. I may add, that breathless calm, stillness and the like waste and impair, while wind and storm preserve; and the palmary argument of all, which I strongly urge, is the golden chain in Homer, by which he means the sun, thereby indicating that so long as the sun and the heavens go round in their orbits, all things human and divine are and are preserved, but if they were chained up and

their motions ceased, then all things would be destroyed, and, as the saying is, turned upside down.

Theaet. I believe, Socrates, that you have truly explained his meaning.

Soc. Then now apply his doctrine to perception, my good friend, and first of all to vision; that which you call white colour is not in your eyes, and is not a distinct thing which exists out of them. And you must not assign any place to it: for if it had position it would be, and be at rest, and there would be no process of becoming.

Theaet. Then what is colour?

Soc. Let us carry the principle which has just been affirmed, that nothing is self-existent, and then we shall see that white, black, and every other colour, arises out of the eye meeting the appropriate motion, and that what we call a colour is in each case neither the active nor the passive element, but something which passes between them, and is peculiar to each percipient; are you quite certain that the several colours appear to a dog or to any animal whatever as they appear to you?

Theaet. Far from it.

Soc. Or that anything appears the same to you as to another man? Are you so profoundly convinced of this? Rather would it not be true that it never appears exactly the same to you, because you are never exactly the same?

Theaet. The latter.

Soc. And if that with which I compare myself in size, or which I apprehend by touch, were great or white or hot, it could not become different by mere contact with another unless it actually changed; nor again, if the comparing or apprehending subject were great or white or hot, could this, when unchanged from within become changed by any approximation or affection of any other thing. The fact is that in our ordinary way of speaking we allow ourselves to be driven into most ridiculous and wonderful contradictions, as Protagoras and all who take his line of argument would remark.

Theaet. How? and of what sort do you mean?

Soc. A little instance will sufficiently explain my meaning: Here are six dice, which are more by a half when compared with four, and fewer by a half than twelve-they are more and also fewer. How can you or any one maintain the contrary?

Theaet. Very true.

Soc. Well, then, suppose that Protagoras or some one asks whether anything can become greater or more if not by increasing, how would you answer him, Theaetetus?

Theaet. I should say "No," Socrates, if I were to speak my mind in reference to this last question, and if I were not afraid of contradicting my former answer.

Soc. Capital excellent! spoken like an oracle, my boy! And if you reply "Yes," there will be a case for Euripides; for our tongue will be unconvinced, but not our mind.

Theaet. Very true.

Soc. The thoroughbred Sophists, who know all that can be known about the mind, and argue only out of the superfluity of their wits, would have had a regular sparring-match over this, and would -have knocked their arguments together finely. But you and I, who have no professional aims, only desire to see what is the mutual relation of these principles-whether they are consistent with each or not.

Theaet. Yes, that would be my desire.

Soc. And mine too. But since this is our feeling, and there is plenty of time, why should we not calmly and patiently review our own thoughts, and thoroughly examine and see what these appearances in us really are? If I am not mistaken, they will be described by us as follows:-first, that nothing can become greater or less, either in number or magnitude, while remaining equal to itself-you would agree?

Theaet. Yes.

Soc. Secondly, that without addition or subtraction there is no increase or diminution of anything, but only equality.

Theaet. Quite true.

Soc. Thirdly, that what was not before cannot be afterwards, without becoming and having become.

Theaet. Yes, truly.

Soc. These three axioms, if I am not mistaken, are fighting with one another in our minds in the case of the dice, or, again, in such a case as this-if I were to say that I, who am of a certain height and taller than you, may within a year, without gaining or losing in height, be not so tall-not that I should have lost, but that you would have increased. In such a case, I am afterwards what I once was not, and yet I have not become; for I could not have become without becoming, neither could I have become less without losing somewhat of my height; and I could give you ten thousand examples of similar contradictions, if we admit them at all. I believe that you follow me, Theaetetus; for I suspect that you have thought of these questions before now.

Theaet. Yes, Socrates, and I am amazed when I think of them; by the Gods I am! and I want to know what on earth they mean; and there are times when my head quite swims with the contemplation of them.

Soc. I see, my dear Theaetetus, that Theodorus had a true insight into your nature when he said that you were a philosopher, for wonder is the feeling of a philosopher, and philosophy begins in wonder. He was not a bad genealogist who said that Iris (the messenger of heaven) is the child of Thaumas (wonder). But do you begin to see what is the explanation of this perplexity on the hypothesis which we attribute to Protagoras?

Theaet. Not as yet.

Soc. Then you will be obliged to me if I help you to unearth the hidden "truth" of a famous man or school.

Theaet. To be sure, I shall be very much obliged.

Soc. Take a look round, then, and see that none of the uninitiated are listening. Now by the uninitiated I mean: the people who believe in nothing but what they can grasp in their hands, and who will not allow that action or generation or anything invisible can have real existence.

Theaet. Yes, indeed, Socrates, they are very hard and impenetrable mortals.

Soc. Yes, my boy, outer barbarians. Far more ingenious are the brethren whose mysteries I am about to reveal to you. Their first principle is, that all is motion, and upon this all the affections of which we were just now speaking, are supposed to depend: there is nothing but motion, which has two forms, one active and the other passive, both in endless number; and out of the union and friction of them there is generated a progeny endless in number, having two forms, sense and the object of sense, which are ever breaking forth and coming to the birth at the same moment. The senses are variously named hearing, seeing, smelling; there is the sense of heat, cold, pleasure, pain, desire, fear, and many more which have names, as well as innumerable others which are without them; each has its kindred object each variety of colour has a corresponding variety of sight, and so with sound and hearing, and with the rest of the senses and the objects akin to them. Do you see, Theaetetus, the bearings of this tale on the preceding argument?

Theaet. Indeed I do not.

Soc. Then attend, and I will try to finish the story. The purport is that all these things are in motion, as I was saying, and that this motion is of two kinds, a slower and a quicker; and the slower elements have their motions in the same place and with reference to things near them, and so they beget; but what is begotten is swifter, for it is carried to fro, and moves from place to place. Apply this to sense:-When the eye and the appropriate object meet together and give birth to whiteness and the sensation connatural with it, which could not have been given by either of them going elsewhere, then, while the sight: is flowing from the eye, whiteness proceeds from the object which combines in producing the colour; and so the eye is fulfilled with sight, and really sees, and becomes, not sight, but a seeing eye; and the object which combined to form the colour is fulfilled with whiteness, and becomes not whiteness but a white thing, whether wood or stone or whatever the object may be which happens to be colour,ed white. And this is true of all sensible objects, hard, warm, and the like, which are similarly to be regarded, as I was saying before, not as having any absolute existence, but as being all of them of whatever kind. generated by motion in their intercourse with one another; for of the agent and patient, as existing in separation, no trustworthy conception, as they say, can be formed, for the agent has no existence until united; with the patient, and the patient has no existence until united with the agent; and that which by uniting with something becomes an agent, by meeting with some other thing is converted into a patient. And from all these considerations, as I said at first, there arises a general reflection, that there is no one self-existent thing, but everything is becoming and in relation; and being must be altogether abolished, although from habit and ignorance we are compelled even in this discussion to retain the use of the term. But great philosophers tell us that we are not to allow either the word "something," or "belonging to something," or "to me," or "this," or "that," or any other detaining name to be used, in the language of nature all things are being created and destroyed, coming into being and passing into new forms; nor can any name fix or detain them; he who attempts to fix them is easily refuted. And this should be the way of speaking, not only of particulars but of aggregates such aggregates as are expressed in the word "man," or "stone," or any name of animal or of a class. O Theaetetus, are not these speculations sweet as honey? And do you not like the taste of them in the mouth?

Theaet. I do not know what to say, Socrates, for, indeed, I cannot make out whether you are giving your own opinion or only wanting to draw me out.

Soc. You forget, my friend, that I neither know, nor profess to know, anything of! these matters; you are the person who is in labour, I am the barren midwife; and this is why I soothe you, and offer you one good thing after another, that you may taste them. And I hope that I may at last help to bring your own opinion into the light of day: when this has been accomplished, then we will determine whether what you have brought forth is only a wind-egg or a real and genuine birth. Therefore, keep up your spirits, and answer like a man what you think.

Theaet. Ask me.

Soc. Then once more: Is it your opinion that nothing is but what becomes? the good and the noble, as well; as all the other things which we were just now mentioning?

Theaet. When I hear you discoursing in this style, I think that there is a great deal in what you say, and I am very ready to assent.

Soc. Let us not leave the argument unfinished, then; for there still remains to be considered an objection which may be raised about dreams and diseases, in particular about madness, and the various illusions of hearing and sight, or of other senses. For you know that in all these cases the esse-percipi theory appears to be unmistakably refuted, since in dreams and illusions we certainly have false perceptions; and far from saying that everything is which appears, we should rather say that nothing is which appears.

Theaet. Very true, Socrates.

Soc. But then, my boy, how can any one contend that knowledge is perception, or that to every man what appears is?

Theaet. I am afraid to say, Socrates, that I have nothing to answer, because you rebuked me just now for making this excuse; but I certainly cannot undertake to argue that madmen or dreamers think truly, when they imagine, some of them that they are gods, and others that they can fly, and are flying in their sleep.

Soc. Do you see another question which can be raised about these phenomena, notably about dreaming and waking?

Theaet. What question?

Soc. A question which I think that you must often have heard persons ask:-How can you determine whether at this moment we are sleeping, and all our thoughts are a dream; or whether we are awake, and talking to one another in the waking state?

Theaet. Indeed, Socrates, I do not know how to prove the one any more than the other, for in both cases the facts precisely correspond;-and there is no difficulty in supposing that during all this discussion we have been talking to one another in a dream; and when in a dream we seem to be narrating dreams, the resemblance of the two states is quite astonishing.

Soc. You see, then, that a doubt about the reality of sense is easily raised, since there may even be a doubt whether we are awake or in a dream. And as our time is equally divided between sleeping and waking, in either sphere of existence the soul contends that the thoughts which are present to our minds at the time are true; and during one half of our lives we affirm the truth of the one, and, during the other half, of the other; and are equally confident of both.

Theaet. Most true.

Soc. And may not the same be said of madness and other disorders? the difference is only that the times are not equal.

Theaet. Certainly.

Soc. And is truth or falsehood to be determined by duration of time?

Theaet. That would be in many ways ridiculous.

Soc. But can you certainly determine: by any other means which of these opinions is true?

Theaet. I do not think that I can.

Soc. Listen, then to a statement of the other side of the argument, which is made by the champions of appearance. They would say, as I imagine-can that which is wholly other than something, have the same quality as that from which it differs? and observe, -Theaetetus, that the word "other" means not "partially," but "wholly other."

Theaet. Certainly, putting the question as you do, that which is wholly other cannot either potentially or in any other way be the same.

Soc. And must therefore be admitted to be unlike?

Theaet. True.

Soc. If, then, anything happens to become like or unlike itself or another, when it becomes like we call it the same-when unlike, other?

Theaet. Certainly.

Soc. Were we not saying that there. are agents many and infinite, and patients many and infinite?

Theaet. Yes.

Soc. And also that different combinations will produce results which are not the same, but different?

Theaet. Certainly.

Soc. Let us take you and me, or anything as an example:-There is Socrates in health, and Socrates sick-Are they like or unlike?

Theaet. You mean to, compare Socrates in health as a whole, and Socrates in sickness as a whole?

Soc. Exactly; that is my meaning.

Theaet. I answer, they are unlike.

Soc. And if unlike, they are other?

Theaet. Certainly.

Soc. And would you not say the same of Socrates sleeping and waking, or in any of the states which we were mentioning?

Theaet. I should.

Soc. All agents have a different patient in Socrates, accordingly as he is well or ill.

Theaet. Of course.

Soc. And I who am the patient, and that which is the agent, will produce something different in each of the two cases?

Theaet. Certainly.

Soc. The wine which I drink when I am in health, appears sweet and pleasant to me?

Theaet. True.

Soc. For, as has been already acknowledged, the patient and agent meet together and produce sweetness and a perception of sweetness, which are in simultaneous motion, and the perception which comes from the patient makes the tongue percipient, and the quality of sweetness which arises out of and is moving about the wine, makes the wine, both to be and to appear sweet to the healthy tongue.

Theaet. Certainly; that has been already acknowledged.

Soc. But when I am sick, the wine really acts upon another and a different person?

Theaet. Yes.

Soc. The combination of the draught of wine, and the Socrates who is sick, produces quite another result; which is the sensation of bitterness in the tongue, and the, motion and creation of bitterness in and about the wine, which becomes not bitterness but something bitter; as I myself become not but percipient?

Theaet. True.

Soc. There is no, other object of which I shall ever have the same perception, for another object would give another perception, and would make the perception other and different; nor can that object which affects me, meeting another, subject, produce, the same, or become similar, for that too would produce another result from another subject, and become different.

Theaet. True.

Soc. Neither can by myself, have this sensation, nor the object by itself, this quality.

Theaet. Certainly not.

Soc. When I perceive I must become percipient of something-there can be no such thing as perceiving and perceiving nothing; the object, whether it become sweet, bitter, or of any other quality, must have relation to a percipient; nothing can become sweet which is sweet to no one.

Theaet. Certainly not.

Soc. Then the inference is, that we [the agent and patient] are or become in relation to one another; there is a law which binds us one to the other, but not to any other existence, nor each of us to himself; and therefore we can only be bound to one another; so that whether a person says that a thing is or becomes, he must say that it is or becomes to or of or in relation to something else; but he must not say or allow any one else to say that anything is or becomes absolutely: -such is our conclusion.

Theaet. Very true, Socrates.

Soc. Then, if that which acts upon me has relation to me and to no other, I and no other am the percipient of it?

Theaet. Of course.

Soc. Then my perception is true to me, being inseparable from my own being; and, as Protagoras says, to myself I am judge of what is and-what is not to me.

Theaet. I suppose so.

Soc. How then, if I never err, and if my mind never trips in the conception of being or becoming, can I fail of knowing that which I perceive?

Theaet. You cannot.

Soc. Then you were quite right in affirming that knowledge is only perception; and the meaning turns out to be the same, whether with Homer and Heracleitus, and all that company, you say that all is motion and flux, or with the great sage Protagoras, that man is the measure of all things; or with Theaetetus, that, given these premises, perception is knowledge. Am I not right, Theaetetus, and is not this your newborn child, of which I have delivered you? What say you?

Theaet. I cannot but agree, Socrates.

Soc. Then this is the child, however he may turn out, which you and I have with difficulty brought into the world. And now that he is born, we must run round the hearth with him, and see whether he is worth rearing, or is only a wind-egg and a sham. Is he to be reared in any case, and not exposed? or will you bear to see him rejected, and not get into a passion if I take away your first-born?

Theod. Theaetetus will not be angry, for he is very good-natured. But tell me, Socrates, in heaven's name, is this, after all, not the truth?

Soc. You, Theodorus, are a lover of theories, and now you innocently fancy that I am a bag full of them, and can easily pull one out which will overthrow its predecessor. But you do not see that in reality none of these theories come from me; they all come from him who talks with me. I only know just enough to extract them from the wisdom of another, and to receive them in a spirit of fairness. And now I shall say nothing myself, but shall endeavour to elicit something from our young friend.

Theod. Do as you say, Socrates; you are quite right.

Soc. Shall I tell you, Theodorus, what amazes me in your acquaintance Protagoras?

Theod. What is it?

Soc. I am charmed with his doctrine, that what appears is to each one, but I wonder that he did not begin his book on Truth with a declaration that a pig or a dog-faced baboon, or some other yet stranger monster which has sensation, is the measure of all things; then he might have shown a magnificent contempt for our opinion of him by informing us at the outset that while we were reverencing him like a God for his wisdom he was no better than a tadpole, not to speak of his fellow-men-would not this have produced an over-powering effect? For if truth is only sensation, and no man can discern another's feelings better than he, or has any superior right to determine whether his opinion is true or false, but each, as we have several times repeated, is to himself the sole judge, and everything that he judges is true and right, why, my friend, should Protagoras be preferred to the place of wisdom and instruction, and deserve to be well paid, and we poor ignoramuses have to go to him, if each one is the measure of his own wisdom? Must he not be talking ad captandum in all this? I say nothing of the ridiculous predicament in which my own midwifery and the whole art of dialectic is placed; for the attempt to supervise or refute the notions or opinions of others would be a tedious and enormous piece of folly, if to each man his own are right; and this must be the case if Protagoras Truth is the real truth, and the philosopher is not merely amusing himself by giving oracles out of the shrine of his book.

Theod. He was a friend of mine, Socrates, as you were saying, and therefore I cannot have him refuted by my lips, nor can I oppose you when I agree with you; please, then, to take Theaetetus again; he seemed to answer very nicely.

Soc. If you were to go into a Lacedaemonian palestra, Theodorus, would you have a right to look on at the naked wrestlers, some of them making a poor figure, if you did not strip and give them an opportunity of judging of your own person?

Theod. Why not, Socrates, if they would allow me, as I think you will in consideration of my age and stiffness; let some more supple youth try a fall with you, and do not drag me into the gymnasium.

Soc. Your will is my will, Theodorus, as the proverbial philosophers say, and therefore I will return to the sage Theaetetus: Tell me, Theaetetus, in reference to what I was saying, are you not lost in wonder, like myself, when you find that all of a sudden you are raised to the level of the wisest of men, or indeed of the gods?-for you would assume the measure of Protagoras to apply to the gods as well as men?

Theaet. Certainly I should, and I confess to you that I am lost in wonder. At first hearing, I was quite satisfied with the doctrine, that whatever appears is to each one, but now the face of things has changed.

Soc. Why, my dear boy, you are young, and therefore your ear is quickly caught and your mind influenced by popular arguments. Protagoras, or some one speaking on his behalf, will doubtless say in reply, good people, young and old, you meet and harangue, and bring in the gods, whose existence of non-existence I banish from writing and speech, or you talk about the reason of man being degraded to the level of the brutes, which is a telling argument with the multitude, but not one word of proof or demonstration do you offer. All is probability with you, and yet surely you and Theodorus had better reflect whether you are disposed to admit of probability and figures of speech in matters of such importance. He or any other mathematician who argued from probabilities and likelihoods in geometry, would not be worth an ace.

Theaet. But neither you nor we, Socrates, would be satisfied with such arguments.

Soc. Then you and Theodorus mean to say that we must look at the matter in some other way?

Theaet. Yes, in quite another way.

Soc. And the way will be to ask whether perception is or is not the same as knowledge; for this was the real point of our argument, and with a view to this we raised (did we not?) those many strange questions.

Theaet. Certainly.

Soc. Shall we say that we know every thing which we see and hear? for example, shall we say that not having learned, we do not hear the language of foreigners when they speak to us? or shall we say that we not only hear, but know what they are saying? Or again, if we see letters which we do not understand, shall we say that we do not see them? or shall we aver that, seeing them, we must know them?

Theaet. We shall say, Socrates, that we know what we actually see and hear of them-that is to say, we see and know the figure and colour of the letters, and we hear and know the elevation or depression of the sound of them; but we do not perceive by sight and hearing, or know, that which grammarians and interpreters teach about them.

Soc. Capital, Theaetetus; and about this there shall be no dispute, because I want you to grow; but there is another difficulty coming, which you will also have to repulse.

Theaet. What is it?

Soc. Some one will say, Can a man who has ever known anything, and still has and preserves a memory of that which he knows, not know that which he remembers at the time when he remembers? I have, I fear, a tedious way of putting a simple question, which is only, whether a man who has learned, and remembers, can fail to know?

Theaet. Impossible, Socrates; the supposition is monstrous.

Soc. Am I talking nonsense, then? Think: is not seeing perceiving, and is not sight perception?

Theaet. True.

Soc. And if our recent definition holds, every man knows that which he has seen?

Theaet. Yes.

Soc. And you would admit that there is such a thing as memory?

Theaet. Yes.

Soc. And is memory of something or of nothing?

Theaet. Of something, surely.

Soc. Of things learned and perceived, that is?

Theaet. Certainly.

Soc. Often a man remembers that which he has seen?

Theaet. True.

Soc. And if he closed his eyes, would he forget?

Theaet. Who, Socrates, would dare to say so?

Soc. But we must say so, if the previous argument is to be maintained.

Theaet. What do you mean? I am not quite sure that I understand you, though I have a strong suspicion that you are right.

Soc. As thus: he who sees knows, as we say, that which he sees; for perception and sight and knowledge are admitted to be the same.

Theaet. Certainly.

Soc. But he who saw, and has knowledge of that which he saw, remembers, when he closes his eyes, that which he no longer sees.

Theaet. True.

Soc. And seeing is knowing, and therefore not-seeing is not-knowing?

Theaet. Very true.

Soc. Then the inference is, that a man may have attained the knowledge, of something, which he may remember and yet not know, because he does not see; and this has been affirmed by us to be a monstrous supposition.

Theaet. Most true.

Soc. Thus, then, the assertion that knowledge and perception are one, involves a manifest impossibility?

Theaet. Yes.

Soc. Then they must be distinguished?

Theaet. I suppose that they must.

Soc. Once more we shall have to begin, and ask "What is knowledge?" and yet, Theaetetus, what are we going to do?

Theaet. About what?

Soc. Like a good-for-nothing cock, without having won the victory, we walk away from the argument and crow.

Theaet. How do you mean?

Soc. After the manner of disputers, we were satisfied with mere verbal consistency, and were well pleased if in this way we could gain an advantage. Although professing not to be mere Eristics, but philosophers, I suspect that we have unconsciously fallen into the error of that ingenious class of persons.

Theaet. I do not as yet understand you.

Soc. Then I will try to explain myself: just now we asked the question, whether a man who had learned and remembered could fail to know, and we showed that a person who had seen might remember when he had his eyes shut and could not see, and then he would at the same time remember and not know. But this was an impossibility. And so the Protagorean fable came to nought, and yours also, who maintained that knowledge is the same as perception.

Theaet. True.

Soc. And yet, my friend, I rather suspect that the result would have been different if Protagoras, who was the father of the first of the two-brats, had been alive; he would have had a great deal to say on their behalf. But he is dead, and we insult over his orphan

child; and even the guardians whom he left, and of whom our friend Theodorus is one, are unwilling to give any help, and therefore I suppose that must take up his cause myself, and see justice done?

Theod. Not I, Socrates, but rather Callias, the son of Hipponicus, is guardian of his orphans. I was too soon diverted from the abstractions of dialectic to geometry. Nevertheless, I shall be grateful to you if you assist him.

Soc. Very good, Theodorus; you shall see how I will come to the rescue. If a person does not attend to the meaning of terms as they are commonly used in argument, he may be involved even in greater paradoxes than these. Shall I explain this matter to you or to Theaetetus?

Theod. To both of us, and let the younger answer; he will incur less disgrace if he is discomfited.

Soc. Then now let me ask the awful question, which is this:-Can a man know and also not know that which he knows?

Theod. How shall we answer, Theaetetus?

1.4: The Republic, Book VII - The Allegory of the Cave

4 The Republic, Book VII: The Allegory of the Cave

The Allegory of the Cave[5]

(The following discussion takes place between Socrates and Glaucon)

And now, I said, let me show in a figure how far our nature is enlightened or unenlightened: --Behold! human beings living in a underground den, which has a mouth open towards the light and reaching all along the den; here they have been from their childhood, and have their legs and necks chained so that they cannot move, and can only see before them, being prevented by the chains from turning round their heads. Above and behind them a fire is blazing at a distance, and between the fire and the prisoners there is a raised way; and you will see, if you look, a low wall built along the way, like the screen which marionette players have in front of them, over which they show the puppets.

I see.

And do you see, I said, men passing along the wall carrying all sorts of vessels, and statues and figures of animals made of wood and stone and various materials, which appear over the wall? Some of them are talking, others silent.

You have shown me a strange image, and they are strange prisoners.

Like ourselves, I replied; and they see only their own shadows, or the shadows of one another, which the fire throws on the opposite wall of the cave?

True, he said; how could they see anything but the shadows if they were never allowed to move their heads?

And of the objects which are being carried in like manner they would only see the shadows?

Yes, he said.

And if they were able to converse with one another, would they not suppose that they were naming what was actually before them?

Very true.

And suppose further that the prison had an echo which came from the other side, would they not be sure to fancy when one of the passers-by spoke that the voice which they heard came from the passing shadow?

No question, he replied.

To them, I said, the truth would be literally nothing but the shadows of the images.

That is certain.

And now look again, and see what will naturally follow it' the prisoners are released and disabused of their error. At first, when any of them is liberated and compelled suddenly to stand up and turn his neck round and walk and look towards the light, he will suffer sharp pains; the glare will distress him, and he will be unable to see the realities of which in his former state he had seen the shadows; and then conceive some one saying to him, that what he saw before was an illusion, but that now, when he is approaching nearer to being and his eye is turned towards more real existence, he has a clearer vision, -what will be his reply? And you may further imagine that his instructor is pointing to the objects as they pass and requiring him to name them, -will he not be perplexed? Will he not fancy that the shadows which he formerly saw are truer than the objects which are now shown to him?

Far truer.

And if he is compelled to look straight at the light, will he not have a pain in his eyes which will make him turn away to take and take in the objects of vision which he can see, and which he will conceive to be in reality clearer than the things which are now being shown to him?

True, he now

And suppose once more, that he is reluctantly dragged up a steep and rugged ascent, and held fast until he 's forced into the presence of the sun himself, is he not likely to be pained and irritated? When he approaches the light his eyes will be dazzled, and he will not be able to see anything at all of what are now called realities.

Not all in a moment, he said.

He will require to grow accustomed to the sight of the upper world. And first he will see the shadows best, next the reflections of men and other objects in the water, and then the objects themselves; then he will gaze upon the light of the moon and the stars and the spangled heaven; and he will see the sky and the stars by night better than the sun or the light of the sun by day?

Certainly.

Last of he will be able to see the sun, and not mere reflections of him in the water, but he will see him in his own proper place, and not in another; and he will contemplate him as he is.

Certainly.

He will then proceed to argue that this is he who gives the season and the years, and is the guardian of all that is in the visible world, and in a certain way the cause of all things which he and his fellows have been accustomed to behold?

Clearly, he said, he would first see the sun and then reason about him.

And when he remembered his old habitation, and the wisdom of the den and his fellow-prisoners, do you not suppose that he would felicitate himself on the change, and pity them?

Certainly, he would.

And if they were in the habit of conferring honours among themselves on those who were quickest to observe the passing shadows and to remark which of them went before, and which followed after, and which were together; and who were therefore best able to draw conclusions as to the future, do you think that he would care for such honours and glories, or envy the possessors of them? Would he not say with Homer,

Better to be the poor servant of a poor master, and to endure anything, rather than think as they do and live after their manner?

Yes, he said, I think that he would rather suffer anything than entertain these false notions and live in this miserable manner.

Imagine once more, I said, such an one coming suddenly out of the sun to be replaced in his old situation; would he not be certain to have his eyes full of darkness?

To be sure, he said.

And if there were a contest, and he had to compete in measuring the shadows with the prisoners who had never moved out of the den, while his sight was still weak, and before his eyes had become steady (and the time which would be needed to acquire this new habit of sight might be very considerable) would he not be ridiculous? Men would say of him that up he went and down he came without his eyes; and that it was better not even to think of ascending; and if any one tried to loose another and lead him up to the light, let them only catch the offender, and they would put him to death.

No question, he said.

This entire allegory, I said, you may now append, dear Glaucon, to the previous argument; the prison-house is the world of sight, the light of the fire is the sun, and you will not misapprehend me if you interpret the journey upwards to be the ascent of the soul into the intellectual world according to my poor belief, which, at your desire, I have expressed whether rightly or wrongly God knows. But, whether true or false, my opinion is that in the world of knowledge the idea of good appears last of all, and is seen only with an effort; and, when seen, is also inferred to be the universal author of all things beautiful and right, parent of light and of the lord of light in this visible world, and the immediate source of reason and truth in the intellectual; and that this is the power upon which he who would act rationally, either in public or private life must have his eye fixed.

I agree, he said, as far as I am able to understand you.

Moreover, I said, you must not wonder that those who attain to this beatific vision are unwilling to descend to human affairs; for their souls are ever hastening into the upper world where they desire to dwell; which desire of theirs is very natural, if our allegory may be trusted.

Yes, very natural.

And is there anything surprising in one who passes from divine contemplations to the evil state of man, misbehaving himself in a ridiculous manner; if, while his eyes are blinking and before he has become accustomed to the surrounding darkness, he is compelled to fight in courts of law, or in other places, about the images or the shadows of images of justice, and is endeavouring to meet the conceptions of those who have never yet seen absolute justice?

Anything but surprising, he replied.

Any one who has common sense will remember that the bewilderments of the eyes are of two kinds, and arise from two causes, either from coming out of the light or from going into the light, which is true of the mind's eye, quite as much as of the bodily eye; and he who remembers this when he sees any one whose vision is perplexed and weak, will not be too ready to laugh; he will first ask whether that soul of man has come out of the brighter light, and is unable to see because unaccustomed to the dark, or having turned from darkness to the day is dazzled by excess of light. And he will count the one happy in his condition and state of being, and he will pity the other; or, if he have a mind to laugh at the soul which comes from below into the light, there will be more reason in this than in the laugh which greets him who returns from above out of the light into the den.

That, he said, is a very just distinction.

But then, if I am right, certain professors of education must be wrong when they say that they can put a knowledge into the soul which was not there before, like sight into blind eyes.

They undoubtedly say this, he replied.

Whereas, our argument shows that the power and capacity of learning exists in the soul already; and that just as the eye was unable to turn from darkness to light without the whole body, so too the instrument of knowledge can only by the movement of the whole soul be turned from the world of becoming into that of being, and learn by degrees to endure the sight of being, and of the brightest and best of being, or in other words, of the good.

Very true.

And must there not be some art which will effect conversion in the easiest and quickest manner; not implanting the faculty of sight, for that exists already, but has been turned in the wrong direction, and is looking away from the truth?

Yes, he said, such an art may be presumed.

And whereas the other so-called virtues of the soul seem to be akin to bodily qualities, for even when they are not originally innate they can be implanted later by habit and exercise, the of wisdom more than anything else contains a divine element which always remains, and by this conversion is rendered useful and profitable; or, on the other hand, hurtful and useless. Did you never observe the narrow intelligence flashing from the keen eye of a clever rogue --how eager he is, how clearly his paltry soul sees the way to his end; he is the reverse of blind, but his keen eyesight is forced into the service of evil, and he is mischievous in proportion to his cleverness.

Very true, he said.

But what if there had been a circumcision of such natures in the days of their youth; and they had been severed from those sensual pleasures, such as eating and drinking, which, like leaden weights, were attached to them at their birth, and which drag them down and turn the vision of their souls upon the things that are below --if, I say, they had been released from these impediments and turned in the opposite direction, the very same faculty in them would have seen the truth as keenly as they see what their eyes are turned to now.

Very likely.

Yes, I said; and there is another thing which is likely. or rather a necessary inference from what has preceded, that neither the uneducated and uninformed of the truth, nor yet those who never make an end of their education, will be able ministers of State; not the former, because they have no single aim of duty which is the rule of all their actions, private as well as public; nor the latter, because they will not act at all except upon compulsion, fancying that they are already dwelling apart in the islands of the blest.

Very true, he replied.

Then, I said, the business of us who are the founders of the State will be to compel the best minds to attain that knowledge which we have already shown to be the greatest of all-they must continue to ascend until they arrive at the good; but when they have ascended and seen enough we must not allow them to do as they do now.

What do you mean?

I mean that they remain in the upper world: but this must not be allowed; they must be made to descend again among the prisoners in the den, and partake of their labours and honours, whether they are worth having or not.

But is not this unjust? he said; ought we to give them a worse life, when they might have a better?

You have again forgotten, my friend, I said, the intention of the legislator, who did not aim at making any one class in the State happy above the rest; the happiness was to be in the whole State, and he held the citizens together by persuasion and necessity,

making them benefactors of the State, and therefore benefactors of one another; to this end he created them, not to please themselves, but to be his instruments in binding up the State.

True, he said, I had forgotten.

Observe, Glaucon, that there will be no injustice in compelling our philosophers to have a care and providence of others; we shall explain to them that in other States, men of their class are not obliged to share in the toils of politics: and this is reasonable, for they grow up at their own sweet will, and the government would rather not have them. Being self-taught, they cannot be expected to show any gratitude for a culture which they have never received. But we have brought you into the world to be rulers of the hive, kings of yourselves and of the other citizens, and have educated you far better and more perfectly than they have been educated, and you are better able to share in the double duty. Wherefore each of you, when his turn comes, must go down to the general underground abode, and get the habit of seeing in the dark. When you have acquired the habit, you will see ten thousand times better than the inhabitants of the den, and you will know what the several images are, and what they represent, because you have seen the beautiful and just and good in their truth. And thus our State which is also yours will be a reality, and not a dream only, and will be administered in a spirit unlike that of other States, in which men fight with one another about shadows only and are distracted in the struggle for power, which in their eyes is a great good. Whereas the truth is that the State in which the rulers are most reluctant to govern is always the best and most quietly governed, and the State in which they are most eager, the worst.

Quite true, he replied.

And will our pupils, when they hear this, refuse to take their turn at the toils of State, when they are allowed to spend the greater part of their time with one another in the heavenly light?

Impossible, he answered; for they are just men, and the commands which we impose upon them are just; there can be no doubt that every one of them will take office as a stern necessity, and not after the fashion of our present rulers of State.

Yes, my friend, I said; and there lies the point. You must contrive for your future rulers another and a better life than that of a ruler, and then you may have a well-ordered State; for only in the State which offers this, will they rule who are truly rich, not in silver and gold, but in virtue and wisdom, which are the true blessings of life. Whereas if they go to the administration of public affairs, poor and hungering after the' own private advantage, thinking that hence they are to snatch the chief good, order there can never be; for they will be fighting about office, and the civil and domestic broils which thus arise will be the ruin of the rulers themselves and of the whole State.

Most true, he replied.

And the only life which looks down upon the life of political ambition is that of true philosophy. Do you know of any other?

Indeed, I do not, he said.

And those who govern ought not to be lovers of the task? For, if they are, there will be rival lovers, and they will fight.

1.5: Descartes' Meditations - Doubt

5 Descartes' Meditations: Doubt

Meditations[6]

MEDITATION I.

OF THE THINGS OF WHICH WE MAY DOUBT.

1. SEVERAL years have now elapsed since I first became aware that I had accepted, even from my youth, many false opinions for true, and that consequently what I afterward based on such principles was highly doubtful; and from that time I was convinced of the necessity of undertaking once in my life to rid myself of all the opinions I had adopted, and of commencing anew the work of building from the foundation, if I desired to establish a firm and abiding superstructure in the sciences. But as this enterprise appeared to me to be one of great magnitude, I waited until I had attained an age so mature as to leave me no hope that at any stage of life more advanced I should be better able to execute my design. On this account, I have delayed so long that I should henceforth consider I was doing wrong were I still to consume in deliberation any of the time that now remains for action. To-day, then, since I have opportunely freed my mind from all cares [and am happily disturbed by no passions], and since I am in the secure possession of leisure in a peaceable retirement, I will at length apply myself earnestly and freely to the general overthrow of all my former opinions.

2. But, to this end, it will not be necessary for me to show that the whole of these are false--a point, perhaps, which I shall never reach; but as even now my reason convinces me that I ought not the less carefully to withhold belief from what is not entirely certain and indubitable, than from what is manifestly false, it will be sufficient to justify the rejection of the whole if I shall find in each some ground for doubt. Nor for this purpose will it be necessary even to deal with each belief individually, which would be truly an endless labor; but, as the removal from below of the foundation necessarily involves the downfall of the whole edifice, I will at once approach the criticism of the principles on which all my former beliefs rested.

3. All that I have, up to this moment, accepted as possessed of the highest truth and certainty, I received either from or through the senses. I observed, however, that these sometimes misled us; and it is the part of prudence not to place absolute confidence in that by which we have even once been deceived.

4. But it may be said, perhaps, that, although the senses occasionally mislead us respecting minute objects, and such as are so far removed from us as to be beyond the reach of close observation, there are yet many other of their informations (presentations), of the truth of which it is manifestly impossible to doubt; as for example, that I am in this place, seated by the fire, clothed in a winter dressing gown, that I hold in my hands this piece of paper, with other intimations of the same nature. But how could I deny that I possess these hands and this body, and withal escape being classed with persons in a state of insanity, whose brains are so disordered and clouded by dark bilious vapors as to cause them pertinaciously to assert that they are monarchs when they are in the greatest poverty; or clothed [in gold] and purple when destitute of any covering; or that their head is made of clay, their body of glass, or that they are gourds? I should certainly be not less insane than they, were I to regulate my procedure according to examples so extravagant.

5. Though this be true, I must nevertheless here consider that I am a man, and that, consequently, I am in the habit of sleeping, and representing to myself in dreams those same things, or even sometimes others less probable, which the insane think are presented to them in their waking moments. How often have I dreamt that I was in these familiar circumstances, that I was dressed, and occupied this place by the fire, when I was lying undressed in bed? At the present moment, however, I certainly look upon this paper with eyes wide awake; the head which I now move is not asleep; I extend this hand consciously and with express purpose, and I perceive it; the occurrences in sleep are not so distinct as all this. But I cannot forget that, at other times I have been deceived in sleep by similar illusions; and, attentively considering those cases, I perceive so clearly that there exist no certain marks by which the state of waking can ever be distinguished from sleep, that I feel greatly astonished; and in amazement I almost persuade myself that I am now dreaming.

6. Let us suppose, then, that we are dreaming, and that all these particulars--namely, the opening of the eyes, the motion of the head, the forth- putting of the hands--are merely illusions; and even that we really possess neither an entire body nor hands such as we see. Nevertheless it must be admitted at least that the objects which appear to us in sleep are, as it were, painted representations which could not have been formed unless in the likeness of realities; and, therefore, that those general objects, at all events, namely, eyes, a head, hands, and an entire body, are not simply imaginary, but really existent. For, in truth, painters themselves, even when

they study to represent sirens and satyrs by forms the most fantastic and extraordinary, cannot bestow upon them natures absolutely new, but can only make a certain medley of the members of different animals; or if they chance to imagine something so novel that nothing at all similar has ever been seen before, and such as is, therefore, purely fictitious and absolutely false, it is at least certain that the colors of which this is composed are real. And on the same principle, although these general objects, viz. [a body], eyes, a head, hands, and the like, be imaginary, we are nevertheless absolutely necessitated to admit the reality at least of some other objects still more simple and universal than these, of which, just as of certain real colors, all those images of things, whether true and real, or false and fantastic, that are found in our consciousness *(cogitatio)*,are formed.

7. To this class of objects seem to belong corporeal nature in general and its extension; the figure of extended things, their quantity or magnitude, and their number, as also the place in, and the time during, which they exist, and other things of the same sort.

8. We will not, therefore, perhaps reason illegitimately if we conclude from this that Physics, Astronomy, Medicine, and all the other sciences that have for their end the consideration of composite objects, are indeed of a doubtful character; but that Arithmetic, Geometry, and the other sciences of the same class, which regard merely the simplest and most general objects, and scarcely inquire whether or not these are really existent, contain somewhat that is certain and indubitable: for whether I am awake or dreaming, it remains true that two and three make five, and that a square has but four sides; nor does it seem possible that truths so apparent can ever fall under a suspicion of falsity [or incertitude].

9. Nevertheless, the belief that there is a God who is all powerful, and who created me, such as I am, has, for a long time, obtained steady possession of my mind. How, then, do I know that he has not arranged that there should be neither earth, nor sky, nor any extended thing, nor figure, nor magnitude, nor place, providing at the same time, however, for [the rise in me of the perceptions of all these objects, and] the persuasion that these do not exist otherwise than as I perceive them ? And further, as I sometimes think that others are in error respecting matters of which they believe themselves to possess a perfect knowledge, how do I know that I am not also deceived each time I add together two and three, or number the sides of a square, or form some judgment still more simple, if more simple indeed can be imagined? But perhaps Deity has not been willing that I should be thus deceived, for he is said to be supremely good. If, however, it were repugnant to the goodness of Deity to have created me subject to constant deception, it would seem likewise to be contrary to his goodness to allow me to be occasionally deceived; and yet it is clear that this is permitted.

10. Some, indeed, might perhaps be found who would be disposed rather to deny the existence of a Being so powerful than to believe that there is nothing certain. But let us for the present refrain from opposing this opinion, and grant that all which is here said of a Deity is fabulous: nevertheless, in whatever way it be supposed that I reach the state in which I exist, whether by fate, or chance, or by an endless series of antecedents and consequents, or by any other means, it is clear (since to be deceived and to err is a certain defect) that the probability of my being so imperfect as to be the constant victim of deception, will be increased exactly in proportion as the power possessed by the cause, to which they assign my origin, is lessened. To these reasonings I have assuredly nothing to reply, but am constrained at last to avow that there is nothing of all that I formerly believed to be true of which it is impossible to doubt, and that not through thoughtlessness or levity, but from cogent and maturely considered reasons; so that henceforward, if I desire to discover anything certain, I ought not the less carefully to refrain from assenting to those same opinions than to what might be shown to be manifestly false.

11. But it is not sufficient to have made these observations; care must be taken likewise to keep them in remembrance. For those old and customary opinions perpetually recur-- long and familiar usage giving them the right of occupying my mind, even almost against my will, and subduing my belief; nor will I lose the habit of deferring to them and confiding in them so long as I shall consider them to be what in truth they are, viz, opinions to some extent doubtful, as I have already shown, but still highly probable, and such as it is much more reasonable to believe than deny. It is for this reason I am persuaded that I shall not be doing wrong, if, taking an opposite judgment of deliberate design, I become my own deceiver, by supposing, for a time, that all those opinions are entirely false and imaginary, until at length, having thus balanced my old by my new prejudices, my judgment shall no longer be turned aside by perverted usage from the path that may conduct to the perception of truth. For I am assured that, meanwhile, there will arise neither peril nor error from this course, and that I cannot for the present yield too much to distrust, since the end I now seek is not action but knowledge.

12. I will suppose, then, not that Deity, who is sovereignly good and the fountain of truth, but that some malignant demon, who is at once exceedingly potent and deceitful, has employed all his artifice to deceive me; I will suppose that the sky, the air, the earth, colors, figures, sounds, and all external things, are nothing better than the illusions of dreams, by means of which this being has laid snares for my credulity; I will consider myself as without hands, eyes, flesh, blood, or any of the senses, and as falsely believing that I am possessed of these; I will continue resolutely fixed in this belief, and if indeed by this means it be not in my

power to arrive at the knowledge of truth, I shall at least do what is in my power, viz, [suspend my judgment], and guard with settled purpose against giving my assent to what is false, and being imposed upon by this deceiver, whatever be his power and artifice. But this undertaking is arduous, and a certain indolence insensibly leads me back to my ordinary course of life; and just as the captive, who, perchance, was enjoying in his dreams an imaginary liberty, when he begins to suspect that it is but a vision, dreads awakening, and conspires with the agreeable illusions that the deception may be prolonged; so I, of my own accord, fall back into the train of my former beliefs, and fear to arouse myself from my slumber, lest the time of laborious wakefulness that would succeed this quiet rest, in place of bringing any light of day, should prove inadequate to dispel the darkness that will arise from the difficulties that have now been raised.

MEDITATION II.

OF THE NATURE OF THE HUMAN MIND; AND THAT IT IS MORE EASILY KNOWN THAN THE BODY.

1. The Meditation of yesterday has filled my mind with so many doubts, that it is no longer in my power to forget them. Nor do I see, meanwhile, any principle on which they can be resolved; and, just as if I had fallen all of a sudden into very deep water, I am so greatly disconcerted as to be unable either to plant my feet firmly on the bottom or sustain myself by swimming on the surface. I will, nevertheless, make an effort, and try anew the same path on which I had entered yesterday, that is, proceed by casting aside all that admits of the slightest doubt, not less than if I had discovered it to be absolutely false; and I will continue always in this track until I shall find something that is certain, or at least, if I can do nothing more, until I shall know with certainty that there is nothing certain. Archimedes, that he might transport the entire globe from the place it occupied to another, demanded only a point that was firm and immovable; so, also, I shall be entitled to entertain the highest expectations, if I am fortunate enough to discover only one thing that is certain and indubitable.[

2. I suppose, accordingly, that all the things which I see are false (fictitious); I believe that none of those objects which my fallacious memory represents ever existed; I suppose that I possess no senses; I believe that body, figure, extension, motion, and place are merely fictions of my mind. What is there, then, that can be esteemed true ? Perhaps this only, that there is absolutely nothing certain.

3. But how do I know that there is not something different altogether from the objects I have now enumerated, of which it is impossible to entertain the slightest doubt? Is there not a God, or some being, by whatever name I may designate him, who causes these thoughts to arise in my mind ? But why suppose such a being, for it may be I myself am capable of producing them? Am I, then, at least not something? But I before denied that I possessed senses or a body; I hesitate, however, for what follows from that? Am I so dependent on the body and the senses that without these I cannot exist? But I had the persuasion that there was absolutely nothing in the world, that there was no sky and no earth, neither minds nor bodies; was I not, therefore, at the same time, persuaded that I did not exist? Far from it; I assuredly existed, since I was persuaded. But there is I know not what being, who is possessed at once of the highest power and the deepest cunning, who is constantly employing all his ingenuity in deceiving me. Doubtless, then, I exist, since I am deceived; and, let him deceive me as he may, he can never bring it about that I am nothing, so long as I shall be conscious that I am something. So that it must, in fine, be maintained, all things being maturely and carefully considered, that this proposition (pronunciatum) *I am, I exist*, is necessarily true each time it is expressed by me, or conceived in my mind.

1.6: Hume's "An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding"- Skepticism

6 Hume's "An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding": Skepticism

An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding[7]

SECTION XII
OF THE ACADEMICAL OR SCEPTICAL PHILOSOPHY

PART I

THERE is not a greater number of philosophical reasonings, displayed upon any subject, than those, which prove the existence of a Deity, and refute the fallacies of Atheists; and yet the most religious philosophers still dispute whether any man can be so blinded as to be a speculative atheist. How shall we reconcile these contradictions? The knights errant, who wandered about to clear the world of dragons and giants, never entertained the least doubt with regard to the existence of these monsters.

The Sceptic is another enemy of religion, who naturally provokes the indignation of all divines and graver philosophers; though it is certain, that no man ever met with any such absurd creature, or conversed with a man, who had no opinion or principle concerning any subject, either of action or speculation. This begets a very natural question; What is meant by a sceptic? And how far it is possible to push these philosophical principles of doubt and uncertainty?

There is a species of scepticism, antecedent to all study and philosophy, which is much inculcated by Des Cartes and others, as a sovereign preservative against error and precipitate judgement. It recommends an universal doubt, not only of all our former opinions and principles, but also of our very faculties; of whose veracity, say they, we must assure ourselves, by a chain of reasoning, deduced from some original principle, which cannot possibly be fallacious or deceitful. But neither is there any such original principle, which has a prerogative above others, that are self-evident and convincing: or if there were, could we advance a step beyond it, but by the use of those very faculties, of which we are supposed to be already diffident. The Cartesian doubt, therefore, were it ever possible to be attained by any human creature (as it plainly is not) would be entirely incurable; and no reasoning could ever bring us to a state of assurance and conviction upon any subject.

It must, however, be confessed, that this species of scepticism, when more moderate, may be understood in a very reasonable sense, and is a necessary preparative to the study of philosophy, by preserving a proper impartiality in our judgements, and weaning our mind from all those prejudices, which we may have imbibed from education or rash opinion. To begin with clear and self-evident principles, to advance by timorous and sure steps, to review frequently our conclusions, and examine accurately all their consequences; though by these means we shall make both a slow and a short progress in our systems; are the only methods, by which we can ever hope to reach truth, and attain a proper stability and certainty in our determinations.

There is another species of scepticism, consequent to science and enquiry, when men are supposed to have discovered, either the absolute fallaciousness of their mental faculties, or their unfitness to reach any fixed determination in all those curious subjects of speculation, about which they are commonly employed. Even our very senses are brought into dispute, by a certain species of philosophers; and the maxims of common life are subjected to the same doubt as the most profound principles or conclusions of metaphysics and theology. As these paradoxical tenets (if they may be called tenets) are to be met with in some philosophers, and the refutation of them in several, they naturally excite our curiosity, and make us enquire into the arguments, on which they may be founded.

I need not insist upon the more trite topics, employed by the sceptics in all ages, against the evidence of sense; such as those which are derived from the imperfection and fallaciousness of our organs, on numberless occasions; the crooked appearance of an oar in water; the various aspects of objects, according to their different distances; the double images which arise from the pressing one eye; with many other appearances of a like nature. These sceptical topics, indeed, are only sufficient to prove, that the senses alone are not implicitly to be depended on; but that we must correct their evidence by reason, and by considerations, derived from the nature of the medium, the distance of the object, and the disposition of the organ, in order to render them, within their sphere, the proper criteria of truth and falsehood. There are other more profound arguments against the senses, which admit not of so easy a solution.

It seems evident, that men are carried, by a natural instinct or prepossession, to repose faith in their senses; and that, without any reasoning, or even almost before the use of reason, we always suppose an external universe, which depends not on our perception, but would exist, though we and every sensible creature were absent or annihilated. Even the animal creation are governed by a like opinion, and preserve this belief of external objects, in all their thoughts, designs, and actions.

It seems also evident, that, when men follow this blind and powerful instinct of nature, they always suppose the very images, presented by the senses, to be the external objects, and never entertain any suspicion, that the one are nothing but representations of the other. This very table, which we see white, and which we feel hard, is believed to exist, independent of our perception, and to be something external to our mind, which perceives it. Our presence bestows not being on it: our absence does not annihilate it. It preserves its existence uniform and entire, independent of the situation of intelligent beings, who perceive or contemplate it.

But this universal and primary opinion of all men is soon destroyed by the slightest philosophy, which teaches us, that nothing can ever be present to the mind but an image or perception, and that the senses are only the inlets, through which these images are conveyed, without being able to produce any immediate intercourse between the mind and the object. The table, which we see, seems to diminish, as we remove farther from it: but the real table, which exists independent of us, suffers no alteration: it was, therefore, nothing but its image, which was present to the mind. These are the obvious dictates of reason; and no man, who reflects, ever doubted, that the existences, which we consider, when we say, this house and that tree, are nothing but perceptions in the mind, and fleeting copies or representations of other existences, which remain uniform and independent.

So far, then, are we necessitated by reasoning to contradict or depart from the primary instincts of nature, and to embrace a new system with regard to the evidence of our senses. But here philosophy finds herself extremely embarrassed, when she would justify this new system, and obviate the cavils and objections of the sceptics. She can no longer plead the infallible and irresistible instinct of nature: for that led us to a quite different system, which is acknowledged fallible and even erroneous. And to justify this pretended philosophical system, by a chain of clear and convincing argument, or even any appearance of argument, exceeds the power of all human capacity.

By what argument can it be proved, that the perceptions of the mind must be caused by external objects, entirely different from them, though resembling them (if that be possible) and could not arise either from the energy of the mind itself, or from the suggestion of some invisible and unknown spirit, or from some other cause still more unknown to us? It is acknowledged, that, in fact, many of these perceptions arise not from anything external, as in dreams, madness, and other diseases. And nothing can be more inexplicable than the manner, in which body should so operate upon mind as ever to convey an image of itself to a substance, supposed of so different, and even contrary a nature.

It is a question of fact, whether the perceptions of the senses be produced by external objects, resembling them: how shall this question be determined? By experience surely; as all other questions of a like nature. But here experience is, and must be entirely silent. The mind has never anything present to it but the perceptions, and cannot possibly reach any experience of their connexion with objects. The supposition of such a connexion is, therefore, without any foundation in reasoning.

To have recourse to the veracity of the supreme Being, in order to prove the veracity of our senses, is surely making a very unexpected circuit. If his veracity were at all concerned in this matter, our senses would be entirely infallible; because it is not possible that he can ever deceive. Not to mention, that, if the external world be once called in question, we shall be at a loss to find arguments, by which we may prove the existence of that Being or any of his attributes.

This is a topic, therefore, in which the profounder and more philosophical sceptics will always triumph, when they endeavour to introduce an universal doubt into all subjects of human knowledge and enquiry. Do you follow the instincts and propensities of nature, may they say, in assenting to the veracity of sense? But these lead you to believe that the very perception or sensible image is the external object. Do you disclaim this principle, in order to embrace a more rational opinion, that the perceptions are only representations of something external? You here depart from your natural propensities and more obvious sentiments; and yet are not able to satisfy your reason, which can never find any convincing argument from experience to prove, that the perceptions are connected with any external objects.

There is another sceptical topic of a like nature, derived from the most profound philosophy; which might merit our attention, were it requisite to dive so deep, in order to discover arguments and reasonings, which can so little serve to any serious purpose. It is universally allowed by modern enquirers, that all the sensible qualities of objects, such as hard, soft, hot, cold, white, black, &c. are merely secondary, and exist not in the objects themselves, but are perceptions of the mind, without any external archetype or model, which they represent. If this be allowed, with regard to secondary qualities, it must also follow, with regard to the supposed primary qualities of extension and solidity; nor can the latter be any more entitled to that denomination than the former. The idea of extension is entirely acquired from the senses of sight and feeling; and if all the qualities, perceived by the senses, be in the mind, not in the object, the same conclusion must reach the idea of extension, which is wholly dependent on the sensible ideas or the ideas of secondary qualities. Nothing can save us from this conclusion, but the asserting, that the ideas of those primary qualities are attained by Abstraction, an opinion, which, if we examine it accurately, we shall find to be unintelligible, and even absurd. An extension, that is neither tangible nor visible, cannot possibly be conceived: and a tangible or visible extension, which is neither

hard nor soft, black nor white, is equally beyond the reach of human conception. Let any man try to conceive a triangle in general, which is neither Isosceles nor Scalenum, nor has any particular length or proportion of sides; and he will soon perceive the absurdity of all the scholastic notions with regard to abstraction and general ideas.

Thus the first philosophical objection to the evidence of sense or to the opinion of external existence consists in this, that such an opinion, if rested on natural instinct, is contrary to reason, and if referred to reason, is contrary to natural instinct, and at the same time carries no rational evidence with it, to convince an impartial enquirer. The second objection goes farther, and represents this opinion as contrary to reason: at least, if it be a principle of reason, that all sensible qualities are in the mind, not in the object. Bereave matter of all its intelligible qualities, both primary and secondary, you in a manner annihilate it, and leave only a certain unknown, inexplicable something, as the cause of our perceptions; a notion so imperfect, that no sceptic will think it worth while to contend against it.

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

2: Personal Identity and the Mind-Body Problem

In philosophy, the matter of personal identity deals with such questions as, "What makes it true that a person at one time is the same thing as a person at another time?" or "What kinds of things are we persons?" The term "identity" in "personal identity" refers to "numerical identity," where saying that X and Y are numerically identical just means that X and Y are the same thing. Personal identity is not the same as personality, though some theories of personal identity maintain that continuity of personality may be required for one to persist through time. In relation to answer questions about persistence, such as under what conditions a person does or does not continue to exist, contemporary philosophers often seek to first answer questions about what sort of things we are, most fundamentally. Many people claim we are animals, or organisms, but many others strongly believe that no person can exist without mental traits, such as consciousness. Since an organism can exist without consciousness, both these views cannot be true (if we are organisms we can exist without being conscious; but if we can't exist without consciousness, we are not organisms). Thus, in order to determine whether certain features (such as consciousness) are crucial to a person's continued existence, it may be important to first ask what sort of things we are.

Generally, personal identity is the unique numerical identity of a person in the course of time. That is, the necessary and sufficient conditions under which a person at one time and a person at another time can be said to be the *same* person, persisting through time;

In contemporary metaphysics, the matter of personal identity is referred to as the *diachronic problem* of personal identity. The *synchronic problem* concerns the question of: What features and traits characterize a person at a given time. In Continental philosophy and in Analytic philosophy, enquiry to the nature of Identity is common. Continental philosophy deals with conceptually maintaining identity when confronted by different philosophic propositions, postulates, and presuppositions about the world and its nature.

2.1: Hoops of Steel

Northwest Regional Hospital was chosen by doctors Renee Carter and David Hughes for the experiment precisely because it was unexceptional. It was a quiet place where no extraordinary procedures were performed and patients came to die very ordinary deaths. It also happened to be where they first met doing their residencies, so it meant they were familiar with its procedures and generally well-liked. While it had the guise of a public hospital, it was primarily funded by a local businessman that owned many large manufacturing facilities in the area. The nearest hospital used to be 3 hours away and, with the potential for serious accidents every day for his workers, he felt opening the hospital was just a necessary part of doing business. He was also a Lutheran minister, and all these factors meant it would be easier to accomplish what began as a conversation over a beer many years ago.

“We’ve received approval from the review board to proceed with the experiment! Of the fifteen patients we received consent from earlier, nine are still alive and eight of them are still consenting to our experiment,” Renee shouted excitedly as she entered the office she shared with David. He was both too nervous and abrasive to attend the meeting with Renee. They were happy the hospital gave them some private space to set up their things a few days ago in anticipation of receiving approval for the experiment. After all, no patients were going to be harmed by their work, as they were all dying, but the potential implications of their research were not to be taken lightly. Whatever their results showed, there were bound to be serious consequences for some people's deeply held beliefs about the world.

“That’s great! But you really must prepare yourself for finding out the truth that you’re wrong,” David replied with a sly grin. He always enjoyed pestering her about what he called her “groundless mystical beliefs.”

“Oh, come on. You know that all this experiment can do is confirm my beliefs and will do nothing to undo them. If it turns out I’m ‘wrong’ and souls don’t actually weigh anything, then I’m fine. And I wouldn’t be wrong even if we find out you’re ‘right’ since I don’t know what we’ll find. I’m just genuinely curious to learn something new,” she responded.

“Yeah, yeah, I know. But if it turns out souls don’t have any measurable weight, then there would really be no way to ever scientifically prove their existence, unless they exist in the form of a yet-to-be-discovered brand new energy state,” David reminded her. He continued, “After all, you are the namesake of a guy that thought we could never touch or interact with souls directly, but that they would control us by communicating through our cerebellum or something. I still can’t believe you’re named after Descartes.”

“What can I say? My parents are good Catholics and appreciate one of the greatest minds of all time. It was the pineal gland, not the cerebellum – that would just be crazy. But how can you hold that against him? He barely had any knowledge of medicine and was just trying to explain how it is our minds and souls can interact with our physical bodies. I still can’t believe you refuse to read his meditations. They really are a great piece of literature and philosophy, and they’re not really that long. You’d understand where I’m coming from if you had ever bothered to look at them. Maybe I’ll just post them along with pictures of cute kittens on Facebook? That seems to get my less academically-minded friends to read things. Perhaps I can run an experiment to see if that works on you, too?” Renee bantered back as she began to take stock of the equipment in the room.

“Speaking of good experiments, Dr. Duncan McDougall, your almighty savior, was a terrible scientist. He’s the only reason people believe souls actually weigh an amount we can measure, but his methods were not up to even the scientific standards of the time in the early 20th century. He made his observations of the weight of the soul under very terrible experimental circumstances with only a few observations and somehow settled on a little less than an ounce, 21 grams, as the weight of the soul. He was unable to accurately reproduce his measurements or experiments. At least that theory resulted in a good performance for Benicio del Toro in the movie *21 Grams*,” David said.

“And if he or someone else had experimented further on his hypothesis that a dying person loses some precise amount of weight after death because the soul is lost, then we wouldn’t be about to make history, would we? I still can’t believe that no one has properly conducted an experiment to confirm or refute the claim that the soul leaves the body after death and there is a measurable loss of mass,” Renee said, shaking her head while smiling at the same time. “We are just so lucky we get to be the ones to test it.”

“Now *that*, I agree with. I think it’s all a load of garbage, but it is a very interesting load of garbage worth investigating, if at least to help illustrate that there is definitely no physical evidence in favor of the soul’s existence. There is still, of course, one major problem: when exactly will we declare someone dead?” David asked. He had made a very important point here, and Renee knew it, as there were quite varying definitions and criteria for death. “Are we allowed to look at the loss of mass after the death of the physical body in patients that are already brain dead? Or are we to assume their souls are already gone?”

“We’ve already discussed this, and we are only going to use patients that are going to expire from cardiopulmonary cessation, and observe them before, during, and after their hearts and lungs cease to function. It doesn’t matter for how long they’ve been stopped, since all we care about is what happens to their weight in the minutes after they do stop,” Renee reminded him.

“But when they die still has to be important and we should still have a good grasp of when they are dead as we currently understand death. For how long must their hearts and lungs stop? It will be hard to pick a point that is not arbitrary, because – as we both know – you can keep a patient’s heart beating and lungs going for quite a while using artificial means, and they can even be restored to normal functions using devices like defibrillators, especially if they just lost their vital functions. Do we declare them dead immediately, even though they may spontaneously come back? Do we do it after a minute? After two minutes? Five minutes? All of those are currently in use as standards,” David asked.

“You’re right, we still haven’t decided that factor yet, partly since we never thought we’d get approval so easily or so early. But, again, it doesn’t matter when we declare them dead for our little experiment, and if we get the results I’m hoping for, then maybe we will have a new way to determine death. It’s like this: if the soul does have a measurable weight, then when we measure it leaving the body, shouldn’t we declare the body dead then? And if the ‘dead’ body does come back to life and regains the weight it just lost, wouldn’t that then even more confirm the theory of the soul and its residence in the body?” Renee asked excitedly.

“That would be interesting, and you’re right. However, just be prepared for us to see nothing when someone dies by any standard we choose to apply,” David said sternly.

“I can’t help but remember something I read in college by the Philosopher John Perry. In his story, a philosopher is dying and her friends are trying to comfort her. She says there is no point in doing so since she knows she will shortly end up as nothing much more than worm food since she believes she has no soul and is simply identical to just her body. When her body goes, everything goes, and she sees no possible way for her to continue on after her body dies. Her friends however, think otherwise, and try to convince her that she can survive the death of her body. I guess I’m still wondering that even if we find a mysterious loss of weight after death, what will that tell us? We can’t quite directly assume that it’s the loss of a soul that caused it, but we know that’s what everyone would say. But then what is the soul? Is it just weight? Does it even matter if we have one or not? What if someone loses that weight, gets revived, and the soul doesn’t return? No offense, but I’ve always thought that’s what might have happened to you,” Renee said, attempting to lighten the mood.

“Dogs have always looked at me like I have no soul, and my parents swear I stopped breathing for a full three minutes when I was two years old and deathly ill from pneumonia, so that would make sense. You’re actually making some sense today, since I also agree with you about the results of our experiment. It would seem that someone could lose their soul and still be the same person possibly, right? If someone loses 21 grams, but comes ‘back to life’ and acts no differently than before, why say they're a different person? The soul wouldn’t add anything to us understanding the identity of a person, and the soul would then have to be carved off of our understanding of identity using the precision of Ockam's Razor,” David said while pretending to excise a mole from his arm with a scalpel.

“That's the idea that the simplest explanation is the correct one, right?”

“Not exactly, and that idea wouldn't be worthy of such a cool name. Old William of Ockham was an Anglican Bishop that told us that we should not multiply causes beyond necessity, which is very different than heading straight towards the simplest explanation. That idea has obvious flaws in it, and is totally not what he meant. Your soul example is exactly what he had in mind: if us having a soul adds nothing to our understanding of identities and how our persons work – and there is no independent evidence to say we have them – then they provide no explanatory force in our discussion and ought to be removed as useless, hideous moles before they turn cancerous and infect our understanding of the truth,” David said, once again pretending to cut off his mole.

“Thank you for that history and philosophy lesson, professor. Though I believe we have souls, I never thought it was the soul itself that really made us who we are, but rather it is because the soul contains our memories, and our memories make us who we are. John Locke gave me that idea. I know that you equate the physical body to our identity and our physical brain to our minds, which isn't that far off from Locke. You just think that if I made a copy of your memories, it wouldn't be you, but some bizarre unholy copy. I truly believe a copy of your mind would be just as annoying and brilliant as the original,” she said with an air of finality.

“That may be, but why would that copy then be *me*? Many people have the same memories of watching the Cubs finally win the World Series in 2016, but they’re clearly different people. There has got to be something else that makes someone the *same* and it can’t just be memories. What if we do find a soul and we can copy it? What would that say about our identities?” David replied.

“Now that’s just crazy. Let’s stop discussing this and start setting up our experiments. Our remaining nine patients are literally on their death beads and we need to set up our ‘soul containment chambers,’ awesome name, by the way, and calibrate the equipment

in their rooms before they expire. We've gone over it so many times, I know we have it right. We'll be able to properly measure the precise weight of everything in the body just before it dies and properly account for all losses of gas and moisture up to, during, and after the moment of death. Unless souls get trapped by sterile instruments, any loss of weight will be very interesting," Renee responded as she began placing their equipment onto a cart.

"Regardless of what results we get, they will be helpful and interesting. You ready to be known as one half of the duo that 'proves souls do not exist'?" David asked as he also began to load the carts.

"I really hope that's not what they say, but we know everyone loves a sensational headline, like 'Young, bright doctor proves the soul weighs 21 grams! How come no one ever bothered to do this before?' or 'Philosophers now have an easier job, thanks to attractive doctor and her sidekick' or something like that," Renee said smugly.

"If we do find a soul, how will we catch it?" David asked, somewhat nervously.

"With 'hoops of steel,'" Renee replied dreamily.

"What?" David was genuinely confused.

"'Those friends thou hast, and their adoption tried, Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel.' It is Polonius' advice to his son Laertes in *Hamlet*. For some reason it's a line that's always stuck with me, and I can't help but think of it when I wonder how exactly we can catch a soul if we ever find one. It is the advice that made me stick with you all these years, so don't dismiss it so quickly," Renee smiled as she said this.

Just then, they received a call letting them know that one of their patients had begun to decline and they should set up their equipment immediately before it was too late. They were about to get their first bit of information on the weight of souls, and they could hardly contain their excitement.

2.2: The Devil Himself

The alarm woke them all from their slumber. First, Derek had awakened from his nap. He was on watch, but as the group had come accustomed to the complete lack of problems overnight, being “on watch” meant sleeping on the bed that had been set up in the communications chamber, precisely for those “on watch.” The alarm going off wasn’t abnormal, and the others only awoke because Derek increased the volume and shouted at them over the intercom. “Guys, this is serious! Everyone get in here now!”

The rest of the small crew, Virginia, David, and Jean, joined Derek. They knew something was wrong since there was the faint odor of smoke in the air. The filtration system would only miss smoke particles to this degree if it were overwhelmed.

“What the hell is going on?” Jean shouted as she entered the room. Although all members of the crew were on equal standing, she had assumed the role of leader. It had become easy to live together in such tight quarters with one person assuming the function of final arbiter on any disagreements, and Jean was reasonable enough that it worked for the group.

“Oh, it’s bad! Really bad! I have no idea how our sensors missed this and why it was able to breach our shell! I think it hit the intake grill on the south wall, which would explain the filtration system’s failure,” Derek cried.

They all took a look at the cameras and diagnostics on the screen. It quickly became clear what had happened: a small storm had suddenly kicked up within the outer protective shell and quickly developed a micro-cyclone that shot a small stone straight through the protective grating where fresh air was brought in, filtered, and separated to help replenish the recycled air in the base as needed. This was Mars, after all, and the weather was always unpredictable.

“The stone must have penetrated very deeply and somehow struck an oxygen storage tank, generating a spark. Why aren’t the fire suppressors working?” Virginia asked.

“I don’t know, but I don’t think it matters right now. We need to get out of here immediately. Do you see how quickly the safety walls are failing? It’s not long until the fire spreads to us here.” As David said this, a loud explosion rocked the room, and the camera trained on the vehicle hangar went blank.

“Gamma base is too far away to make it here in time to save us. There’s no way that fire takes more than 30 minutes to get to the door here, and the smoke is likely to take over the ventilation ducts before that anyway. Wait – can we close the vents off? Isolate ourselves? At least that will give us a chance to figure things out. We should have 45 minutes of oxygen in here, and the fire doors should last double that, though it won’t matter at that point,” Virginia said.

“The vents are already closed,” Jean said as she finished moving some manual levers near the door. “What now?”

They all looked at each other confused. Jean was not only the natural leader here, she also knew this base inside and out. They were all trapped in this room and no one knew how to get out. They had one option, the keyhole, but it only mattered if any of them remembered about it. It had been placed in the storage room so long ago that Jean had never even seen it. It was only through having to go through a complete accounting of all supplies on a monthly basis that she knew where it was and what it was, but had never given it a second thought. It had never even been tested.

“What about the keyhole?” Derek asked timidly. They all showed a glimpse of hope and fear at the same time.

The keyhole was part of a teleporter prototype that had been deposited at the base when it was first built, partly for a situation like this one. The working model for a teleporter only required significant power and equipment on one end, thus making it easy to drop a smaller receiving portal anywhere in the universe. The technology and development rather interestingly seemed to have it right on these smaller receptacles, referred to as “keyholes” not just because it meshes well with calling the larger halves “gates,” but because structurally they resembled an old-fashioned keyhole. All of the problems in development were related to the gate, and the keyholes hadn’t changed in years. While the keyhole here was an earlier prototype, it was physically and functionally identical to the newer ones being made. It had not, however, had its self-diagnostic tests run in a long time and never actually used to transport matter, let alone living, organic matter. The first successful tests involving living animals had just occurred, and the process was nowhere near perfect. This keyhole, for now, was to be used only in case of emergency, and that time had come.

“Remember how the transporters in Star Trek worked? These ones work almost precisely like them. Matter enters into one end, gets transformed into energy, and then put back into matter on the other end. You just get converted, but in an odd way, you stay intact,” David said, hurriedly. Until arriving at the station, he had made transporter technology his intellectual hobby. “With how successful the recent tests have been, there’s a good chance it will be safe and we’ll come out the other side. We know what our fate is if we stay here, so I’m going to use it.”

He ran into the storage room and carried out the keyhole. As he started to set it up, he asked Jean to contact the International Moon Research Base and ask for Dr. Okeda, the leading researcher on the organic matter transport experiments. David powered up the keyhole and it all looked good.

“I don’t care if I use this thing, so you all must go before me. I know how these things work, and they are death. I won’t be coming out the other side; it will just be some odd copy of me. I’m fine with my fate here, and I can accept my fate since the outcome will be the same no matter what happens,” Jean said as they waited for acknowledgment from Dr. Okeda.

“But that’s crazy! You just get transformed into another state for an instant, and you don’t even notice or feel it. The same energy stored in your body right now is what makes you up on the other side. You must come if you can,” Derek pleaded.

“Look, I know you all don’t agree with my faith, but I believe my body and soul – yes, I still believe in those – were given to me by God and that even if I made it through the transporter process, my body will have gone through a state that changed so much, it can’t be me that comes out the other side. I don’t believe my soul would come with my either, but it doesn’t matter. My body is sacred to me as it is, and the transporter would destroy that sacredness. You all know this, this isn’t the first time we’ve ever talked about the potential of transporters. I said I wouldn’t use one myself even if my life depended on it, and I meant it. I’ll stay here and ensure everything works for you all,” Jean said.

“We’re sending the gate information over right now,” Dr. Okeda interrupted as he appeared on the screen. It looked as if he had just been awakened, which was very likely as the moon was also on “space time” that aligned with Greenwich Mean Time on Earth, and it was the middle of the night for him as well.

“I see it. I’ll enter it into the transporter right now,” David replied.

“We’re not ready for this, and it may not even work. I’m uncomfortable attempting this, but someone above me has ordered this to be tried out of desperation. We have been having storage battery issues here at our base and are operating at only 30% of our normal power supply. We have just enough energy to spare to transport all four of you, but if something goes wrong, we won’t be able to give it another try. I won’t jeopardize the safety of this station to run this emergency experiment,” Dr. Okeda said sharply.

“Understood, of course. This is our only hope, and I have faith in your research, Dr. Okeda. I have been following your work for years,” David said excitedly, despite the direness of the situation. The fire was progressing faster than they had anticipated, and David hurried to ready the transporter.

“There is no time for inorganic testing, doctor. I’ll go through first on your go. Are you ready?” David asked through the screen, finally showing his nervousness.

“We are clear. Proceed when ready,” Dr. Okeda replied.

David pressed some buttons on the keyhole and nothing seemed to change, except the screen indicating it was ready. All one had to do was enter the keyhole shaped alcove, which was approximately 6 feet high, 2 feet wide at the bottom, 3 feet wide at the top, and about 3 feet deep. It was open on both ends, and there was one button on the inside that matched one on the outside labeled with a bright, green glowing “GO.” Without saying a word, David walked into the keyhole, turned around, smiled, and pressed the button. He was gone in an instant and all eyes darted for the screen broadcasting the gate on the moon.

“Woohoo! That was amazing! I didn’t feel a thing!” David shouted as he instantly appeared in the gate. It appeared to have worked, and everyone breathed a collective sigh of relief. Their relief was short-lived when the video feed went blank.

“Wait, what happened?” Derek asked. There appeared to be no signal coming from the moon, though all other sensors seemed to suggest nothing else had changed. After a few seconds, the video feed restarted.

“We had a small glitch – the drain on our power was more than anticipated. Transporting a whole person takes more energy than we had calculated. We only have enough for 2 more rounds of transportation, so two of you will have to go together,” Dr. Okeda said as he reappeared on the screen. As the fire consumed the pure oxygen contained in storage tanks throughout the base, it burned stronger. Time was running out.

“I’ll go next,” Virginia stated. “Whether or not this works again is irrelevant – it’s our only option. As long as something comes out the other side, it’s the best shot at any part of me surviving. If it all goes well again, we’ll know in a few moments. If not…well, you all know how I feel,” Virginia finished, choking back some tears. She stepped through the keyhole, disappeared, and in a few instants, she appeared right where she was, in the keyhole on Mars.

“What happened?” Derek shouted at Dr. Okeda.

“We lost the signal somehow. Is she OK?” Dr. Okeda asked.

“Yes, I don’t feel any different,” Virginia replied. “Let’s do it again. Ready?”

“There was minimal power loss, so we’re good to go again. Ready when you are,” Dr. Okeda stated.

Just like last time, she pushed a button and disappeared. In an instant, she appeared in the gate and collapsed. After a collective gasp, she stood up and waved at the camera, teary-eyed.

“We have just enough energy for one last transport with the two of you. Things should have stabilized now, so you should go when ready,” Dr. Okeda said.

“Wait. I need to ensure we have the backup of our research. We shouldn’t lose everything we have now, especially the current data on what the hell is happening to our base,” Jean said as she began typing hurriedly on the computer. “This will only take a few seconds.”

As she worked, Derek took in everything that had happened, and then began thinking out loud.

“Remember all the episodes of *Star Trek* where things went wrong with the transporter? Since we’re simply stored in energy, there can be a gap between being digitized and being re-created, like with what happened to Virginia, and she luckily reappeared here. This means there is even the possibility of duplication. There was that one episode of *Star Trek: The Next Generation* where Commander Riker was accidentally duplicated in a transporter accident. The episode was called ‘Second Chances’ because for the one that remained stuck on a planet, it was like 8 years literally flew by without anyone knowing he existed, so he got to pick up where he left off while the other one that it made it off the planet had continued to live. There was also that one time Scotty was caught in a beam for a long time and then came out of it. What if this happens to us?” Derek said, mostly to himself.

“There’s only enough energy for one more transport, and even that is questionable. We shouldn’t push it – only one of us should go at a time, and hope there’s enough left for the other. You must go first, and I’ll follow if you’re fine. I know that I won’t come out the other side regardless of what you think. Now, hurry! There’s not much time!” Jean ordered.

“You have to come. But we would still have you, even if you don't think it's you. That's got to be worth something,” he pleaded.

“Like I said, I’m dead either way. If I got through and it works, that won’t be me. I’ll stay behind – my fate has already been sealed,” she replied.

“I can’t leave you back here. You have to come with me. There’s only just enough energy for one more transport – we must go through together. It’s the only way,” Derek pleaded again.

“Stop wasting the time you have left to go!”

“I’m not going anywhere without you. I can’t bear to live knowing you got left behind instead of me. We must go together right now.”

Jean thought for a second, took a deep breath, and said, “Fine. If it’s the only way you’ll go, we’ll do it together,” she said as she kissed him on the cheek and calmly grabbed his hand. As they walked toward the keyhole, she shoved Derek into it, alone, and pushed the button. She then looked at the communications screen and said, just before it went blank, “‘'Tis too much proved, that with devotion’s visage And pious action we do sugar o'er The devil himself.’”

“What does that mean?” David asked.

“It means she’s not coming,” Virginia replied. “You know how much Jean adored Shakespeare. It’s a quote from *Hamlet* when Polonius is convincing his daughter to deceive Hamlet in order to try and save him,” she continued through tears.

Though Derek had entered the keyhole, he did not appear through the gate. The fire had consumed the communications room only seconds after Derek entered the keyhole. It wasn’t clear what was happening, but he had definitely been energized. While the scientists were trying to figure out what happened, Derek appeared in the gate in what felt like an instant to him.

“It worked! Wait, Jean still needs to come through!” Derek shouted as they shut down the gate behind him. “What are you doing? There’s still time!”

“Sorry, it’s over,” Virginia said, in a state of shock. “It took almost two hours for you to come through, and Jean never made it into the keyhole. You made it out of there just in time.”

“Did I? What happened in those two hours? Where was I?...what was I?”

“We don’t know. There were complications – you know something like this has never been attempted before,” David said from the corner, sitting in a daze staring at the gate.

Just then, the gate shook and trembled again. Someone else was coming through. Derek was waiting with shocked anticipation, hoping to see Jean come through. No one was prepared for what happened next.

2.3: Removing “identity” from “persons”- Derek Parfit

Reasons and Persons[14]

Reasons and Persons is a philosophical work by Derek Parfit, first published in 1984. It focuses on ethics, rationality and personal identity. His views on personal identity transformed how it is understood and used in philosophy, especially ethics. His view is briefly explained as follows:

At time 1, there is a person. At a later time 2, there is a person. These people seem to be the same person. Indeed, these people share memories and personality traits. But there are no further facts in the world that make them the same person.

Parfit's argument for this position relies on our intuitions regarding thought experiments such as teleportation, the fission and fusion of persons, gradual replacement of the matter in one's brain, gradual alteration of one's psychology, and so on. For example, Parfit asks the reader to imagine entering a "teletransporter," a machine that puts you to sleep, then destroys you, breaking you down into atoms, copying the information and relaying it to Mars at the speed of light. On Mars, another machine re-creates you (from local stores of carbon, hydrogen, and so on), each atom in exactly the same relative position. Parfit poses the question of whether or not the teletransporter is a method of travel—is the person on Mars the same person as the person who entered the teletransporter on Earth? Certainly, when waking up on Mars, you would feel like being you, you would remember entering the teletransporter in order to travel to Mars, you would even feel the cut on your upper lip from shaving this morning.

Then the teleporter is upgraded. The teletransporter on Earth is modified to not destroy the person who enters it, but instead it can simply make infinite replicas, all of whom would claim to remember entering the teletransporter on Earth in the first place.

Using thought experiments such as these, Parfit argues that any criteria we attempt to use to determine sameness of person will be lacking, because there is no further fact. What matters, to Parfit, is simply "Relation R," psychological connectedness, including memory, personality, and so on.

Parfit continues this logic to establish a new context for morality and social control. He cites that it is morally wrong for one person to harm or interfere with another person and it is incumbent on society to protect individuals from such transgressions. That accepted, it is a short extrapolation to conclude that it is also incumbent on society to protect an individual's "Future Self" from such transgressions; tobacco use could be classified as an abuse of a Future Self's right to a healthy existence. Parfit resolves the logic to reach this conclusion, which appears to justify incursion into personal freedoms, but he does not explicitly endorse such invasive control.

Parfit's conclusion is similar to David Hume's view, and also to the view of the self in Buddhism, though it does not restrict itself to a mere reformulation of them. For besides being reductive, Parfit's view is also deflationary: in the end, "what matters" is not personal identity, but rather mental continuity and connectedness.

The “Identity Doesn’t Matter View”[15]

David Shoemaker has written an excellent explanation of Parfit’s views and their implications. They are located in his entry on “Personal Identity and Ethics” in the free *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, which is a wonderful resource that you should read if you are interested in doing so. The quoted sections from his article that follow below along with my commentary and explanation are from Section 2.5 on “The Identity Doesn’t Matter (IDM) View”

John Locke’s view on personal identity, often called the “Lockean Memory Theory of Personal Identity” is exactly as the name sounds: our personal identity is tied to our memories in one way or another, and we have periods where we are conscious and make memories and periods where we are not (when we are sleeping, for example), and our identity consists of the whole of these memory-making moments. Derek Parfit generally agrees with this view on personal identity since it seems to match up with how we conceive of ourselves. On top of this, as Shoemaker explains, “He is a ‘reductionist,’ according to which the facts about persons and personal identity consist in more particular facts about brains, bodies, and series of interrelated mental and physical events (Parfit, *Reasons and Persons*, 1984, 210–211). The denial of reductionism is called ‘nonreductionism,’ according to which the facts about persons and personal identity consist in some further fact, typically a fact about Cartesian egos or souls.” Basically, this means that Parfit denies anything like a “soul” and thinks we are identical to something we can quantify, measure, and point to directly that is associated with our memories.

To begin explaining why Parfit doesn’t think that identity matters in survival (that is, how “we” continue to exist as ourselves from moment to moment and day-to-day), Shoemaker says that Parfit “suggests at times that the most plausible reductionist criterion of personal identity is the Psychological Criterion. As we saw earlier, this criterion maintains that in order for *X* to be identical to *Y*, *X*

must be uniquely psychologically continuous with *Y*. Psychological continuity is potentially a branching, one-many relation, i.e., it could conceivably hold between me-now and more than one person in the future. But identity is an equivalence relation — it is reflexive, symmetrical, and transitive — so it holds only one-one. Thus only by including a 'no branching' clause can this criterion of identity avoid a crippling contradiction."

Along with the transporter experiment, Parfit outlines a "fission" experiment to help bolster his claim that identity doesn't matter in survival. It works like this: assume that your brain exists in two halves (which they do, and they are called "hemispheres") and that both of these halves are identical to each other (which isn't a stretch, as this is hypothetically possible with how our brains can work). Now, you also happen to be one member of a set of triplets, and at the same time your body gets irreversibly damaged, your brothers' brains get irreversibly damaged. Half of your brain is then transplanted into each of the brothers. "You" would not be "split" into two identical parts. So where did "you" go? As Shoemaker puts it, "If we lack the "no branching" clause, we are forced to say that, because both brothers are psychologically continuous with me, they are *both* me. But then (given the transitivity of identity) both survivors would also have to be identical *to each other*, which seems obviously false…" So, if identity means there can be only one of you, then there's a problem. Are you both of them? Neither? Are you dead? You can't be identical to either of them since picking one over the other would be arbitrary. However, it does seem that "you" survived in a very important sense.

Shoemaker continues,

"But is this like an ordinary case in which I don't survive, i.e., like *death*? Clearly not: both survivors will seem to remember my thoughts and experiences, they will fulfill intentions I had in action, they will have the same beliefs/desires/goals as me, and their characters will be exactly like mine. Indeed, it will be just *as if* I had survived. Everything that matters in ordinary survival (or nearly everything), therefore, is preserved in fission, despite the fact that the identity relation is not. What this must mean, then, is that the identity relation just is not what matters (or is not what matters very much) in survival; instead, what matters has to consist in psychological continuity and/or connectedness (what Parfit calls "Relation R"). As long as *that* relation holds between me-now and some other person-stage — regardless of whether or not it holds one-one — what happens to me is just as good as ordinary survival. Call this the *Identity Doesn't Matter* (IDM) view."

What all this means is that our *unique* survival might not matter, and that identity then isn't as important as we thought, and that what matters is that things that are closely related to us using "Relation R" are what matters. This could have a drastic impact on how we approach our lives, ourselves, others, and those things we value in the world. As Shoemaker explains the implications,

"So let us assume that Relation R grounds our patterns of concern. Consider, then, prudential rationality. While it is ordinarily thought to be imprudent to discount the interests of one's Much Later Self (MLS) just because that self will not come into existence for a long time, Parfit suggests that reductionism provides a different, more plausible reason to do so. Since one of the relations in R (connectedness) obtains by degrees, it is very likely it will obtain to a much reduced degree between me-now and my MLS than it will between me-now and my tomorrow's self. But if R grounds my patterns of concern, and a reduced degree of connectedness is one part of R, then a reduced degree of connectedness justifies a reduced degree of concern. Thus, I may be justified in caring much less about my MLS than about my tomorrow's self. This conclusion justifies discounting my MLS's (expected) interests in favor of my present interests.

Of course, given that we still think great imprudence is wrong, how might we criticize it if we made these revisions to our practices? One way to do so would be to recognize that, since my MLS would really be more like a different person than me, he should be treated as such, i.e., how I treat him should now fall under the rubric of *morality*, and insofar as it is wrong to harm others without their consent, it would be wrong for me to harm him as well. Great imprudence like this, in other words, would be *immoral* (Parfit 1984, 318–320)."

This results in something quite enlightening since it helps us understand why we might conceive of our past and future selves as very different than our current selves. It also gives real meaning to the phrase "he's a different person than he used to be." It also means that we can truly survive the death of our bodies and brains if we survive in others and through our works. Derek Parfit (the man) passed away New Year's day in 2017, but he still survives in the ways he found most meaningful through his work and influence.

2.4: The Ship of Theseus

The ship of Theseus, also known as Theseus' paradox, is a thought experiment that raises the question of whether an object that has had all of its components replaced remains fundamentally the same object. The paradox is most notably recorded by Plutarch in Life of Theseus from the late first century. Plutarch asked whether a ship that had been restored by replacing every single wooden part remained the same ship.

The paradox had been discussed by other ancient philosophers such as Heraclitus and Plato prior to Plutarch's writings, and more recently by Thomas Hobbes and John Locke. Several variants are known, including the grandfather's axe, which has had both head and handle replaced.

Variations of the paradox

Ancient philosophy

This particular version of the paradox was first introduced in Greek legend as reported by the historian, biographer, and essayist Plutarch,

“The ship wherein Theseus and the youth of Athens returned from Crete had thirty oars, and was preserved by the Athenians down even to the time of Demetrius Phalereus, for they took away the old planks as they decayed, putting in new and stronger timber in their places, in so much that this ship became a standing example among the philosophers, for the logical question of things that grow; one side holding that the ship remained the same, and the other contending that it was not the same.”

— Plutarch, Theseus

Plutarch thus questions whether the ship would remain the same if it were entirely replaced, piece by piece. Centuries later, the philosopher Thomas Hobbes introduced a further puzzle, wondering what would happen if the original planks were gathered up after they were replaced, and used to build a second ship. Hobbes asked which ship, if either, would be the original Ship of Theseus.

Modern era

John Locke proposed a scenario regarding a favorite sock that develops a hole. He pondered whether the sock would still be the same after a patch was applied to the hole, and if it would be the same sock after a second patch was applied, and a third, etc., until all of the material of the original sock has been replaced with patches.

George Washington's axe (sometimes "my grandfather's axe") is the subject of an apocryphal story of unknown origin in which the famous artifact is "still George Washington's axe" despite having had both its head and handle replaced.

This has also been recited as "Abe Lincoln's axe"; Lincoln was well known for his ability with an axe, and axes associated with his life are held in various museums.

The French equivalent is the story of Jeannot's knife, where the eponymous knife has had its blade changed fifteen times and its handle fifteen times, but is still the same knife. In some Spanish-speaking countries, Jeannot's knife is present as a proverb, though referred to simply as "the family knife". The principle, however, remains the same.

A Hungarian version of the story features "Lajos Kossuth's pocket knife", having its blade and handle continuously replaced but still being referred to as the very knife of the famous statesman. As a proverbial expression it is used for objects or solutions being repeatedly renewed and gradually replaced to an extent that it has no original parts.

A comedic version of the story appears in the popular TV sitcom Only Fools and Horses, in which the character Trigger explains that his broom... "has had 17 new heads and 14 new handles in it's time".

One version is often discussed in introductory Jurisprudence and Evidence classes in law school, discussing whether a weapon used in a murder, for example, would still be considered the "murder weapon" if both its handle and head/blade were to be replaced at separate, subsequent times. (Perhaps yes if the issue is whether tracing the history of 'its' possession may lead one back to the murderer; perhaps no if the issue is whether fingerprints from the murder may still be on 'it'. This shows how a philosophical paradox can be resolved, perhaps in different ways in different contexts, when converted into a question about the physical world. Likewise mathematical paradoxes in physics, for example the significance of whether or not a number is rational in Hofstadter's butterfly.)

In popular culture

The paradox appears in various forms in fictional contexts, particularly in fantasy or science-fiction, for example where a character has body parts swapped for artificial replacements until the person has been entirely replaced. There are many other variations with reference to the same concept in popular culture for example axes and brooms.

Proposed resolutions

Heraclitus

The Greek philosopher Heraclitus attempted to solve the paradox by introducing the idea of a river where water replenishes it. Arius Didymus quoted him as saying "upon those who step into the same rivers, different and again different waters flow". Plutarch disputed Heraclitus' claim about stepping twice into the same river, citing that it cannot be done because "it scatters and again comes together, and approaches and recedes".

Aristotle's causes

According to the philosophical system of Aristotle and his followers, four causes or reasons describe a thing; these causes can be analyzed to get to a solution to the paradox. The formal cause or 'form' (perhaps best parsed as the cause of an object's form or of its having that form) is the design of a thing, while the material cause is the matter of which the thing is made. Another of Aristotle's causes is the 'end' or final cause, which is the intended purpose of a thing. The ship of Theseus would have the same ends, those being, mythically, transporting Theseus, and politically, convincing the Athenians that Theseus was once a living person, though its material cause would change with time. The efficient cause is how and by whom a thing is made, for example, how artisans fabricate and assemble something; in the case of the ship of Theseus, the workers who built the ship in the first place could have used the same tools and techniques to replace the planks in the ship.

According to Aristotle, the "what-it-is" of a thing is its formal cause, so the ship of Theseus is the 'same' ship, because the formal cause, or design, does not change, even though the matter used to construct it may vary with time. In the same manner, for Heraclitus's paradox, a river has the same formal cause, although the material cause (the particular water in it) changes with time, and likewise for the person who steps in the river.

This argument's validity and soundness as applied to the paradox depend on the accuracy not only of Aristotle's expressed premise that an object's formal cause is not only the primary or even sole determiner of its defining characteristic(s) or essence ("what-it-is") but also of the unstated, stronger premise that an object's formal cause is the sole determiner of its identity or "which-it-is" (i.e., whether the previous and the later ships or rivers are the "same" ship or river). This latter premise is subject to attack by indirect proof using arguments such as "Suppose two ships are built using the same design and exist at the same time until one sinks the other in battle. Clearly the two ships are not the same ship even before, let alone after, one sinks the other, and yet the two have the same formal cause; therefore, formal cause cannot by itself suffice to determine an object's identity" or " [...] therefore, two objects' or object-instances' having the same formal cause does not by itself suffice to make them the same object or prove that they are the same object."

Definitions of "the same"

One common argument found in the philosophical literature is that in the case of Heraclitus' river one is tripped up by two different definitions of "the same". In one sense, things can be "qualitatively identical", by sharing some properties. In another sense, they might be "numerically identical" by being "one". As an example, consider two different marbles that look identical. They would be qualitatively, but not numerically, identical. A marble can be numerically identical only to itself.

Note that some languages differentiate between these two forms of identity. In German, for example, "gleich" ("equal") and "selbe" ("self-same") are the pertinent terms, respectively. At least in formal speech, the former refers to qualitative identity (e.g. die gleiche Murmel, "the same [qualitative] marble") and the latter to numerical identity (e.g. die selbe Murmel, "the same [numerical] marble"). Colloquially, "gleich" is also used in place of "selbe", however.

Four-dimensionalism

Ted Sider and others have proposed that considering objects to extend across time as four-dimensional causal series of three-dimensional "time-slices" could solve the ship of Theseus problem because, in taking such an approach, each time-slice and all four dimensional objects remain numerically identical to themselves while allowing individual time-slices to differ from each other. The aforementioned river, therefore, comprises different three-dimensional time-slices of itself while remaining numerically identical to

itself across time; one can never step into the same river-time-slice twice, but one can step into the same (four-dimensional) river twice.

In Japan

In Japan, Shinto shrines are rebuilt every twenty years with entirely "new wood". The continuity over the centuries is spiritual and comes from the source of the wood in the case of the Ise Jingu's Naiku shrine, which is harvested from an adjoining forest that is considered sacred. The shrine has currently been rebuilt 62 times.

2.5: This Above All

It had been almost exactly fifty years since the first successful human head transplant. The first attempted one was in 2017, and while there were some organic signs of life in the head for 6 days, the person never appeared to wake up or become conscious. For both moral and medical reasons, another one wasn't attempted until 2023, and this time it went much better. The resultant head actually did regain some minor control of the hands and arms and lived for approximately two years until the complications from unforeseen autoimmune issues ultimately led to the rapid deterioration of the body, head and all. But that success ushered in a new era, and brain-only transplants gradually became perfected and not uncommon. With the success of the transplant process came unprecedented understanding of the physics of the brain, but the connection between our minds and consciousness remained mysterious. There had been attempts to transfer brains into traditional electronic computers, but even while there had been some success transferring sets of memories to computer storage devices, no person had ever been truly "downloaded" into a computer. If such a thing were possible, then a deteriorating brain would no longer be an impediment to life; it would just be another disease with a regular course of treatment. While a computer transfer seemed too complex to be accomplished in the near future, Alan had another idea, and he was seeking a volunteer to be his first test subject.

"I guess I'm still not entirely clear on how this will be any different than the failed computer download attempts of the past. Believe me, I have put much thought into trying those, but I'm not sure I would survive through the whole process," Greg asked Alan from his hospital bed.

Greg was the perfect test subject for Alan. He had been involved in a bizarre accident in which almost a third of his brain had been completely destroyed while the rest of it and his body were left intact. Most of the time in these cases, the remaining part of the brain "re-programs" itself to assume those functions the missing part of the brain once performed. For unknown reasons, Greg's brain was not fixing itself, and, in fact, it seemed to be getting worse. If something weren't done, it appeared his brain would slowly continue to die until it were entirely gone, with his body inevitably soon to follow. He had only some control over the left half of his body remaining, and the atrophy from disuse was on the verge of causing permanent damage to his body. On top of his unique medical condition, Greg had also been childhood friends with Alan, which gave Alan a slight edge in convincing Greg to try the procedure.

"In one sense, it's not much different, you're right. It might not even work, but without it…well, you're aware of your fate better than I am," Alan paused, to ensure he had Greg's attention. "Look, I can understand your hesitation. Not only do computer transfers appear to only be capable of capturing a small portion of our minds, the process itself is unfortunately entirely destructive. You can't survive any mind to computer transfer attempt, and my brain transfer process works the same. Whatever the results are of what I am proposing, the brain you have now will be, for lack of a better word, fried. Your brain and mind as they are now, in this physical form, will not survive. However, there is one crucial difference in my process: rather than transferring you into traditional computer media, I have – I believe – successfully recreated the human brain using entirely inorganic materials. Every little part of the brain has been meticulously reconstructed, down to the smallest component of every axon, in complete parallel to a healthy human brain. The difference with my process is that I don't want to, nor need to, translate anything in your mind into another language, the way a normal brain to computer transfer would work. I merely want to copy and replicate exactly what is in your brain into an inorganic recreation of your brain," Alan said, speeding up near the end of his monologue as he became increasingly more excited and confident in his work. He continued, "It will be you when we're done, I have no doubt about that."

"I guess I'm still not entirely sure about that," Greg whispered. "I can't shake the feeling that this brain, with its headaches and problems, will be gone, but I won't be. Am I now defined by my disabilities? Will I be an entirely different person without these problems? If I go through with this procedure, will that be the same as death?"

"We've discussed this before. You said you were persuaded by my presentation of the philosophical views on these problems by John Locke. Is this no longer true? Need I remind you that Locke sees no better way of understanding who we are than by identifying our most important aspects with our memories," Alan reminded him.

"I know, but I am still worried by these notions. What if my memories are copied? Would there then be two of me? We already know that we can insert fake memories into people and have them believe they're real, and that makes me second-guess identifying ourselves with our memories. How do we know what's real and what's not? Were we *really* childhood friends or did you just make me believe that?" Greg responded worriedly.

"I understand your concerns, but we both know that if I could make you falsely believe all the memories we made as children, I'd put my skills to better use than trying to save you. No offense," he caught himself. "Look, if it's not your memories, what then

defines you? What matters?"

"Well, what about my personality? All the subtle biochemical interactions in my body help make me who I am. All different parts of the body play a role in this, and who is to say that this new brain won't change me completely? Remember the cases of Eadweard Muybridge and Phineas Gage," Greg reminded him.

Eadweard Muybridge, a pioneer in the arts of photography and moving pictures, had a bad accident as a young man which he, and his friends, claimed altered his personality to the extent that he went from a compassionate individual to one that was unpredictable and could suddenly go from calm to extremely emotional in an instant. He murdered his wife's lover and was found innocent, not because his insanity plea convinced the jury, but because they presumably believed he lacked control due to his brain injury. Phineas Gage experienced a similar fate: when a tamper (long medal rod) used in the process of repairing railroad spikes was shot clean through his head, his personality was said to take the same sort of turn. These cases are ones that helped illustrate a very clear, strong, and subtle connection between the health of the brains and our personalities. But no one knew just how close the organic connection was, for while partial inorganic neural implants had seen moderate success, a full replacement on this scale had never been considered.

"True, we do not know all of the subtleties that make our bodies work. Our body can maintain many regulatory functions even when the rest of the body is gone. Subtle changes in our blood chemistry can drastically affect our mood, and the brain and mind itself are still largely a mystery. There might be subtle organic chemicals present in the membranes that we have missed and this could have a snowball effect on your mind in ways we could have never foreseen. All I can tell you is that we have done our best, and I know that someone closely resembling you will emerge from the surgery," Alan said to his friend.

"We never discussed him but the philosopher Derek Parfit has the most convincing argument for me. I read him a long time ago in one of my undergraduate courses, and his basic idea was that we are misguided when we think that our continued existence is what's important. We obviously care that *we* survive, but what this 'we' means is not that 'I' as a unique person survive, but rather that what is *important* about *me* continues on. I am still afraid that it won't be *me* that wakes up, but if there is something at the end of this all that is a lot like me, then that sounds like my best shot for surviving. I know that if I do nothing, everything about me will be gone. At least with your surgery, something about me might survive. And, who knows? Maybe you are as brilliant as you think you are and I will wake up as if nothing happened," Greg replied.

"If we are successful, you will be changed – your brain is unlikely to ever age or lose function. We never much discussed the potential 'positive' side effects of success. You may have the most perfect brain to ever exist," Alan told him.

"Hopefully my mind would be able to catch up to it then. Can I please have some time to think things through? I promise I'll get back to you by the end of the day," Greg asked.

"Of course," Alan said as he got up to leave the room.

Only a few hours passed when Alan received the call from Greg. All Greg could get out was that he was ready and to perform the surgery as soon as he possibly could. Alan obliged and David and the operating room were being prepared for surgery as he arrived at the hospital.

"I know you're frightened right now, and I'd be lying if I said I wasn't, too. I wouldn't have come to you with this if I didn't truly believe it would work. I could never live with myself if I killed my oldest friend," Alan said to Greg.

"Do you remember when we were in third grade and I was too afraid to climb up the tree onto the roof with you to watch the fireworks? You convinced me to try to climb up and that the tree was perfectly safe and that it was just like climbing a ladder. I believed you, but I fell anyway. I blamed you for months, but it was my own fault. I let my fear get the better of me and lost my grip. You never fell from that tree, despite my falling every time you convinced me to try again. I always wanted to climb like you, but I could never get over my fear, and my fingers would always stiffen up and I'd lose my grip time and time again. Your hands were amazing then, and they are amazing now. That's why I feel safe in letting you do this. It was never your fault when I fell from the tree; it was always my decision. If I fall this time, it was only because you, just like then, were trying to make me into the person I wanted to be," Greg told him softly.

"I never knew you felt that way," Alan said, just as emotional.

"I thought I never needed to say it. If I have any chance of living through what has happened to me, you're my best chance," Greg replied.

“There will be someone that comes out of this that is like you, and I hope you remember this conversation,” Alan paused. “Are you ready?” he asked. Greg nodded, and they began to administer the sedatives.

“‘This above all…’” Greg trailed off as the drugs took hold.

“‘To thine own self be true,’” Alan finished for him. “It will be you that awakes, my friend.”

The operation took a total of 32 hours. They had decided to remove the brain first and keep it in stasis while they implanted the new synthetic brain. After ensuring that all the neural connections were working properly between the new brain and the body’s nervous system, they began the transfer of neurological information. That part took only a few minutes, and it had seemed to go as planned. The procedure had been successful in the final round of simulations, but they would not know if it worked in reality until it was all done. They brought Greg out of the operating room and began the process of bringing him back to consciousness.

Greg’s eyes slowly opened and adjusted to the light. The path his gaze took around the room did not betray the thoughts going on inside the head. Was the brain working as hoped? Was he aware of what was going on? At least, the surgery seemed to have been minimally successful and the eyes were searching with a purpose. Someone was thinking inside that head.

With some hesitation, Alan finally whispered, “Greg, can you hear me?”

2.6: Descartes' Meditations - Cartesian Dualism

Meditations[11]

MEDITATION VI- OF THE EXISTENCE OF MATERIAL THINGS, AND OF THE REAL DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE MIND AND BODY OF MAN.

1. THERE now only remains the inquiry as to whether material things exist. With regard to this question, I at least know with certainty that such things may exist, in as far as they constitute the object of the pure mathematics, since, regarding them in this aspect, I can conceive them clearly and distinctly. For there can be no doubt that God possesses the power of producing all the objects I am able distinctly to conceive, and I never considered anything impossible to him, unless when I experienced a contradiction in the attempt to conceive it aright. Further, the faculty of imagination which I possess, and of which I am conscious that I make use when I apply myself to the consideration of material things, is sufficient to persuade me of their existence: for, when I attentively consider what imagination is, I find that it is simply a certain application of the cognitive faculty *(facultas cognoscitiva)* to a body which is immediately present to it, and which therefore exists.

2. And to render this quite clear, I remark, in the first place, the difference that subsists between imagination and pure intellection [or conception]. For example, when I imagine a triangle I not only conceive *(intelligo)* that it is a figure comprehended by three lines, but at the same time also I look upon *(intueor)* these three lines as present by the power and internal application of my mind *(acie mentis)*, and this is what I call imagining. But if I desire to think of a chiliogon, I indeed rightly conceive that it is a figure composed of a thousand sides, as easily as I conceive that a triangle is a figure composed of only three sides; but I cannot imagine the thousand sides of a chiliogon as I do the three sides of a triangle, nor, so to speak, view them as present [with the eyes of my mind]. And although, in accordance with the habit I have of always imagining something when I think of corporeal things, it may happen that, in conceiving a chiliogon, I confusedly represent some figure to myself, yet it is quite evident that this is not a chiliogon, since it in no wise differs from that which I would represent to myself, if I were to think of a myriogon, or any other figure of many sides; nor would this representation be of any use in discovering and unfolding the properties that constitute the difference between a chiliogon and other polygons. But if the question turns on a pentagon, it is quite true that I can conceive its figure, as well as that of a chiliogon, without the aid of imagination; but I can likewise imagine it by applying the attention of my mind to its five sides, and at the same time to the area which they contain. Thus I observe that a special effort of mind is necessary to the act of imagination, which is not required to conceiving or understanding *(ad intelligendum);* and this special exertion of mind clearly shows the difference between imagination and pure intellection *(imaginatio et intellectio pura).*

3. I remark, besides, that this power of imagination which I possess, in as far as it differs from the power of conceiving, is in no way necessary to my [nature or] essence, that is, to the essence of my mind; for although I did not possess it, I should still remain the same that I now am, from which it seems we may conclude that it depends on something different from the mind. And I easily understand that, if some body exists, with which my mind is so conjoined and united as to be able, as it were, to consider it when it chooses, it may thus imagine corporeal objects; so that this mode of thinking differs from pure intellection only in this respect, that the mind in conceiving turns in some way upon itself, and considers some one of the ideas it possesses within itself; but in imagining it turns toward the body, and contemplates in it some object conformed to the idea which it either of itself conceived or apprehended by sense. I easily understand, I say, that imagination may be thus formed, if it is true that there are bodies; and because I find no other obvious mode of explaining it, I thence, with probability, conjecture that they exist, but only with probability; and although I carefully examine all things, nevertheless I do not find that, from the distinct idea of corporeal nature I have in my imagination, I can necessarily infer the existence of any body.

4. But I am accustomed to imagine many other objects besides that corporeal nature which is the object of the pure mathematics, as, for example, colors, sounds, tastes, pain, and the like, although with less distinctness; and, inasmuch as I perceive these objects much better by the senses, through the medium of which and of memory, they seem to have reached the imagination, I believe that, in order the more advantageously to examine them, it is proper I should at the same time examine what sense-perception is, and inquire whether from those ideas that are apprehended by this mode of thinking (consciousness), I cannot obtain a certain proof of the existence of corporeal objects.

5. And, in the first place, I will recall to my mind the things I have hitherto held as true, because perceived by the senses, and the foundations upon which my belief in their truth rested; I will, in the second place, examine the reasons that afterward constrained me to doubt of them; and, finally, I will consider what of them I ought now to believe.

6. Firstly, then, I perceived that I had a head, hands, feet and other members composing that body which I considered as part, or perhaps even as the whole, of myself. I perceived further, that that body was placed among many others, by which it was capable of being affected in diverse ways, both beneficial and hurtful; and what was beneficial I remarked by a certain sensation of pleasure, and what was hurtful by a sensation of pain. And besides this pleasure and pain, I was likewise conscious of hunger, thirst, and other appetites, as well as certain corporeal inclinations toward joy, sadness, anger, and similar passions. And, out of myself, besides the extension, figure, and motions of bodies, I likewise perceived in them hardness, heat, and the other tactile qualities, and, in addition, light, colors, odors, tastes, and sounds, the variety of which gave me the means of distinguishing the sky, the earth, the sea, and generally all the other bodies, from one another. And certainly, considering the ideas of all these qualities, which were presented to my mind, and which alone I properly and immediately perceived, it was not without reason that I thought I perceived certain objects wholly different from my thought, namely, bodies from which those ideas proceeded; for I was conscious that the ideas were presented to me without my consent being required, so that I could not perceive any object, however desirous I might be, unless it were present to the organ of sense; and it was wholly out of my power not to perceive it when it was thus present. And because the ideas I perceived by the senses were much more lively and clear, and even, in their own way, more distinct than any of those I could of myself frame by meditation, or which I found impressed on my memory, it seemed that they could not have proceeded from myself, and must therefore have been caused in me by some other objects; and as of those objects I had no knowledge beyond what the ideas themselves gave me, nothing was so likely to occur to my mind as the supposition that the objects were similar to the ideas which they caused. And because I recollected also that I had formerly trusted to the senses, rather than to reason, and that the ideas which I myself formed were not so clear as those I perceived by sense, and that they were even for the most part composed of parts of the latter, I was readily persuaded that I had no idea in my intellect which had not formerly passed through the senses. Nor was I altogether wrong in likewise believing that that body which, by a special right, I called my own, pertained to me more properly and strictly than any of the others; for in truth, I could never be separated from it as from other bodies; I felt in it and on account of it all my appetites and affections, and in fine I was affected in its parts by pain and the titillation of pleasure, and not in the parts of the other bodies that were separated from it. But when I inquired into the reason why, from this I know not what sensation of pain, sadness of mind should follow, and why from the sensation of pleasure, joy should arise, or why this indescribable twitching of the stomach, which I call hunger, should put me in mind of taking food, and the parchedness of the throat of drink, and so in other cases, I was unable to give any explanation, unless that I was so taught by nature; for there is assuredly no affinity, at least none that I am able to comprehend, between this irritation of the stomach and the desire of food, any more than between the perception of an object that causes pain and the consciousness of sadness which springs from the perception. And in the same way it seemed to me that all the other judgments I had formed regarding the objects of sense, were dictates of nature; because I remarked that those judgments were formed in me, before I had leisure to weigh and consider the reasons that might constrain me to form them.

7. But, afterward, a wide experience by degrees sapped the faith I had reposed in my senses; for I frequently observed that towers, which at a distance seemed round, appeared square, when more closely viewed, and that colossal figures, raised on the summits of these towers, looked like small statues, when viewed from the bottom of them; and, in other instances without number, I also discovered error in judgments founded on the external senses; and not only in those founded on the external, but even in those that rested on the internal senses; for is there aught more internal than pain ? And yet I have sometimes been informed by parties whose arm or leg had been amputated, that they still occasionally seemed to feel pain in that part of the body which they had lost, --a circumstance that led me to think that I could not be quite certain even that any one of my members was affected when I felt pain in it. And to these grounds of doubt I shortly afterward also added two others of very wide generality: the first of them was that I believed I never perceived anything when awake which I could not occasionally think I also perceived when asleep, and as I do not believe that the ideas I seem to perceive in my sleep proceed from objects external to me, I did not any more observe any ground for believing this of such as I seem to perceive when awake; the second was that since I was as yet ignorant of the author of my being or at least supposed myself to be so, I saw nothing to prevent my having been so constituted by nature as that I should be deceived even in matters that appeared to me to possess the greatest truth. And, with respect to the grounds on which I had before been persuaded of the existence of sensible objects, I had no great difficulty in finding suitable answers to them; for as nature seemed to incline me to many things from which reason made me averse, I thought that I ought not to confide much in its teachings. And although the perceptions of the senses were not dependent on my will, I did not think that I ought on that ground to conclude that they proceeded from things different from myself, since perhaps there might be found in me some faculty, though hitherto unknown to me, which produced them.

8. But now that I begin to know myself better, and to discover more clearly the author of my being, I do not, indeed, think that I ought rashly to admit all which the senses seem to teach, nor, on the other hand, is it my conviction that I ought to doubt in general of their teachings.

9. And, firstly, because I know that all which I clearly and distinctly conceive can be produced by God exactly as I conceive it, it is sufficient that I am able clearly and distinctly to conceive one thing apart from another, in order to be certain that the one is different from the other, seeing they may at least be made to exist separately, by the omnipotence of God; and it matters not by what power this separation is made, in order to be compelled to judge them different; and, therefore, merely because I know with certitude that I exist, and because, in the meantime, I do not observe that aught necessarily belongs to my nature or essence beyond my being a thinking thing, I rightly conclude that my essence consists only in my being a thinking thing [or a substance whose whole essence or nature is merely thinking]. And although I may, or rather, as I will shortly say, although I certainly do possess a body with which I am very closely conjoined; nevertheless, because, on the one hand, I have a clear and distinct idea of myself, in as far as I am only a thinking and unextended thing, and as, on the other hand, I possess a distinct idea of body, in as far as it is only an extended and unthinking thing, it is certain that I, [that is, my mind, by which I am what I am], is entirely and truly distinct from my body, and may exist without it.

3: Philosophy of Religion

Philosophy of religion according to the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* is, "the philosophical examination of the central themes and concepts involved in religious traditions." It is an ancient discipline, being found in the earliest known manuscripts concerning philosophy, and relates to many other branches of philosophy, including metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics.

The philosophy of religion differs from religious philosophy in that it seeks to discuss questions regarding the nature of religion as a whole, rather than examining the problems brought forth by a particular belief system. It is designed such that it can be carried out dispassionately by those who identify as believers or non-believers.

Field of study

Philosophy of religion covers alternative beliefs about God, the varieties of religious experience, the interplay between science and religion, the nature and scope of good and evil, and religious treatments of birth, history, and death. The field also includes the ethical implications of religious commitments, the relation between faith, reason, experience and tradition, concepts of the miraculous, the sacred revelation, mysticism, power, and salvation.

The philosophy of religion has been distinguished from theology by pointing out that, for theology, "its critical reflections are based on religious convictions". Also, "theology is responsible to an authority that initiates its thinking, speaking, and witnessing ... [while] philosophy bases its arguments on the ground of timeless evidence."

Basic themes and problems

Three considerations that are basic to the philosophy of religion concerning deities are: the existence of God, the nature of God, and the knowledge of God.

Existence of God

There are several main positions with regard to the existence of God that one might take:

1. Theism - the belief in the existence of one or more divinities or deities.
2. Pantheism - the belief that God exists *as* all things of the cosmos, that God is one and all is God; God is immanent.
3. Panentheism - the belief that God encompasses all things of the cosmos but that God is greater than the cosmos; God is both immanent and transcendent.
4. Deism - the belief that God does exist but does not interfere with human life and the laws of the universe; God is transcendent.
5. Monotheism - the belief that a single deity exists which rules the universe as a separate and individual entity.
6. Polytheism - the belief that multiple deities exist which rule the universe as separate and individual entities.
7. Henotheism - the belief that multiple deities may or may not exist, though there is a single supreme deity.
8. Henology - believing that multiple avatars of a deity exist, which represent unique aspects of the ultimate deity.
9. Agnosticism - (literally, *not knowing* or *without knowledge*) the belief that the existence or non-existence of deities or God is currently unknown or unknowable and cannot be proven. A weaker form of this might be defined as simply a lack of certainty about gods' existence or nonexistence.[]
10. Atheism - the rejection of belief in the existence of deities.
    1. Weak atheism is simply the absence of belief that any deities exist.
    2. Strong atheism is specifically the position that there are no deities.
11. Apatheism - a complete disinterest in, or lack of caring for, whether or not any deity or deities exists.
12. Possibilianism

These are not mutually exclusive positions. For example, agnostic theists choose to believe God exists while asserting that knowledge of God's existence is inherently unknowable. Similarly, agnostic atheists reject belief in the existence of all deities, while asserting that whether any such entities exist or not is inherently unknowable.

Natural theology

The attempt to provide proofs or arguments for the existence of God is one aspect of what is known as natural theology or the natural theistic project. This strand of natural theology attempts to justify belief in God by independent grounds. There is plenty of philosophical literature on faith (especially fideism) and other subjects generally considered to be outside the realm of natural theology. Perhaps most of philosophy of religion is predicated on natural theology's assumption that the existence of God can be

justified or warranted on rational grounds. There has been considerable philosophical and theological debate about the kinds of proofs, justifications and arguments that are appropriate for this discourse.

The philosopher Alvin Plantinga has shifted his focus to justifying belief in God (that is, those who believe in God, for whatever reasons, are rational in doing so) through Reformed epistemology, in the context of a theory of warrant and proper cognitive function.

Other reactions to natural theology are those of Wittgensteinian philosophers of religion, most notably D. Z. Phillips. Phillips rejects "natural theology" and its evidentialist approach as confused, in favor of a grammatical approach which investigates the meaning of belief in God. For Phillips, belief in God is not a proposition with a particular truth value, but a form of life. Consequently, the question of whether God exists confuses the logical categories which govern theistic language with those that govern other forms of discourse (most notably, scientific discourse). According to Phillips, the question of whether or not God exists cannot be "objectively" answered by philosophy because the categories of truth and falsity, which are necessary for asking the question, have no application in the religious contexts wherein religious belief has its sense and meaning. In other words, the question cannot be answered because it cannot be asked without entering into confusion. As Phillips sees things, the job of the philosopher is not to investigate the "rationality" of belief in God but to elucidate its meaning.

Problem of evil

Main articles: Problem of evil and Theodicy

The problem of evil is the question of how to reconcile the existence of evil with that of a deity who is, in either absolute or relative terms, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnibenevolent. An argument from evil attempts to show that the co-existence of evil and such a deity is unlikely or impossible if placed in absolute terms. Attempts to show the contrary have traditionally been discussed under the heading of theodicy.

The nature of God

There exists many understandings of the term "God". It typically differs not only from religion to religion, but also from person to person who share the same religious beliefs. It is therefore hard to define "God" or list a complete array of characteristics (nature) of God that is applicable to all religions.

For the sake of simplicity, the concept of "God" is often described by philosophers of religion to be an " 1. Omniscient, 2. Omnipotent, 3. Omnibenevolent 4. Being". Any "God" that is referred to in most contexts of philosophy of religion must have the above four characteristics, including being a "Being". Note that this list is not exhaustive. There exists other characteristics of certain "God"s that are not included, for example, "omnipresent".

Above all, a simple "if" relationship exists between "God" and those four characteristics. That is to say. if X is a "God", X must possess all four characteristics. Yet, according to the above statement, the existence of those four characteristics together on Y might not be sufficient to lead to the conclusion that Y is a "God". However, the non-existence of one or more of the four characteristics on an object Z is sufficient to lead to the argument that Z is not a "God" that we have defined above.

3.1: Science and Theology

13 Science and Theology

Science and Theology[17]

The relationship between science and theology has a long and complicated history that goes back four or five hundred years. This discussion blends into an even longer debate over the relationship between reason and revelation. In response to science theology has undergone a profound reformulation. The European Enlightenment and the rise of the historical-critical study of the Bible were also extremely important, but I will limit my attention to science. I am also focusing on the response of Protestant theology to science, since that is the area I know best.

I want to list four important challenges arising from science that called orthodox theology into question and brought about a major revision of Christian thought.

1. The first challenge was that the success of scientific method called into question truth claims based on supernatural revelation and tradition. Science has provided the modern world its most reliable standard of knowledge. Science is the dominant paradigm of truth about the world. At the extreme we get what can be called scientism: What cannot be known by science not only cannot be known but is not real. Along with this there was in many quarters a loss of confidence in speculative reason under the influence of philosophers like David Hume and Immanuel Kant. In the minds of many they demolished the traditional arguments for the existence of God. This took place in the context of the Enlightenment, which urged people to think for themselves. It called into question all ancient traditions, superstitions, and any claims about reality that could not stand the test of enlightened reason. The great themes of the Enlightenment were reason, nature, and progress. If we will use our reason to understand nature and history, we can make material and moral progress as we move toward an ultimate perfection of life on earth. Among the resources of reason none was more important than science in providing the truth that would enlighten us and help us make life better. Science was based on evidence we could test. It solved one problem after another. It worked. It was creating a picture of the world and of human beings that was so convincing to so many that it gradually weakened other ways of knowing or pushed them aside. For Christians it raised a disturbing question: If the Bible could be wrong in matters of fact, could it also be wrong about matters of faith?

2. The second challenge was that science undermined biblical cosmology. The Bible had provided Christian Europe its basic story of the origin of the cosmos and the structure of the natural world for 1500 hundred years. Between 1500-1900 of the Christian era, this understanding was demolished. The biblical picture was that of a three-story universe with the earth in the middle, heaven above, and hell below. This world came into being a few thousand years ago with all the species of plant and animal life reproducing after their kind. Adam and Eve were real people living in a garden that could roughly be located on a map. A series of discoveries from Copernicus to Darwin demonstrated that picture of the universe and of human origins to be in error. Copernicus showed that the earth was not in the center of the world. His suggestion that the sun was the center was also wrong, but that is another story. Next geology revealed the earth to be much older than the biblical chronology allowed. Then came Darwin with the big bombshell. In 1859 the world was shaken by the claim that present species of life have evolved over a long period of time by natural selection to produce the forms of life that now inhabit the earth. The most disturbing feature of this theory was that human beings did not descend from Adam and Eve a few thousand years ago but evolved from earlier species that could be traced back to the first beginnings of life on earth far in the distant past.

The Christian world was deeply disturbed. A few came pretty quickly to the conclusion that Darwin was right. They saw that there was no point in trying to resist. Others were upset and simply refused to believe it. They insisted that the Bible not science gave us the true picture. In England Bishop Wilberforce reacted with sarcasm. He asked Julian Huxley, the great scientist, whether it was on his mother's side or his father's side that he was descended from apes. An upper class, aristocratic British lady upon hearing about Darwin's theory said, "Oh dear, that is so dreadful. Let us hope it is not true. But if it is, let us keep quiet about it." In America Charles Hodge, the eminent Presbyterian theologian at Princeton, said that Darwinism is atheism. This was all taking place from 1860-1900. I saw a book by a fundamentalist Christian written in this century who said that he had seen performers in the circus riding two horses at one time, one foot on one horse and the other foot on the other. However, he noted that he had never seen this done when the horses were going in opposite directions. In his mind the Bible and evolution were going in opposite directions.

This, then, is the second impact of science. It undermined the biblical picture of the physical and biological world. The controversy raised by Darwin goes on today. Liberal Christians accept evolution and revise their view of the Bible and of the world accordingly. Fundamentalists still insist that Darwin was wrong and the Bible is right. Some want creationism taught in the public schools along with evolution.

3. The third challenge was the fact that the scientific picture of a law-abiding world called into question the reality of miracle and the supernatural. Science pictures nature as a dynamic, causal network, self-contained and self-explanatory. There is one order of activities in which all events occur in a law-abiding fashion. In this view miracles are suspect. The Bible is full of miracles from the Red Sea incident to the Virgin Birth of Jesus and his Resurrection from the dead, to mention only a few. John Calvin had used miracles and the fulfillment of prophesy as evidence of the truth of Scripture. Now it was miracles themselves that were in question. Could Christians live everyday in a world that abided by the laws of nature and then go to church on Sunday and believe in miracles that violated them?

4. The fourth challenge was that the picture of nature as a self-contained causal system called into question the need for a supernatural creator or for any reference to divine purpose. From the 17th century beginnings until the 20th century revolutions in physical science, the natural order had been described by science in mechanistic, deterministic, materialist terms. Nature consists of bits of material stuff - matter - organized into a machine that operates in accordance with inexorable laws. The natural order is at best a neutral and at worst a meaningless process. There are causes but no reasons or purposes in nature. In nature there is no freedom, no meaning, or value. This is the most powerful and daunting challenge of all. Science seemed to imply a universe that needed no God to create it. It was a machine that required no explanation beyond itself. This machine did just what it did do, not knowing or caring what it did or having any purpose in doing it . In 1903 Bertrand Russell offered the most extreme summary of this outlook by saying that the world science presents for our belief is meaningless and void of purpose, an accidental collocation of atoms.[18] A lot of people, including myself, do not think that present-day science requires this world-view, but it prevailed for 300 years.[19] Moreover, many scientists today still hold that nature is full of causes but exemplifies no purpose.[20]

We could go on with this at great length. I have by no means given the complete picture, but let me turn now to the response of theology to these challenges. Let me speak briefly of two main types of response. I will then divide the second type into two sub-groups. This will leave out a lot that needs to be said to get the complete picture, but it will at least give some hint as to how Christian theology has met the challenge of modern science. I will call the two basic responses by the short-hand terms of fundamentalism and liberalism, recognizing that each of these schools of thought comes in many varieties. Moreover, some views would fall in between. To get the main point before us at once, let me say that fundamentalism says the Bible is right about everything, and that if science says something different, it must be rejected. Liberals say that science and the Bible are both right within their own legitimate spheres, but they deal with different aspects of reality. Therefore, there need not be any conflict between science and theology.

Fundamentalism: Fundamentalists hold the view that the Bible is inerrant, without error. It tells the truth about everything it mentions. It is right about nature, the universe, the origin of human beings, the reproduction of species, and so on. All of its historical claims are true. The miracle stories happened just the way the Bible says. There is to be no compromise of biblical truth. The Bible is the Word of God in a full, complete, total manner and in all respects. Hence, if the Bible teaches that Adam and Eve were literal people living a garden somewhere on earth that we could locate on earth, then that story is just true. If evolution teaches something contrary to what the right interpretation of Scripture requires, then it is wrong. True science is in harmony with the Bible. Whatever contradicts the Bible is bad science. Some conservatives have made a variety of accommodations to science with respect to biblical cosmology, the age of the earth, and even evolution. Some even venture to distinguish between matters of science not essential to religious truth and matters of faith in which the Bible is without any error at all. As the recognition of the authority of science grows with respect to its own legitimate field of inquiry, the closer it comes to blending in with a moderate liberal approach. At some point the boundaries between science and theology and between fundamentalism and liberalism may become fuzzy.

Liberalism: What all forms of liberalism agree on is that science is not to be contested on its own terms. If the scientific evidence shows conclusively that evolution occurred in the way that present-day science says it did, then it must be accepted. We simply have to come to terms with it. The basic way of doing that is to distinguish between the realms that science and religion deal with. Here let me distinguish very broadly between two sub-types of liberal thinking that make the distinction between science and theology in somewhat different ways. They agree with the basic liberal premise is that we must distinguish between two spheres of knowledge about reality.

1. The first approach is deeply influenced by the philosophy of Immanuel Kant. Kant distinguished between the realm of fact that science deals with and the realm of value that morality and religion deal with. It is true that science presents us with a world of fact that is law-abiding and void of freedom and value. However, we have another faculty of understanding as moral persons who are free, who can live in accordance with duty, and make value judgments. Theology interprets the moral and religious realms. Science and religion cannot contradict each other since they deal with different spheres of human activity and deal with the world in

different ways. Many theologians in the 19th and 20th centuries have taken their clues from Kant. Karl Barth, Emil Brunner, Rudolf Bultmann, and H. Richard Niebuhr fall into this camp. Existential theology under the joint influence of Kant and Kierkegaard takes this approach. The world, then, is one order of activities that human beings deal with in two different ways. On the one hand, we have the realm of fact, law, cause, and determinism. On the other hand, we have the realm of value, meaning, purpose, and freedom. Morality and religion are in this second sphere, and theology is the interpreter of the moral and religious experience of human beings in relation to God. Science neither contradicts or supports religion. It has its own methods and its own subject matter. The same is true of theology. It cannot call into question the findings of science, but it can accept them whatever they are and then go on to make its own claims based on Scripture, tradition, reason, and experience. However, it does mean that much of the Bible cannot be taken literally. The Bible is not a book of science. The creation stories Genesis have to be seen as myths that contain moral and religious truth for our lives today in a world that was produced by a long evolutionary process. Many liberals rejected the virgin birth and the literal resurrection of Jesus and many other miracle stories because these miracles are contrary to what science knows about physical and biological laws. Science tells us about facts. Religion tells us about values - to oversimplify the matter.

It is important to recognize that this view holds that it does not matter to faith what science says about the nature of the world. In the 19th century and on into the early 20th the prevailing scientific cosmology was materialistic, mechanistic, and materialistic. Nature is a realm without freedom, meaning, and value. If 20th century science after relativity, quantum mechanics, indeterminacy, and the like no longer implies this particular world-view, then it does not matter much. Faith does not look to science for its foundations, and it is not threatened by anything that science could possibly say. Hence, theology can be basically indifferent to any and all cosmologies that implied by the scientific account of nature and the world of observable objects. Faith has to do with the decisions and commitments of selves in quest of meaning and purpose as moral personalities. The two realms may converse with each other, but neither can undermine or support the other.[21]

2. The second type of liberal approach is very much like the first in many ways. It differs primarily in that it does not make a sharp division between science and theology or between facts and values. Instead of a dualism between the world as known by disinterested observers, on the one hand, and committed moral selves, on the other hand, this approach speaks of different dimensions of the same events or things as objective entities. Science gives us a partial picture of the whole. It gives us one perspective on the world. The full and complete reality has many dimensions, some of which are not discerned by scientific methods. The part it deals with by its particular approach is completely true within those limits. Science abstracts from the whole and investigates nature in so far as it can be observed by the senses or measured and quantified with the aid of technology. Philosophy is needed to ask about the nature and meaning of the totality, about reality in its fulness and wholeness. Science gives us a perspective on the whole, but it does not tell us the whole truth about the whole of reality. Philosophy must do that, and theology does the same with the special task of interpreting the meaning of the Christian tradition within this framework. Process theology under the influence of Alfred North Whitehead is the best example of this approach. It is much like the first liberal type but instead of a sharp dualism between science and theology or between facts and values, the second speaks of part and whole. Science deals with the dimension of reality that its methods allow it to examine. Philosophy deals with the whole from which science abstracts. Theology deals with the moral and religious dimensions of the whole of reality and focuses on the reality of God in relation to the world and human beings.

So each of these liberal types holds that science and theology deal with different subject matter or with the same subject matter in different ways. Theology can be true in its sphere, and science can be true in its sphere, and neither interferes with or contradicts the work of the other.

3.2: Pascal's Wager

14 Pascal's Wager

The Wager[23]

343 (6-233)

If there is a God, He is infinitely incomprehensible, since, having neither parts nor limits, He has no affinity to us. We are then incapable of knowing either what He is or if He is. This being so, who will dare to undertake the decision of the question? Not we, who have no affinity to Him.

Who then will blame Christians for not being able to give a reason for their belief, since they profess a religion for which they cannot give a reason? They declare, in expounding it to the world, that it is a foolishness, I Cor. 1. 21. ["For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."]; and then you complain that they do not prove it! If they proved it, they would not keep their word; it is in lacking proofs that they are not lacking in sense. "Yes, but although this excuses those who offer it as such and takes away from them the blame of putting it forward without reason, it does not excuse those who receive it." Let us then examine this point, and say, "God is, or He is not." But to which side shall we incline? Reason can decide nothing here. There is an infinite chaos which separated us. A game is being played at the extremity of this infinite distance where heads or tails will turn up. What will you wager? According to reason, you can do neither the one thing nor the other; according to reason, you can defend neither of the propositions.

Do not, then, reprove for error those who have made a choice; for you know nothing about it. "No, but I blame them for having made, not this choice, but a choice; for again both he who chooses heads and he who chooses tails are equally at fault, they are both in the wrong. The true course is not to wager at all."

Yes; but you must wager. It is not optional. You are embarked. Which will you choose then? Let us see. Since you must choose, let us see which interests you least. You have two things to lose, the true and the good; and two things to stake, your reason and your will, your knowledge and your happiness; and your nature has two things to shun, error and misery. Your reason is no more shocked in choosing one rather than the other, since you must of necessity choose. This is one point settled. But your happiness? Let us weigh the gain and the loss in wagering that God is. Let us estimate these two chances. If you gain, you gain all; if you lose, you lose nothing. Wager, then, without hesitation that He is. "That is very fine. Yes, I must wager; but I may perhaps wager too much." Let us see. Since there is an equal risk of gain and of loss, if you had only to gain two lives, instead of one, you might still wager. But if there were three lives to gain, you would have to play (since you are under the necessity of playing), and you would be imprudent, when you are forced to play, not to chance your life to gain three at a game where there is an equal risk of loss and gain. But there is an eternity of life and happiness. And this being so, if there were an infinity of chances, of which one only would be for you, you would still be right in wagering one to win two, and you would act stupidly, being obliged to play, by refusing to stake one life against three at a game in which out of an infinity of chances there is one for you, if there were an infinity of an infinitely happy life to gain. But there is here an infinity of an infinitely happy life to gain, a chance of gain against a finite number of chances of loss, and what you stake is finite. It is all divided; where-ever the infinite is and there is not an infinity of chances of loss against that of gain, there is no time to hesitate, you must give all. And thus, when one is forced to play, he must renounce reason to preserve his life, rather than risk it for infinite gain, as likely to happen as the loss of nothingness.

For it is no use to say it is uncertain if we will gain, and it is certain that we risk, and that the infinite distance between the certainly of what is staked and the uncertainty of what will be gained, equals the finite good which is certainly staked against the uncertain infinite. It is not so, as every player stakes a certainty to gain an uncertainty, and yet he stakes a finite certainty to gain a finite uncertainty, without transgressing against reason. There is not an infinite distance between the certainty staked and the uncertainty of the gain; that is untrue. In truth, there is an infinity between the certainty of gain and the certainty of loss. But the uncertainty of the gain is proportioned to the certainty of the stake according to the proportion of the chances of gain and loss. Hence it comes that, if there are as many risks on one side as on the other, the course is to play even; and then the certainty of the stake is equal to the uncertainty of the gain, so far is it from fact that there is an infinite distance between them. And so our proposition is of infinite force, when there is the finite to stake in a game where there are equal risks of gain and of loss, and the infinite to gain. This is demonstrable; and if men are capable of any truths, this is one.

"I confess it, I admit it. But, still, is there no means of seeing the faces of the cards?" Yes, Scripture and the rest, etc. "Yes, but I have my hands tied and my mouth closed; I am forced to wager, and am not free. I am not released, and am so made that I cannot believe. What, then, would you have me do?"

True. But at least learn your inability to believe, since reason brings you to this, and yet you cannot believe. Endeavor, then, to convince yourself, not by increase of proofs of God, but by the abatement of your passions. You would like to attain faith and do not know the way; you would like to cure yourself of unbelief and ask the remedy for it. Learn of those who have been bound like you, and who now stake all their possessions. These are people who know the way which you would follow, and who are cured of an ill of which you would be cured. Follow the way by which they began; by acting as if they believed, taking the holy water, having masses said, etc. Even this will naturally make you believe, and deaden your acuteness. "But this is what I am afraid of." And why? What have you to lose?

But to show you that this leads you there, it is this which will lessen the passions, which are your stumbling-blocks.

The end of this discourse.-- Now, what harm will befall you in taking this side? You will be faithful, humble, grateful, generous, a sincere friend, truthful. Certainly you will not have those poisonous pleasures, glory and luxury; but will you not have others? I will tell you that you will thereby gain in this life, and that, at each step you take on this road, you will see so great certainty of gain, so much nothingness in what you risk, that you will at last recognize that you have wagered for something certain and infinite, for which you have given nothing.

3.3: Anselm's Ontological Argument and Gaunilo's Lost Island

Anselm's "Ontological Argument"[24]

Therefore, Lord, you who give knowledge of the faith, give me as much knowledge as you know to be fitting for me, because you are as we believe and that which we believe. And indeed we believe you are something greater than which cannot be thought. Or is there no such kind of thing, for "the fool said in his heart, 'there is no God'" (Ps. 13:1, 52:1)? But certainly that same fool, having heard what I just said, "something greater than which cannot be thought," understands what he heard, and what he understands is in his thought, even if he does not think it exists. For it is one thing for something to exist in a person's thought and quite another for the person to think that thing exists. For when a painter thinks ahead to what he will paint, he has that picture in his thought, but he does not yet think it exists, because he has not done it yet. Once he has painted it he has it in his thought and thinks it exists because he has done it. Thus even the fool is compelled to grant that something greater than which cannot be thought exists in thought, because he understands what he hears, and whatever is understood exists in thought. And certainly that greater than which cannot be understood cannot exist only in thought, for if it exists only in thought it could also be thought of as existing in reality as well, which is greater. If, therefore, that than which greater cannot be thought exists in thought alone, then that than which greater cannot be thought turns out to be that than which something greater actually can be thought, but that is obviously impossible. Therefore something than which greater cannot be thought undoubtedly exists both in thought and in reality.

Gaunilo's "Lost Island Objection"

For example, they say there is in the ocean somewhere an island which, due to the difficulty (or rather the impossibility) of finding what does not actually exist, is called "the lost island." And they say that this island has all manner of riches and delights, even more of them than the Isles of the Blest, and having no owner or inhabitant it is superior in the abundance of its riches to all other lands which are inhabited by men. If someone should tell me that such is the case, I will find it easy to understand what he says, since there is nothing difficult about it. But suppose he then adds, as if he were stating a logical consequence, "Well then, you can no longer doubt that this island more excellent than all other lands really exists somewhere, since you do not doubt that it is in your mind; and since it is more excellent to exist not only in the mind but in reality as well, this island must necessarily exist, because if it didn't, any other island really existing would be more excellent than it, and thus that island now thought of by you as more excellent will not be such." If, I say, someone tries to convince me though this argument that the island really exists and there should be no more doubt about it, I will either think he is joking or I will have a hard time deciding who is the bigger fool, me if I believe him or him if he thinks he has proved its existence without having first convinced me that this excellence is something undoubtedly existing in reality and not just something false or uncertain existing in my mind.

3.4: Aquinas' Cosmological Argument

16 Aquinas' Cosmological Argument

Summa Theologiae[25]

Article 1. Whether the existence of God is self-evident?

Objection 1. It seems that the existence of God is self-evident. Now those things are said to be self-evident to us the knowledge of which is naturally implanted in us, as we can see in regard to first principles. But as Damascene says (De Fide Orth. i, 1,3), "the knowledge of God is naturally implanted in all." Therefore the existence of God is self-evident.

Objection 2. Further, those things are said to be self-evident which are known as soon as the terms are known, which the Philosopher (1 Poster. iii) says is true of the first principles of demonstration. Thus, when the nature of a whole and of a part is known, it is at once recognized that every whole is greater than its part. But as soon as the signification of the word "God" is understood, it is at once seen that God exists. For by this word is signified that thing than which nothing greater can be conceived. But that which exists actually and mentally is greater than that which exists only mentally. Therefore, since as soon as the word "God" is understood it exists mentally, it also follows that it exists actually. Therefore the proposition "God exists" is self-evident.

Objection 3. Further, the existence of truth is self-evident. For whoever denies the existence of truth grants that truth does not exist: and, if truth does not exist, then the proposition "Truth does not exist" is true: and if there is anything true, there must be truth. But God is truth itself: "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6) Therefore "God exists" is self-evident.

On the contrary, No one can mentally admit the opposite of what is self-evident; as the Philosopher (Metaph. iv, lect. vi) states concerning the first principles of demonstration. But the opposite of the proposition "God is" can be mentally admitted: "The fool said in his heart, There is no God" (Psalm 53:2). Therefore, that God exists is not self-evident.

I answer that, A thing can be self-evident in either of two ways: on the one hand, self-evident in itself, though not to us; on the other, self-evident in itself, and to us. A proposition is self-evident because the predicate is included in the essence of the subject, as "Man is an animal," for animal is contained in the essence of man. If, therefore the essence of the predicate and subject be known to all, the proposition will be self-evident to all; as is clear with regard to the first principles of demonstration, the terms of which are common things that no one is ignorant of, such as being and non-being, whole and part, and such like. If, however, there are some to whom the essence of the predicate and subject is unknown, the proposition will be self-evident in itself, but not to those who do not know the meaning of the predicate and subject of the proposition. Therefore, it happens, as Boethius says (Hebdom., the title of which is: "Whether all that is, is good"), "that there are some mental concepts self-evident only to the learned, as that incorporeal substances are not in space." Therefore I say that this proposition, "God exists," of itself is self-evident, for the predicate is the same as the subject, because God is His own existence as will be hereafter shown (I:3:4). Now because we do not know the essence of God, the proposition is not self-evident to us; but needs to be demonstrated by things that are more known to us, though less known in their nature — namely, by effects.

Reply to Objection 1. To know that God exists in a general and confused way is implanted in us by nature, inasmuch as God is man's beatitude. For man naturally desires happiness, and what is naturally desired by man must be naturally known to him. This, however, is not to know absolutely that God exists; just as to know that someone is approaching is not the same as to know that Peter is approaching, even though it is Peter who is approaching; for many there are who imagine that man's perfect good which is happiness, consists in riches, and others in pleasures, and others in something else.

Reply to Objection 2. Perhaps not everyone who hears this word "God" understands it to signify something than which nothing greater can be thought, seeing that some have believed God to be a body. Yet, granted that everyone understands that by this word "God" is signified something than which nothing greater can be thought, nevertheless, it does not therefore follow that he understands that what the word signifies exists actually, but only that it exists mentally. Nor can it be argued that it actually exists, unless it be admitted that there actually exists something than which nothing greater can be thought; and this precisely is not admitted by those who hold that God does not exist.

Reply to Objection 3. The existence of truth in general is self-evident but the existence of a Primal Truth is not self-evident to us.

Article 2. Whether it can be demonstrated that God exists?

Objection 1. It seems that the existence of God cannot be demonstrated. For it is an article of faith that God exists. But what is of faith cannot be demonstrated, because a demonstration produces scientific knowledge; whereas faith is of the unseen (Hebrews

11:1). Therefore it cannot be demonstrated that God exists.

Objection 2. Further, the essence is the middle term of demonstration. But we cannot know in what God's essence consists, but solely in what it does not consist; as Damascene says (De Fide Orth. i, 4). Therefore we cannot demonstrate that God exists.

Objection 3. Further, if the existence of God were demonstrated, this could only be from His effects. But His effects are not proportionate to Him, since He is infinite and His effects are finite; and between the finite and infinite there is no proportion. Therefore, since a cause cannot be demonstrated by an effect not proportionate to it, it seems that the existence of God cannot be demonstrated.

On the contrary, The Apostle says: "The invisible things of Him are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made" (Romans 1:20). But this would not be unless the existence of God could be demonstrated through the things that are made; for the first thing we must know of anything is whether it exists.

I answer that, Demonstration can be made in two ways: One is through the cause, and is called "a priori," and this is to argue from what is prior absolutely. The other is through the effect, and is called a demonstration "a posteriori"; this is to argue from what is prior relatively only to us. When an effect is better known to us than its cause, from the effect we proceed to the knowledge of the cause. And from every effect the existence of its proper cause can be demonstrated, so long as its effects are better known to us; because since every effect depends upon its cause, if the effect exists, the cause must pre-exist. Hence the existence of God, in so far as it is not self-evident to us, can be demonstrated from those of His effects which are known to us.

Reply to Objection 1. The existence of God and other like truths about God, which can be known by natural reason, are not articles of faith, but are preambles to the articles; for faith presupposes natural knowledge, even as grace presupposes nature, and perfection supposes something that can be perfected. Nevertheless, there is nothing to prevent a man, who cannot grasp a proof, accepting, as a matter of faith, something which in itself is capable of being scientifically known and demonstrated.

Reply to Objection 2. When the existence of a cause is demonstrated from an effect, this effect takes the place of the definition of the cause in proof of the cause's existence. This is especially the case in regard to God, because, in order to prove the existence of anything, it is necessary to accept as a middle term the meaning of the word, and not its essence, for the question of its essence follows on the question of its existence. Now the names given to God are derived from His effects; consequently, in demonstrating the existence of God from His effects, we may take for the middle term the meaning of the word "God".

Reply to Objection 3. From effects not proportionate to the cause no perfect knowledge of that cause can be obtained. Yet from every effect the existence of the cause can be clearly demonstrated, and so we can demonstrate the existence of God from His effects; though from them we cannot perfectly know God as He is in His essence.

Article 3. Whether God exists?

Objection 1. It seems that God does not exist; because if one of two contraries be infinite, the other would be altogether destroyed. But the word "God" means that He is infinite goodness. If, therefore, God existed, there would be no evil discoverable; but there is evil in the world. Therefore God does not exist.

Objection 2. Further, it is superfluous to suppose that what can be accounted for by a few principles has been produced by many. But it seems that everything we see in the world can be accounted for by other principles, supposing God did not exist. For all natural things can be reduced to one principle which is nature; and all voluntary things can be reduced to one principle which is human reason, or will. Therefore there is no need to suppose God's existence.

On the contrary, It is said in the person of God: "I am Who am." (Exodus 3:14)

I answer that, The existence of God can be proved in five ways.

The first and more manifest way is the argument from motion. It is certain, and evident to our senses, that in the world some things are in motion. Now whatever is in motion is put in motion by another, for nothing can be in motion except it is in potentiality to that towards which it is in motion; whereas a thing moves inasmuch as it is in act. For motion is nothing else than the reduction of something from potentiality to actuality. But nothing can be reduced from potentiality to actuality, except by something in a state of actuality. Thus that which is actually hot, as fire, makes wood, which is potentially hot, to be actually hot, and thereby moves and changes it. Now it is not possible that the same thing should be at once in actuality and potentiality in the same respect, but only in different respects. For what is actually hot cannot simultaneously be potentially hot; but it is simultaneously potentially cold. It is therefore impossible that in the same respect and in the same way a thing should be both mover and moved, i.e. that it should move itself. Therefore, whatever is in motion must be put in motion by another. If that by which it is put in motion be itself put in motion,

then this also must needs be put in motion by another, and that by another again. But this cannot go on to infinity, because then there would be no first mover, and, consequently, no other mover; seeing that subsequent movers move only inasmuch as they are put in motion by the first mover; as the staff moves only because it is put in motion by the hand. Therefore it is necessary to arrive at a first mover, put in motion by no other; and this everyone understands to be God.

The second way is from the nature of the efficient cause. In the world of sense we find there is an order of efficient causes. There is no case known (neither is it, indeed, possible) in which a thing is found to be the efficient cause of itself; for so it would be prior to itself, which is impossible. Now in efficient causes it is not possible to go on to infinity, because in all efficient causes following in order, the first is the cause of the intermediate cause, and the intermediate is the cause of the ultimate cause, whether the intermediate cause be several, or only one. Now to take away the cause is to take away the effect. Therefore, if there be no first cause among efficient causes, there will be no ultimate, nor any intermediate cause. But if in efficient causes it is possible to go on to infinity, there will be no first efficient cause, neither will there be an ultimate effect, nor any intermediate efficient causes; all of which is plainly false. Therefore it is necessary to admit a first efficient cause, to which everyone gives the name of God.

The third way is taken from possibility and necessity, and runs thus. We find in nature things that are possible to be and not to be, since they are found to be generated, and to corrupt, and consequently, they are possible to be and not to be. But it is impossible for these always to exist, for that which is possible not to be at some time is not. Therefore, if everything is possible not to be, then at one time there could have been nothing in existence. Now if this were true, even now there would be nothing in existence, because that which does not exist only begins to exist by something already existing. Therefore, if at one time nothing was in existence, it would have been impossible for anything to have begun to exist; and thus even now nothing would be in existence — which is absurd. Therefore, not all beings are merely possible, but there must exist something the existence of which is necessary. But every necessary thing either has its necessity caused by another, or not. Now it is impossible to go on to infinity in necessary things which have their necessity caused by another, as has been already proved in regard to efficient causes. Therefore we cannot but postulate the existence of some being having of itself its own necessity, and not receiving it from another, but rather causing in others their necessity. This all men speak of as God.

The fourth way is taken from the gradation to be found in things. Among beings there are some more and some less good, true, noble and the like. But "more" and "less" are predicated of different things, according as they resemble in their different ways something which is the maximum, as a thing is said to be hotter according as it more nearly resembles that which is hottest; so that there is something which is truest, something best, something noblest and, consequently, something which is uttermost being; for those things that are greatest in truth are greatest in being, as it is written in Metaph. ii. Now the maximum in any genus is the cause of all in that genus; as fire, which is the maximum heat, is the cause of all hot things. Therefore there must also be something which is to all beings the cause of their being, goodness, and every other perfection; and this we call God.

The fifth way is taken from the governance of the world. We see that things which lack intelligence, such as natural bodies, act for an end, and this is evident from their acting always, or nearly always, in the same way, so as to obtain the best result. Hence it is plain that not fortuitously, but designedly, do they achieve their end. Now whatever lacks intelligence cannot move towards an end, unless it be directed by some being endowed with knowledge and intelligence; as the arrow is shot to its mark by the archer. Therefore some intelligent being exists by whom all natural things are directed to their end; and this being we call God.

Reply to Objection 1. As Augustine says (Enchiridion xi): "Since God is the highest good, He would not allow any evil to exist in His works, unless His omnipotence and goodness were such as to bring good even out of evil." This is part of the infinite goodness of God, that He should allow evil to exist, and out of it produce good.

Reply to Objection 2. Since nature works for a determinate end under the direction of a higher agent, whatever is done by nature must needs be traced back to God, as to its first cause. So also whatever is done voluntarily must also be traced back to some higher cause other than human reason or will, since these can change or fail; for all things that are changeable and capable of defect must be traced back to an immovable and self-necessary first principle, as was shown in the body of the Article.

3.5: Paley's Watchmaker Argument

17 Paley's Watchmaker Argument

The Teleological Argument[26]

CHAPTER I.

STATE OF THE ARGUMENT.

IN crossing a health, suppose I pitched my foot against a stone, and were asked how the stone came to be there; I might possibly answer, that, for any thing I knew to the contrary, it had lain there for ever: nor would it perhaps be very easy to show the absurdity of this answer. But suppose I had found a watch upon the ground, and it should be inquired how the watch happened to be in that place; I should hardly think of the answer which I had before given, that, for any thing I knew, the watch might have always been there. Yet why should not this answer serve for the watch as well as for the stone? why is it not as admissible in the second case, as in the first? For this reason, and for no other, viz. that, when we come to inspect the watch, we perceive (what we could not discover in the stone) that its several parts are framed and put together for a purpose, e. g. that they are so formed and adjusted as to produce motion, and that motion so regulated as to point out the hour of the day; that, if the different parts had been differently shaped from what they are, of a different size from what they are, or placed after any other manner, or in any other order, than that in which they are placed, either no motion at all would have been carried on in the machine, or none which would have answered the use that is now served by it. To reckon up a few of the plainest of these parts, and of their offices, all tending to one result:-- We see a cylindrical box containing a coiled elastic spring, which, by its endeavour to relax itself, turns round the box. We next observe a flexible chain (artificially wrought for the sake of flexure), communicating the action of the spring from the box to the fusee. We then find a series of wheels, the teeth of which catch in, and apply to, each other, conducting the motion from the fusee to the balance, and from the balance to the pointer; and at the same time, by the size and shape of those wheels, so regulating that motion, as to terminate in causing an index, by an equable and measured progression, to pass over a given space in a given time. We take notice that the wheels are made of brass in order to keep them from rust; the springs of steel, no other metal being so elastic; that over the face of the watch there is placed a glass, a material employed in no other part of the work, but in the room of which, if there had been any other than a transparent substance, the hour could not be seen without opening the case. This mechanism being observed (it requires indeed an examination of the instrument, and perhaps some previous knowledge of the subject, to perceive and understand it; but being once, as we have said, observed and understood), the inference, we think, is inevitable, that the watch must have had a maker: that there must have existed, at some time, and at some place or other, an artificer or artificers who formed it for the purpose which we find it actually to answer; who comprehended its construction, and designed its use.

I. Nor would it, I apprehend, weaken the conclusion, that we had never seen a watch made; that we had never known an artist capable of making one; that we were altogether incapable of executing such a piece of workmanship ourselves, or of understanding in what manner it was performed; all this being no more than what is true of some exquisite remains of ancient art, of some lost arts, and, to the generality of mankind, of the more curious productions of modern manufacture. Does one man in a million know how oval frames are turned? Ignorance of this kind exalts our opinion of the unseen and unknown artist's skill, if he be unseen and unknown, but raises no doubt in our minds of the existence and agency of such an artist, at some former time, and in some place or other. Nor can I perceive that it varies at all the inference, whether the question arise concerning a human agent, or concerning an agent of a different species, or an agent possessing, in some respects, a different nature.

II. Neither, secondly, would it invalidate our conclusion, that the watch sometimes went wrong, or that it seldom went exactly right. The purpose of the machinery, the design, and the designer, might be evident, and in the case supposed would be evident, in whatever way we accounted for the irregularity of the movement, or whether we could account for it or not. It is not necessary that a machine be perfect, in order to show with what design it was made: still less necessary, where the only question is, whether it were made with any design at all.

III. Nor, thirdly, would it bring any uncertainty into the argument, if there were a few parts of the watch, concerning which we could not discover, or had not yet discovered, in what manner they conduced to the general effect; or even some parts, concerning which we could not ascertain, whether they conduced to that effect in any manner whatever. For, as to the first branch of the case; if by the loss, or disorder, or decay of the parts in question, the movement of the watch were found in fact to be stopped, or disturbed, or retarded, no doubt would remain in our minds as to the utility or intention of these parts, although we should be unable to investigate the manner according to which, or the connexion by which, the ultimate effect depended upon their action or assistance; and the more complex is the machine, the more likely is this obscurity to arise. Then, as to the second thing supposed, namely, that

there were parts which might be spared, without prejudice to the movement of the watch, and that we had proved this by experiment,--these superfluous parts, even if we were completely assured that they were such, would not vacate the reasoning which we had instituted concerning other parts. The indication of contrivance remained, with respect to them, nearly as it was before.

IV. Nor, fourthly, would any man in his senses think the existence of the watch, with its various machinery, accounted for, by being told that it was one out of possible combinations of material forms; that whatever he had found in the place where he found the watch, must have contained some internal configuration or other; and that this configuration might be the structure now exhibited, viz. of the works of a watch, as well as a different structure.

V. Nor, fifthly, would it yield his inquiry more satisfaction to be answered, that there existed in things a principle of order, which had disposed the parts of the watch into their present form and situation. He never knew a watch made by the principle of order; nor can he even form to himself an idea of what is meant by a principle of order, distinct from the intelligence of the watch-maker.

VI. Sixthly, he would be surprised to hear that the mechanism of the watch was no proof of contrivance, only a motive to induce the mind to think so:

VII. And not less surprised to be informed, that the watch in his hand was nothing more than the result of the laws of metallicnature. It is a perversion of language to assign any law, as the efficient, operative cause of any thing. A law presupposes an agent; for it is only the mode, according to which an agent proceeds: it implies a power; for it is the order, according to which that power acts. Without this agent, without this power, which are both distinct from itself, the law does nothing; is nothing. The expression, "the law of metallic nature," may sound strange and harsh to a philosophic ear; but it seems quite as justifiable as some others which are more familiar to him, such as "the law of vegetable nature," "the law of animal nature," or indeed as "the law of nature" in general, when assigned as the cause of phænomena, in exclusion of agency and power; or when it is substituted into the place of these.

VIII. Neither, lastly, would our observer be driven out of his conclusion, or from his confidence in its truth, by being told that he knew nothing at all about the matter. He knows enough for his argument: he knows the utility of the end: he knows the subserviency and adaptation of the means to the end. These points being known, his ignorance of other points, his doubts concerning other points, affect not the certainty of his reasoning. The consciousness of knowing little, need not beget a distrust of that which he does know.

3.6: Hume and “The Problem of Evil”

18 Hume and “The Problem of Evil”

The Problem of Evil[27]

PART X.

It is my opinion, I own, replied Demea, that each man feels, in a manner, the truth of religion within his own breast, and, from a consciousness of his imbecility and misery, rather than from any reasoning, is led to seek protection from that Being, on whom he and all nature is dependent. So anxious or so tedious are even the best scenes of life, that futurity is still the object of all our hopes and fears. We incessantly look forward, and endeavour, by prayers, adoration, and sacrifice, to appease those unknown powers, whom we find, by experience, so able to afflict and oppress us. Wretched creatures that we are! what resource for us amidst the innumerable ills of life, did not religion suggest some methods of atonement, and appease those terrors with which we are incessantly agitated and tormented?

I am indeed persuaded, said Philo, that the best, and indeed the only method of bringing every one to a due sense of religion, is by just representations of the misery and wickedness of men. And for that purpose a talent of eloquence and strong imagery is more requisite than that of reasoning and argument. For is it necessary to prove what every one feels within himself? It is only necessary to make us feel it, if possible, more intimately and sensibly.

The people, indeed, replied Demea, are sufficiently convinced of this great and melancholy truth. The miseries of life; the unhappiness of man; the general corruptions of our nature; the unsatisfactory enjoyment of pleasures, riches, honours; these phrases have become almost proverbial in all languages. And who can doubt of what all men declare from their own immediate feeling and experience?

In this point, said Philo, the learned are perfectly agreed with the vulgar; and in all letters, sacred and profane, the topic of human misery has been insisted on with the most pathetic eloquence that sorrow and melancholy could inspire. The poets, who speak from sentiment, without a system, and whose testimony has therefore the more authority, abound in images of this nature. From Homer down to Dr. Young, the whole inspired tribe have ever been sensible, that no other representation of things would suit the feeling and observation of each individual.

As to authorities, replied Demea, you need not seek them. Look round this library of Cleanthes. I shall venture to affirm, that, except authors of particular sciences, such as chemistry or botany, who have no occasion to treat of human life, there is scarce one of those innumerable writers, from whom the sense of human misery has not, in some passage or other, extorted a complaint and confession of it. At least, the chance is entirely on that side; and no one author has ever, so far as I can recollect, been so extravagant as to deny it.

There you must excuse me, said Philo: Leibnitz has denied it; and is perhaps the first 9 who ventured upon so bold and paradoxical an opinion; at least, the first who made it essential to his philosophical system.

And by being the first, replied Demea, might he not have been sensible of his error? For is this a subject in which philosophers can propose to make discoveries especially in so late an age? And can any man hope by a simple denial (for the subject scarcely admits of reasoning), to bear down the united testimony of mankind, founded on sense and consciousness?

And why should man, added he, pretend to an exemption from the lot of all other animals? The whole earth, believe me, Philo, is cursed and polluted. A perpetual war is kindled amongst all living creatures. Necessity, hunger, want, stimulate the strong and courageous: fear, anxiety, terror, agitate the weak and infirm. The first entrance into life gives anguish to the new-born infant and to its wretched parent: weakness, impotence, distress, attend each stage of that life: and it is at last finished in agony and horror.

Observe too, says Philo, the curious artifices of Nature, in order to embitter the life of every living being. The stronger prey upon the weaker, and keep them in perpetual terror and anxiety. The weaker too, in their turn, often prey upon the stronger, and vex and molest them without relaxation. Consider that innumerable race of insects, which either are bred on the body of each animal, or, flying about, infix their stings in him. These insects have others still less than themselves, which torment them. And thus on each hand, before and behind, above and below, every animal is surrounded with enemies, which incessantly seek his misery and distruction.

Man alone, said Demea, seems to be, in part, an exception to this rule. For by combination in society, he can easily master lions, tigers, and bears, whose greater strength and agility naturally enable them to prey upon him.

On the contrary, it is here chiefly, cried Philo, that the uniform and equal maxims of Nature are most apparent. Man, it is true, can, by combination, surmount all his real enemies, and become master of the whole animal creation: but does he not immediately raise up to himself imaginary enemies, the demons of his fancy, who haunt him with superstitious terrors, and blast every enjoyment of life? His pleasure, as he imagines, becomes, in their eyes, a crime: his food and repose give them umbrage and offence: his very sleep and dreams furnish new materials to anxious fear: and even death, his refuge from every other ill, presents only the dread of endless and innumerable woes. Nor does the wolf molest more the timid flock, than superstition does the anxious breast of wretched mortals.

Besides, consider, Demea: this very society, by which we surmount those wild beasts, our natural enemies; what new enemies does it not raise to us? What woe and misery does it not occasion? Man is the greatest enemy of man. Oppression, injustice, contempt, contumely, violence, sedition, war, calumny, treachery, fraud; by these they mutually torment each other; and they would soon dissolve that society which they had formed, were it not for the dread of still greater ills, which must attend their separation.

But though these external insults, said Demea, from animals, from men, from all the elements, which assault us, form a frightful catalogue of woes, they are nothing in comparison of those which arise within ourselves, from the distempered condition of our mind and body. How many lie under the lingering torment of diseases? Hear the pathetic enumeration of the great poet.

Intestine stone and ulcer, colic-pangs,

Demoniac frenzy, moping melancholy,

And moon-struck madness, pining atrohy,

Marasmus, and wide-wasting pestilence.

Dire was the tossing, deep the groans: DESPAIR

Tended the sick, busiest from couch to couch.

And over them triumphant DEATH his dart

Shook: but delay'd to strike, though oft invok'd

With vows, as their chief good and final hope.

The disorders of the mind, continued Demea, though more secret, are not perhaps less dismal and vexatious. Remorse, shame, anguish, rage, disappointment, anxiety, fear, dejection, despair; who has ever passed through life without cruel inroads from these tormentors? How many have scarcely ever felt any better sensations? Labour and poverty, so abhorred by every one, are the certain lot of the far greater number; and those few privileged persons, who enjoy ease and opulence, never reach contentment or true felicity. All the goods of life united would not make a very happy man; but all the ills united would make a wretch indeed; and any one of them almost (and who can be free from every one?) nay often the absence of one good (and who can possess all?) is sufficient to render life ineligible.

Were a stranger to drop on a sudden into this world, I would shew him, as a specimen of its ills, an hospital full of diseases, a prison crowded with malefactors and debtors, a field of battle strewed with carcases, a fleet foundering in the ocean, a nation languishing under tyranny, famine, or pestilence. To turn the gay side of life to him and give him a notion of its pleasures; whither should I conduct him? to a ball, to an opera, to court? He might justly think, that I was only shewing him a diversity of distress and sorrow.

There is no evading such striking instances, said Philo, but by apologies, which still further aggravate the charge. Why have all men, I ask, in all ages, complained incessantly of the miseries of life? . . . . They have no just reason, says one: these complaints proceed only from their discontented, repining, anxious disposition . . . . And can there possibly, I reply, be a more certain foundation of misery, than such a wretched temper?

But if they were really as unhappy as they pretend, says my antagonist, why do they remain in life? . . . .

Not satisfied with life, afraid of death.

This is the secret chain, say I, that holds us. We are terrified, not bribed to the continuance of our existence.

It is only a false delicacy, he may insist, which a few refined spirits indulge, and which has spread these complaints among the whole race of mankind. . . . And what is this delicacy, I ask, which you blame? Is it any thing but a greater sensibility to all the pleasures and pains of life? and if the man of a delicate, refined temper, by being so much more alive than the rest of the world, is only so much more unhappy, what judgment must we form in general of human life?

Let men remain at rest, says our adversary, and they will be easy. They are willing artificers of their own misery. . . . No! reply I: an anxious languor follows their repose; disappointment, vexation, trouble, their activity and ambition.

I can observe something like what you mention in some others, replied Cleanthes: but I confess I feel little or nothing of it in myself, and hope that it is not so common as you represent it.

If you feel not human misery yourself, cried Demea, I congratulate you on so happy a singularity. Others, seemingly the most prosperous, have not been ashamed to vent their complaints in the most melancholy strains. Let us attend to the great, the fortunate emperor, Charles V., when, tired with human grandeur, he resigned all his extensive dominions into the hands of his son. In the last harangue which he made on that memorable occasion, he publicly avowed, that the greatest prosperities which he had ever enjoyed, had been mixed with so many adversities, that he might truly say he had never enjoyed any satisfaction or contentment. But did the retired life, in which he sought for shelter, afford him any greater happiness? If we may credit his son's account, his repentance commenced the very day of his resignation.

Cicero's fortune, from small beginnings, rose to the greatest lustre and renown; yet what pathetic complaints of the ills of life do his familiar letters, as well as philosophical discourses, contain? And suitably to his own experience, he introduces Cato, the great, the fortunate Cato, protesting in his old age, that had he a new life in his offer, he would reject the present.

Ask yourself, ask any of your acquaintance, whether they would live over again the last ten or twenty years of their lives. No! but the next twenty, they say, will be better:

And from the dregs of life, hope to receive
What the first sprightly running could not give0.

Thus at last they find (such is the greatness of human misery, it reconciles even contradictions), that they complain at once of the shortness of life, and of its vanity and sorrow.

And is it possible, Cleanthes, said Philo, that after all these reflections, and infinitely more, which might be suggested, you can still persevere in your Anthropomorphism, and assert the moral attributes of the Deity, his justice, benevolence, mercy, and rectitude, to be of the same nature with these virtues in human creatures? His power we allow is infinite: whatever he wills is executed: but neither man nor any other animal is happy: therefore he does not will their happiness. His wisdom is infinite: he is never mistaken in choosing the means to any end: but the course of Nature tends not to human or animal felicity: therefore it is not established for that purpose. Through the whole compass of human knowledge, there are no inferences more certain and infallible than these. In what respect, then, do his benevolence and mercy resemble the benevolence and mercy of men?

Epicurus's old questions are yet unanswered.

Is he willing to prevent evil, but not able? then is he impotent. Is he able, but not willing? then is he malevolent. Is he both able and willing? whence then is evil?

You ascribe, Cleanthes (and I believe justly), a purpose and intention to Nature. But what, I beseech you, is the object of that curious artifice and machinery, which she has displayed in all animals? The preservation alone of individuals, and propagation of the species. It seems enough for her purpose, if such a rank be barely upheld in the universe, without any care or concern for the happiness of the members that compose it. No resource for this purpose: no machinery, in order merely to give pleasure or ease: no fund of pure joy and contentment: no indulgence, without some want or necessity accompanying it. At least, the few phenomena of this nature are overbalanced by opposite phenomena of still greater importance.

Our sense of music, harmony, and indeed beauty of all kinds, gives satisfaction, without being absolutely necessary to the preservation and propagation of the species. But what racking pains, on the other hand, arise from gouts, gravels, megrims, toothaches, rheumatisms, where the injury to the animal machinery is either small or incurable? Mirth, laughter, play, frolic, seems gratuitous satisfactions, which have no further tendency: spleen, melancholy, discontent, superstition, are pains of the same nature. How then does the Divine benevolence display itself, in the sense of you Anthropomorphites? None but we Mystics, as you were pleased to call us, can account for this strange mixture of phenomena, by deriving it from attributes, infinitely perfect, but incomprehensible.

And have you at last, said Cleanthes, smiling, betrayed your intentions, Philo? Your long agreement with Demea did indeed a little surprize me; but I find you were all the while erecting a concealed battery against me. And I must confess, that you have now fallen upon a subject worthy of your noble spirit of opposition and controversy. If you can make out the present point, and prove mankind to be unhappy or corrupted, there is an end at once of all religion. For to what purpose establish the natural attributes of the Deity, while the moral are still doubtful and uncertain?

You take umbrage very easily, replied Demea, at opinions the most innocent, and the most generally received, even amongst the religious and devout themselves: and nothing can be more surprising than to find a topic like this, concerning the wickedness and misery of man, charged with no less than Atheism and profaneness. Have not all pious divines and preachers, who have indulged their rhetoric on so fertile a subject; have they not easily, I say, given a solution of any difficulties which may attend it? This world is but a point in comparison of the universe; this life but a moment in comparison of eternity. The present evil phenomena, therefore, are rectified in other regions, and in some future period of existence. And the eyes of men, being then opened to larger views of things, see the whole connexion of general laws; and trace with adoration, the benevolence and rectitude of the Deity, through all the mazes and intricacies of his providence.

No! replied Cleanthes, No! These arbitrary suppositions can never be admitted, contrary to matter of fact, visible and uncontroverted. Whence can any cause be known but from its known effects? Whence can any hypothesis be proved but from the apparent phenomena? To establish one hypothesis upon another, is building entirely in the air; and the utmost we ever attain, by these conjectures and fictions, is to ascertain the bare possibility of our opinion; but never can we, upon such terms, establish its reality.

The only method of supporting Divine benevolence, and it is what I willingly embrace, is to deny absolutely the misery and wickedness of man. Your representations are exaggerated; your melancholy views mostly fictitious; your inferences contrary to fact and experience. Health is more common than sickness; pleasure than pain; happiness than misery. And for one vexation which we meet with, we attain, upon computation, a hundred enjoyments.

Admitting your position, replied Philo, which yet is extremely doubtful, you must at the same time allow, that if pain be less frequent than pleasure, it is infinitely more violent and durable. One hour of it is often able to outweigh a day, a week, a month of our common insipid enjoyments; and how many days, weeks, and months, are passed by several in the most acute torments? Pleasure, scarcely in one instance, is ever able to reach ecstasy and rapture; and in no one instance can it continue for any time at its highest pitch and altitude. The spirits evaporate, the nerves relax, the fabric is disordered, and the enjoyment quickly degenerates into fatigue and uneasiness. But pain often, good God, how often! rises to torture and agony; and the longer it continues, it becomes still more genuine agony and torture. Patience is exhausted, courage languishes, melancholy seizes us, and nothing terminates our misery but the removal of its cause, or another event, which is the sole cure of all evil, but which, from our natural folly, we regard with still greater horror and consternation.

But not to insist upon these topics, continued Philo, though most obvious, certain, and important; I must use the freedom to admonish you, Cleanthes, that you have put the controversy upon a most dangerous issue, and are unawares introducing a total scepticism into the most essential articles of natural and revealed theology. What! no method of fixing a just foundation for religion, unless we allow the happiness of human life, and maintain a continued existence even in this world, with all our present pains, infirmities, vexations, and follies, to be eligible and desirable! But this is contrary to every one's feeling and experience: it is contrary to an authority so established as nothing can subvert. No decisive proofs can ever be produced against this authority; nor is it possible for you to compute, estimate, and compare, all the pains and all the pleasures in the lives of all men and of all animals: and thus, by your resting the whole system of religion on a point, which, from its very nature, must for ever be uncertain, you tacitly confess, that that system is equally uncertain.

But allowing you what never will be believed, at least what you never possibly can prove, that animal, or at least human happiness, in this life, exceeds its misery, you have yet done nothing: for this is not, by any means, what we expect from infinite power, infinite wisdom, and infinite goodness. Why is there any misery at all in the world? Not by chance surely. From some cause then. Is it from the intention of the Deity? But he is perfectly benevolent. Is it contrary to his intention? But he is almighty. Nothing can shake the solidity of this reasoning, so short, so clear, so decisive; except we assert, that these subjects exceed all human capacity, and that our common measures of truth and falsehood are not applicable to them; a topic which I have all along insisted on, but which you have, from the beginning, rejected with scorn and indignation.

But I will be contented to retire still from this intrenchment, for I deny that you can ever force me in it. I will allow, that pain or misery in man is compatible with infinite power and goodness in the Deity, even in your sense of these attributes: what are you advanced by all these concessions? A mere possible compatibility is not sufficient. You must prove these pure, unmixed, and uncontrollable attributes from the present mixed and confused phenomena, and from these alone. A hopeful undertaking! Were the phenomena ever so pure and unmixed, yet being finite, they would be insufficient for that purpose. How much more, where they are also so jarring and discordant!

Here, Cleanthes, I find myself at ease in my argument. Here I triumph. Formerly, when we argued concerning the natural attributes of intelligence and design, I needed all my sceptical and metaphysical subtilty to elude your grasp. In many views of the universe

and of its parts, particularly the latter, the beauty and fitness of final causes strike us with such irresistible force, that all objections appear (what I believe they really are) mere cavils and sophisms; nor can we then imagine how it was ever possible for us to repose any weight on them. But there is no view of human life, or of the condition of mankind, from which, without the greatest violence, we can infer the moral attributes, or learn that infinite benevolence, conjoined with infinite power and infinite wisdom, which we must discover by the eyes of faith alone. It is your turn now to tug the laboring oar, and to support your philosophical subtilties against the dictates of plain reason and experience.

4: Free Will, Determinism, and Responsibility

Free will is the ability to choose between different possible courses of action. It is closely linked to the concepts of responsibility, praise, guilt, sin, and other judgments which apply only to actions that are freely chosen. It is also connected with the concepts of advice, persuasion, deliberation, and prohibition. Traditionally, only actions that are freely willed are seen as deserving credit or blame. There are numerous different concerns about threats to the possibility of free will, varying by how exactly it is conceived, which is a matter of some debate.

Some conceive free will to be the capacity to make choices in which the outcome has not been determined by past events. Determinism suggests that only one course of events is possible, which is inconsistent with the existence of such free will. This problem has been identified in ancient Greek philosophy, and remains a major focus of philosophical debate. This view that conceives free will to be incompatible with determinism is called *incompatibilism*, and encompasses both metaphysical libertarianism, the claim that determinism is false and thus free will is at least possible, and hard determinism, the claim that determinism is true and thus free will is not possible. It also encompasses hard incompatibilism, which holds not only determinism but also its negation to be incompatible with free will, and thus free will to be impossible whatever the case may be regarding determinism.

In contrast, *compatibilists* hold that free will *is* compatible with determinism. Some compatibilists even hold that determinism is *necessary* for free will, arguing that choice involves preference for one course of action over another, requiring a sense of *how* choices will turn out. Compatibilists thus consider the debate between libertarians and hard determinists over free will vs determinism a false dilemma. Different compatibilists offer very different definitions of what "free will" even means, and consequently find different types of constraints to be relevant to the issue. Classical compatibilists considered free will nothing more than freedom of action, considering one free of will simply if, *had* one counterfactually wanted to do otherwise, one *could* have done otherwise without physical impediment. Contemporary compatibilists instead identify free will as a psychological capacity, such as to direct one's behavior in a way responsive to reason. And there are still further different conceptions of free will, each with their own concerns, sharing only the common feature of not finding the possibility of determinism a threat to the possibility of free will.

In Western philosophy

The underlying questions are whether we have control over our actions, and if so, what sort of control, and to what extent. These questions predate the early Greek stoics (for example, Chrysippus), and some modern philosophers lament the lack of progress over all these millennia.

On one hand, humans have a strong sense of freedom, which leads us to believe that we have free will. On the other hand, an intuitive feeling of free will could be mistaken.

It is difficult to reconcile the intuitive evidence that conscious decisions are causally effective with the scientific view that the physical world can be explained to operate perfectly by physical law. The conflict between intuitively felt freedom and natural law arises when either causal closure or physical determinism (nomological determinism) is asserted. With causal closure, no physical event has a cause outside the physical domain, and with physical determinism, the future is determined entirely by preceding events (cause and effect).

The puzzle of reconciling 'free will' with a deterministic universe is known as the *problem of free will* or sometimes referred to as the *dilemma of determinism*. This dilemma leads to a moral dilemma as well: How are we to assign responsibility for our actions if they are caused entirely by past events?

Compatibilists maintain that mental reality is not of itself causally effective. Classical compatibilists have addressed the dilemma of free will by arguing that free will holds as long as we are not externally constrained or coerced. Modern compatibilists make a distinction between freedom of will and freedom of *action*, that is, separating freedom of choice from the freedom to enact it. Given that humans all experience a sense of free will, some modern compatibilists think it is necessary to accommodate this intuition. Compatibilists often associate freedom of will with the ability to make rational decisions.

A different approach to the dilemma is that of incompatibilists, namely, that if the world is deterministic then, our feeling that we are free to choose an action is simply an illusion. Metaphysical libertarianism is the form of incompatibilism which posits that determinism is false and free will is possible (at least some people have free will). This view is associated with non-materialist constructions, including both traditional dualism, as well as models supporting more minimal criteria; such as the ability to

consciously veto an action or competing desire. Yet even with physical indeterminism, arguments have been made against libertarianism in that it is difficult to assign *Origination* (responsibility for "free" indeterministic choices).

Free will here is predominately treated with respect to physical determinism in the strict sense of nomological determinism, although other forms of determinism are also relevant to free will. For example, logical and theological determinism challenge metaphysical libertarianism with ideas of destiny and fate, and biological, cultural and psychological determinism feed the development of compatibilist models. Separate classes of compatibilism and incompatibilism may even be formed to represent these.

Below are the classic arguments bearing upon the dilemma and its underpinnings.

Incompatibilism

Incompatibilism is the position that free will and determinism are logically incompatible, and that the major question regarding whether or not people have free will is thus whether or not their actions are determined. "Hard determinists", such as d'Holbach, are those incompatibilists who accept determinism and reject free will. In contrast, "metaphysical libertarians", such as Thomas Reid, Peter van Inwagen, and Robert Kane, are those incompatibilists who accept free will and deny determinism, holding the view that some form of indeterminism is true. Another view is that of hard incompatibilists, which state that free will is incompatible with both determinism and indeterminism.

Traditional arguments for incompatibilism are based on an "intuition pump": if a person is like other mechanical things that are determined in their behavior such as a wind-up toy, a billiard ball, a puppet, or a robot, then people must not have free will. This argument has been rejected by compatibilists such as Daniel Dennett on the grounds that, even if humans have something in common with these things, it remains possible and plausible that we are different from such objects in important ways.

Another argument for incompatibilism is that of the "causal chain". Incompatibilism is key to the idealist theory of free will. Most incompatibilists reject the idea that freedom of action consists simply in "voluntary" behavior. They insist, rather, that free will means that man must be the "ultimate" or "originating" cause of his actions. He must be *causa sui*, in the traditional phrase. Being responsible for one's choices is the first cause of those choices, where first cause means that there is no antecedent cause of that cause. The argument, then, is that if man has free will, then man is the ultimate cause of his actions. If determinism is true, then all of man's choices are caused by events and facts outside his control. So, if everything man does is caused by events and facts outside his control, then he cannot be the ultimate cause of his actions. Therefore, he cannot have free will. This argument has also been challenged by various compatibilist philosophers.

4.1: The Turing Test

"Alan Turing"[29]

Alan Mathison Turing OBE FRS (/ˈtjʊərɪŋ/; 23 June 1912 – 7 June 1954) was an English computer scientist, mathematician, logician, cryptanalyst and theoretical biologist. He was highly influential in the development of theoretical computer science, providing a formalisation of the concepts of algorithm and computation with the Turing machine, which can be considered a model of a general purpose computer. Turing is widely considered to be the father of theoretical computer science and artificial intelligence.

During the Second World War, Turing worked for the Government Code and Cypher School (GC&CS) at Bletchley Park, Britain's codebreaking centre. For a time he led Hut 8, the section responsible for German naval cryptanalysis. He devised a number of techniques for speeding the breaking of German ciphers, including improvements to the pre-war Polish bombe method, an electromechanical machine that could find settings for the Enigma machine. Turing played a pivotal role in cracking intercepted coded messages that enabled the Allies to defeat the Nazis in many crucial engagements, including the Battle of the Atlantic; it has been estimated that this work shortened the war in Europe by more than two years and saved over fourteen million lives.

After the war, he worked at the National Physical Laboratory, where he designed the ACE, among the first designs for a stored-program computer. In 1948 Turing joined Max Newman's Computing Machine Laboratory at the Victoria University of Manchester, where he helped develop the Manchester computers and became interested in mathematical biology. He wrote a paper on the chemical basis of morphogenesis, and predicted oscillating chemical reactions such as the Belousov–Zhabotinsky reaction, first observed in the 1960s.

Turing was prosecuted in 1952 for homosexual acts, when by the Labouchere Amendment, "gross indecency" was still criminal in the UK. He accepted chemical castration treatment, with DES, as an alternative to prison. Turing died in 1954, 16 days before his 42nd birthday, from cyanide poisoning. An inquest determined his death as suicide, but it has been noted that the known evidence is also consistent with accidental poisoning. In 2009, following an Internet campaign, British Prime Minister Gordon Brown made an official public apology on behalf of the British government for "the appalling way he was treated." Queen Elizabeth II granted him a posthumous pardon in 2013.

"The Turing Test"

Turing's work "Computing Machinery and Intelligence"[30] was groundbreaking in his looking toward the future of how we can understand and deal with increasingly capable machines. The quotes from Turing below that are combined with my commentary are from this article.

The first section of Turing's article is labeled "The Imitation Game." The recent biopic abut Turing (2014, Directed by Morten Tyldum) uses this as its title, making use both of Turing's own most popular contribution to Philosophy and the fact that Turing had a lot of difficulties fitting socially, so that he had to "imitate" being a normal person. It's worth a watch if you have the time. In this first section of the article, Turing outlines what his project is going to be, and he makes it very clear what he wants to argue for, and what he does not want to argue for,

"I propose to consider the question, "Can machines think?" This should begin with definitions of the meaning of the terms "machine" and "think." The definitions might be framed so as to reflect so far as possible the normal use of the words, but this attitude is dangerous, If the meaning of the words "machine" and "think" are to be found by examining how they are commonly used it is difficult to escape the conclusion that the meaning and the answer to the question, "Can machines think?" is to be sought in a statistical survey such as a Gallup poll. But this is absurd. Instead of attempting such a definition I shall replace the question by another, which is closely related to it and is expressed in relatively unambiguous words.

The new form of the problem can be described in terms of a game which we call the 'imitation game." It is played with three people, a man (A), a woman (B), and an interrogator (C) who may be of either sex. The interrogator stays in a room apart front the other two. The object of the game for the interrogator is to determine which of the other two is the man and which is the woman. He knows them by labels X and Y, and at the end of the game he says either "X is A and Y is B" or "X is B and Y is A.""

The form that the test will take is rather easy to understand given today's technologies, but Turing had to go to great lengths to basically just describe the judge communicating with the two through electronic form, like a chat room, instant messaging, or texting. Communicating this way ensures that only the content of what is said is considered when making a decision. He then says,

“We now ask the question, "What will happen when a machine takes the part of A in this game?" Will the interrogator decide wrongly as often when the game is played like this as he does when the game is played between a man and a woman? These questions replace our original, "Can machines think?"”

So what he wants to do is rather simple: a judge (you, for example) chats with 2 beings through a computer. One is a computer and the other is a person. They both try to convince you that they are the person, and if you can’t decide which is which or guess wrong – and this happens repeatedly to both yourself and others – then Turing believes we ought to conclude that the computer is intelligent like we are since it has properly imitated us (hence calling it the “imitation game”).

Turing then goes on to explain the advantages of approaching machine intelligence this way as opposed to trying to define thinking and showing that a machine can do it,

“The new problem has the advantage of drawing a fairly sharp line between the physical and the intellectual capacities of a man. No engineer or chemist claims to be able to produce a material which is indistinguishable from the human skin. It is possible that at some time this might be done, but even supposing this invention available we should feel there was little point in trying to make a "thinking machine" more human by dressing it up in such artificial flesh. The form in which we have set the problem reflects this fact in the condition which prevents the interrogator from seeing or touching the other competitors, or hearing -their voices…

We do not wish to penalise the machine for its inability to shine in beauty competitions, nor to penalise a man for losing in a race against an aeroplane. The conditions of our game make these disabilities irrelevant. The "witnesses" can brag, if they consider it advisable, as much as they please about their charms, strength or heroism, but the interrogator cannot demand practical demonstrations….

It might be urged that when playing the "imitation game" the best strategy for the machine may possibly be something other than imitation of the behaviour of a man. This may be, but I think it is unlikely that there is any great effect of this kind. In any case there is no intention to investigate here the theory of the game, and it will be assumed that the best strategy is to try to provide answers that would naturally be given by a man.”

Why approach artificial intelligence in this way? It’s rather simple: how do we know other people are intelligent? Do we define “thinking” and then say “I know that you are thinking and thus can be intelligent”? Or do we just assume others are intelligent if we interact with them and they show they are intelligent? Turing just wants to extend this courtesy that we extend to other people to machines as well.

After presenting his reasons for believing the test to be a good one, Turing goes on to deal with many counter arguments to his own. This is a solid philosophical move and is his attempt to deal with all of the most reasonable and common objections to what he has proposed. He dealt with a number of technological issues which we can now take for granted: there are few who doubt that artificial intelligence will happen some time, and now it appears to just be a matter of when and how. Computers advance in power every year, so some real form of artificial intelligence beyond Siri-like helpers is on the distant horizon. He does deal with other, more timeless objections as well, and those follow below.

The Mathematical Objection

Despite the advances in technology, it is still possible that computers will never be capable of computing everything necessary to mimic or have human intelligence. He summarizes these objections as follows,

“The result in question refers to a type of machine which is essentially a digital computer with an infinite capacity. It states that there are certain things that such a machine cannot do. If it is rigged up to give answers to questions as in the imitation game, there will be some questions to which it will either give a wrong answer, or fail to give an answer at all however much time is allowed for a reply. There may, of course, be many such questions, and questions which cannot be answered by one machine may be satisfactorily answered by another. We are of course supposing for the present that the questions are of the kind to which an answer "Yes" or "No" is appropriate, rather than questions such as "What do you think of Picasso?" The questions that we know the machines must fail on are of this type…This is the mathematical result: it is argued that it proves a disability of machines to which the human intellect is not subject.”

His response to this is rather simple: So what? How do you know that people aren’t limited? And even if a computer has limitations, does it really matter? His response is below and it finishes with his most important point for the purposes of the usefulness of the Imitation Game,

“The short answer to this argument is that although it is established that there are limitations to the Powers If any particular machine, it has only been stated, without any sort of proof, that no such limitations apply to the human intellect. But I do not think

this view can be dismissed quite so lightly. Whenever one of these machines is asked the appropriate critical question, and gives a definite answer, we know that this answer must be wrong, and this gives us a certain feeling of superiority. Is this feeling illusory? It is no doubt quite genuine, but I do not think too much importance should be attached to it. We too often give wrong answers to questions ourselves to be justified in being very pleased at such evidence of fallibility on the part of the machines. Further, our superiority can only be felt on such an occasion in relation to the one machine over which we have scored our petty triumph. There would be no question of triumphing simultaneously over all machines. In short, then, there might be men cleverer than any given machine, but then again there might be other machines cleverer again, and so on.

Those who hold to the mathematical argument would, I think, mostly he willing to accept the imitation game as a basis for discussion…"

So, even if there is something to this argument, the Imitation Game itself can still function as a test for intelligence.

The Argument from Consciousness

This argument is one of the more interesting and strongest ones that still stands today against the possibility of a true Artificial Intelligence akin to our own, human intelligence. Turing explains this argument as follows,

"This argument is very, well expressed in Professor Jefferson's Lister Oration for 1949, from which I quote. "Not until a machine can write a sonnet or compose a concerto because of thoughts and emotions felt, and not by the chance fall of symbols, could we agree that machine equals brain-that is, not only write it but know that it had written it. No mechanism could feel (and not merely artificially signal, an easy contrivance) pleasure at its successes, grief when its valves fuse, be warmed by flattery, be made miserable by its mistakes, be charmed by sex, be angry or depressed when it cannot get what it wants.""

This objection calls into the question validity of the Imitation Game test and essentially says, "Even if it passes the test, it's not intelligent because it lacks consciousness or the ability to do something new and emotional." Turing responds by asking whether or not we really know that others are thinking (or even ourselves). He has a point here since what constitutes "consciousness" and "thinking" is still mostly a mystery. We know how brains work during those processes, but we can't exactly define them yet, hence why Turing likes his test as the method of determining intelligence.

Turing goes on to say that the real force of the argument is that it calls into question a machines ability to *understand* anything like a human does. John Searle's "Chinese Room" argument that follows below is a stronger presentation of this argument, and Turing gives his own response to these objections by saying that a machine could certainly behave as if it has understanding, and whether or not that understanding would be "genuine" is a separate issue; the test of the Imitation Game for intelligence can still work, especially since it's how we know that other people understand things.

Arguments from Various Disabilities

Turing summarizes this objection as follows,

"These arguments take the form, "I grant you that you can make machines do all the things you have mentioned but you will never be able to make one to do X." Numerous features X are suggested in this connexion I offer a selection:

Be kind, resourceful, beautiful, friendly, have initiative, have a sense of humour, tell right from wrong, make mistakes, fall in love, enjoy strawberries and cream, make some one fall in love with it, learn from experience, use words properly, be the subject of its own thought, have as much diversity of behaviour as a man, do something really new."

Turing's response is surprisingly simple: So what if they can't do these things since they could still be intelligent without having to do these things, and more importantly, couldn't we just make the machine do these things? Can't we make a computer make mistakes, learn, behave in a certain way, have taste buds, self-program, etc.? And if it's not funny, is not human then? While I would like to call those without a sense of humor inhuman, I won't. They're just boring, and computers *can* certainly be boring.

Finally, Turing drives home his main point yet again: none of this calls into question the appropriateness of his test in determining when a machine has achieved intelligence.

Lady Lovelace's Objection

This is perhaps one of the more cited objections to computer intelligence, and predates Turing by over a hundred years. He portrays it, and his response, as follows,

"Our most detailed information of Babbage's Analytical Engine comes from a memoir by Lady Lovelace (1842). In it she states, "The Analytical Engine has no pretensions to *originate* anything. It can do *whatever we know how to order it* to perform" (her

italics). This statement is quoted by Hartree (1949) who adds: "This does not imply that it may not be possible to construct electronic equipment which will 'think for itself,' or in which, in biological terms, one could set up a conditioned reflex, which would serve as a basis for 'learning.' Whether this is possible in principle or not is a stimulating and exciting question, suggested by some of these recent developments But it did not seem that the machines constructed or projected at the time had this property."

I am in thorough agreement with Hartree over this. It will be noticed that he does not assert that the machines in question had not got the property, but rather that the evidence available to Lady Lovelace did not encourage her to believe that they had it. It is quite possible that the machines in question had in a sense got this property. For suppose that some discrete-state machine has the property. The Analytical Engine was a universal digital computer, so that, if its storage capacity and speed were adequate, it could by suitable programming be made to mimic the machine in question. Probably this argument did not occur to the Countess or to Babbage. In any case there was no obligation on them to claim all that could be claimed…

A variant of Lady Lovelace's objection states that a machine can "never do anything really new." This may be parried for a moment with the saw, "There is nothing new under the sun." Who can be certain that "original work" that he has done was not simply the growth of the seed planted in him by teaching, or the effect of following well-known general principles."

Again, to come back to Turing's main point, this doesn't seem to create a genuine problem for his test. Whether or not a machine – or anyone – can do anything new is a separate question than whether something is intelligent.

Argument from Continuity in the Nervous System

This objection to Turing is a more technical one, and he explains it like this,

"The nervous system is certainly not a discrete-state machine. A small error in the information about the size of a nervous impulse impinging on a neuron, may make a large difference to the size of the outgoing impulse. It may be argued that, this being so, one cannot expect to be able to mimic the behaviour of the nervous system with a discrete-state system."

This is an early version of the distinction between what is now known as "hard AI" versus "soft AI". Hard AI is the type of intelligence that Turing has been talking about: a computer, as we understand them, runs a program that is intelligent. This objection he is discussing basically says that there is no way this can work since a computer is, in some sense, binary (just using 1's and 0's to do everything) and the human brain and mind work in an entirely different way. This problem is still being discussed, since we just don't know whether or not our brains do function like a very complex personal computer or not.

Because there is still something to this objection, there are those that are going for what is known as "soft AI" where, instead of creating a traditional program on a traditional computer, the goal is to create an artificial mechanical brain that completely replicates our own brain in every way. Rather than having a program be intelligent, the idea is that the resultant thing would be intelligent since it would be, piece for piece, an exact (but artificial) replica of the human brain. Many people think this is the only way to get a real AI and people are laying the foundation to try to create an "artificial" brain that can think for itself and mimic the human mind. Time will give us the answer to whether or not this works.

"The Chinese Room"[31]

The Chinese room argument holds that a program cannot give a computer a "mind", "understanding" or "consciousness", regardless of how intelligently or human-like the program may make the computer behave. The argument was first presented by philosopher John Searle in his paper, "Minds, Brains, and Programs", published in *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* in 1980. It has been widely discussed in the years since. The centerpiece of the argument is a thought experiment known as the Chinese room.

The argument is directed against the philosophical positions of functionalism and computationalism, which hold that the mind may be viewed as an information-processing system operating on formal symbols. Specifically, the argument refutes a position Searle calls Strong AI:

The appropriately programmed computer with the right inputs and outputs would thereby have a mind in exactly the same sense human beings have minds.

Although it was originally presented in reaction to the statements of artificial intelligence (AI) researchers, it is not an argument against the goals of AI research, because it does not limit the amount of intelligence a machine can display. The argument applies only to digital computers running programs and does not apply to machines in general.

The Chinese Room Thought Experiment

Searle's thought experiment begins with this hypothetical premise: suppose that artificial intelligence research has succeeded in constructing a computer that behaves as if it understands Chinese. It takes Chinese characters as input and, by following the

instructions of a computer program, produces other Chinese characters, which it presents as output. Suppose, says Searle, that this computer performs its task so convincingly that it comfortably passes the Turing test: it convinces a human Chinese speaker that the program is itself a live Chinese speaker. To all of the questions that the person asks, it makes appropriate responses, such that any Chinese speaker would be convinced that they are talking to another Chinese-speaking human being.

The question Searle wants to answer is this: does the machine *literally* "understand" Chinese? Or is it merely *simulating* the ability to understand Chinese? Searle calls the first position "strong AI" and the latter "weak AI".

Searle then supposes that he is in a closed room and has a book with an English version of the computer program, along with sufficient paper, pencils, erasers, and filing cabinets. Searle could receive Chinese characters through a slot in the door, process them according to the program's instructions, and produce Chinese characters as output. If the computer had passed the Turing test this way, it follows, says Searle, that he would do so as well, simply by running the program manually.

Searle asserts that there is no essential difference between the roles of the computer and himself in the experiment. Each simply follows a program, step-by-step, producing a behavior which is then interpreted as demonstrating intelligent conversation. However, Searle would not be able to understand the conversation. ("I don't speak a word of Chinese," he points out.) Therefore, he argues, it follows that the computer would not be able to understand the conversation either.

Searle argues that, without "understanding" (or "intentionality"), we cannot describe what the machine is doing as "thinking" and, since it does not think, it does not have a "mind" in anything like the normal sense of the word. Therefore, he concludes that "strong AI" is false.

The Turing Test

The Chinese room implements a version of the Turing test. Alan Turing introduced the test in 1950 to help answer the question "can machines think?" In the standard version, a human judge engages in a natural language conversation with a human and a machine designed to generate performance indistinguishable from that of a human being. All participants are separated from one another. If the judge cannot reliably tell the machine from the human, the machine is said to have passed the test.

Turing then considered each possible objection to the proposal "machines can think", and found that there are simple, obvious answers if the question is de-mystified in this way. He did not, however, intend for the test to measure for the presence of "consciousness" or "understanding". He did not believe this was relevant to the issues that he was addressing. He wrote:

I do not wish to give the impression that I think there is no mystery about consciousness. There is, for instance, something of a paradox connected with any attempt to localise it. But I do not think these mysteries necessarily need to be solved before we can answer the question with which we are concerned in this paper.

To Searle, as a philosopher investigating in the nature of mind and consciousness, these are the relevant mysteries. The Chinese room is designed to show that the Turing test is insufficient to detect the presence of consciousness, even if the room can behave or function as a conscious mind would.

“What it’s like to be a Bat”[32]

The Philosopher Thomas Nagel devised a thought experiment which I believe can act as an interesting response to Searle’s Chinese Room argument. Searle does have a very strong and interesting point about understanding, but he doesn’t show that there is *no* understanding taking place – just that it won’t be the same type of understanding we (normal, conscious humans) believe that we have. Nagel asks us to try to understand what it would be like to be a bat, and concludes that we could not possibly begin to grasp how bats experience the world, but that doesn’t mean there’s not something happening, it’s just that it’s in a form we cannot comprehend. If you take what he says and apply it to the Chinese Room, then couldn’t a computer have its own type of non-human understanding that we can’t comprehend? I have included a summary of his arguments below, and it is very technical, but hopefully it makes sense.

"What is it like to be a bat?" is a paper by American philosopher Thomas Nagel, first published in *The Philosophical Review* in October 1974, and later in Nagel's *Mortal Questions* (1979). In it, Nagel argues that materialist theories of mind omit the essential component of consciousness, namely that there is something that it is (or feels) like to be a particular, conscious thing. He argued that an organism had conscious mental states, "if and only if there is something that it is like to be that organism—something it is like *for* the organism." Daniel Dennett called Nagel's example "The most widely cited and influential thought experiment about consciousness."

The thesis attempts to refute reductionism (the philosophical position that a complex system is nothing more than the sum of its parts). For example, a physicalist reductionist's approach to the mind–body problem holds that the mental process humans experience as consciousness can be fully described via physical processes in the brain and body.

Nagel begins by arguing that the conscious experience is widespread, present in many animals (particularly mammals), and that for an organism to have a conscious experience it must be special, in the sense that its qualia or "subjective character of experience" are unique. Nagel stated, “An organism has conscious mental states if and only if there is something that it is like to be that organism - something that it is like for the organism to be itself.”

The paper argues that the subjective nature of consciousness undermines any attempt to explain consciousness via objective, reductionist means. A subjective character of experience cannot be explained by a system of functional or intentional states. Consciousness cannot be explained without the subjective character of experience, and the subjective character of experience cannot be explained by a reductionist being; it is a mental phenomenon that cannot be reduced to materialism. Thus for consciousness to be explained from a reductionist stance, the idea of the subjective character of experience would have to be discarded, which is absurd. Neither can a physicalist view, because in such a world each phenomenal experience had by a conscious being would have to have a physical property attributed to it, which is impossible to prove due to the subjectivity of conscious experience. Nagel argues that each and every subjective experience is connected with a “single point of view,” making it unfeasible to consider any conscious experience as “objective”.

Nagel uses the metaphor of bats to clarify the distinction between subjective and objective concepts. Bats are mammals, so they are assumed to have conscious experience. Nagel used bats for his argument because of their highly evolved and active use of a biological sensory apparatus that is significantly different from that of many other organisms. Bats use echolocation to navigate and perceive objects. This method of perception is similar to the human sense of vision. Both sonar and vision are regarded as perceptional experiences. While it is possible to imagine what it would be like to fly, navigate by sonar, hang upside down and eat bugs like a bat, that is not the same as a bat's perspective. Nagel claims that even if humans were able to metamorphose gradually into bats, their brains would not have been wired as a bat's from birth; therefore, they would only be able to experience the life and behaviors of a bat, rather than the mindset.

Such is the difference between subjective and objective points of view. According to Nagel, “our own mental activity is the only unquestionable fact of our experience”, meaning that each individual only knows what it is like to be them (Subjectivism). Objectivity, requires an unbiased, non-subjective state of perception. For Nagel, the objective perspective is not feasible, because humans are limited to subjective experience.

Nagel concludes with the contention that it would be wrong to assume that physicalism is incorrect, since that position is also imperfectly understood. Physicalism claims that states and events are physical, but those physical states and events are only imperfectly characterized. Nevertheless, he holds that physicalism cannot be understood without characterizing objective and subjective experience. That is a necessary precondition for understanding the mind-body problem.

4.2: Determinism

“Physical Determinism”[33]

Physical determinism generally refers to the assertion of a deterministic physical universe (greater physical system). This holds that a complete description of the physical state of the world at any given time and a complete statement of the physical laws of nature together entail every truth as to what physical events happen after that time. In a scientific context, the term 'event' is somewhat technical, depending upon which theory one is considering, and basically is the occurrence of some 'state' peculiar to that theory, for example, a quantum state or a thermodynamic state. Physical determinism includes (but is not restricted to) nomological determinism, which holds that all future events are governed by the past or present according to all-encompassing deterministic laws.

The concept of physical determinism has also been used to denote the predictability of a physical system, although this usage is uncommon. Physical determinism can also be viewed as an observed phenomenon of our experience, or a thesis only relevant to mathematical models of physics and other physical sciences. Physical determinism has also been used as a specific deterministic hypothesis about human behavior. Although somewhat unrelated to its standard context, physical determinism has also been used in social engineering theory.

History

The notion of physical determinism takes its classical form in the ideas of Laplace, who posited (in agreement with the physics of his time) that an omniscient observer (called sometimes Laplace's demon) knowing with infinite precision the positions and velocities of every particle in the universe could predict the future entirely. Although such an omniscient observer is a hypothetical construct, and infinite precision exceeds the capacities of human measurement, the illustration is presented as a statement of what in principle would be possible if physical determinism were true, and so reduction to practice is not an issue.

Physical determinism is currently under heavy debate in modern science. For example, physical indeterminism has been proposed to accommodate various interpretations of quantum mechanics. Suggestions have also been made to reformulate the conception of determinism with respect to its application to physical law.

Causal completeness

Physical determinism is related to the question of causal completeness of physics, which is synonymous with the weaker form of causal closure. This is the idea that every real event has a scientific explanation, that science need not search for explanations beyond itself. If causal completeness does not apply to everything in the universe, then the door is open to events that are not subject to physical law. For example, a relatively common view of mental events is that they are an epiphenomenon produced as a by-product of neurological activity, and without causal impact. In this case, only a failure of deterministic physical law would allow room for their causal significance.

Other formulations

A more modern formulation of physical determinism skirts the issue of causal completeness. It is based upon connections between 'events' supplied by a theory:

"a theory is deterministic if, and only if, given its state variables for some initial period, the theory logically determines a unique set of values for those variables for any other period."

— Ernest Nagel, Alternative descriptions of physical state p. 292

This quote replaces the idea of 'cause-and-effect' with that of 'logical implication' according to one or another theory that connects events. In addition, an 'event' is related by the theory itself to formalized states described using the parameters defined by that theory. Thus, the details of interpretation are placed where they belong, fitted to the context in which the chosen theory applies. Using the definition of physical determinism above, the limitations of a theory to some particular domain of experience also limits the associated definition of 'physical determinism' to that same domain.

“Determinism”[34]

Determinism is the philosophical position that for every event there exist conditions that could cause no other event. "There are many determinisms, depending on what pre-conditions are considered to be determinative of an event or action." Deterministic theories throughout the history of philosophy have sprung from diverse and sometimes overlapping motives and considerations.

Some forms of determinism can be empirically tested with ideas from physics and the philosophy of physics. The opposite of determinism is some kind of indeterminism (otherwise called nondeterminism). Determinism is often contrasted with free will.

Determinism often is taken to mean causal determinism, which in physics is known as cause-and-effect. It is the concept that events within a given paradigm are bound by causality in such a way that any state (of an object or event) is completely determined by prior states. This meaning can be distinguished from other varieties of determinism mentioned below.

Other debates often concern the scope of determined systems, with some maintaining that the entire universe is a single determinate system and others identifying other more limited determinate systems (or multiverse). Numerous historical debates involve many philosophical positions and varieties of determinism. They include debates concerning determinism and free will, technically denoted as compatibilistic (allowing the two to coexist) and incompatibilistic (denying their coexistence is a possibility).

Determinism should not be confused with self-determination of human actions by reasons, motives, and desires. Determinism rarely requires that perfect prediction be practically possible.

Varieties

Below are some of the more common viewpoints meant by, or confused with "determinism".

- **Causal determinism** is "the idea that every event is necessitated by antecedent events and conditions together with the laws of nature". However, causal determinism is a broad enough term to consider that "one's deliberations, choices, and actions will often be necessary links in the causal chain that brings something about. In other words, even though our deliberations, choices, and actions are themselves determined like everything else, it is still the case, according to causal determinism, that the occurrence or existence of yet other things depends upon our deliberating, choosing and acting in a certain way". Causal determinism proposes that there is an unbroken chain of prior occurrences stretching back to the origin of the universe. The relation between events may not be specified, nor the origin of that universe. Causal determinists believe that there is nothing in the universe that is uncaused or self-caused. Historical determinism (a sort of path dependence) can also be synonymous with causal determinism. Causal determinism has also been considered more generally as the idea that everything that happens or exists is caused by antecedent conditions. In the case of nomological determinism, these conditions are considered events also, implying that the future is determined completely by preceding events—a combination of prior states of the universe and the laws of nature. Yet they can also be considered metaphysical of origin (such as in the case of theological determinism).
- **Nomological determinism** is the most common form of causal determinism. It is the notion that the past and the present dictate the future entirely and necessarily by rigid natural laws, that every occurrence results inevitably from prior events. Quantum mechanics and various interpretations thereof pose a serious challenge to this view. Nomological determinism is sometimes illustrated by the thought experiment of Laplace's demon. Nomological determinism is sometimes called 'scientific' determinism, although that is a misnomer. Physical determinism is generally used synonymously with nomological determinism (its opposite being physical indeterminism).
- **Necessitarianism** is closely related to the causal determinism described above. It is a metaphysical principle that denies all mere possibility; there is exactly one way for the world to be. Leucippus claimed there were no uncaused events, and that everything occurs for a reason and by necessity.
- **Predeterminism** is the idea that all events are determined in advance. The concept of predeterminism is often argued by invoking causal determinism, implying that there is an unbroken chain of prior occurrences stretching back to the origin of the universe. In the case of predeterminism, this chain of events has been pre-established, and human actions cannot interfere with the outcomes of this pre-established chain. Predeterminism can be used to mean such pre-established causal determinism, in which case it is categorised as a specific type of determinism. It can also be used interchangeably with causal determinism—in the context of its capacity to determine future events. Despite this, predeterminism is often considered as independent of causal determinism. The term predeterminism is also frequently used in the context of biology and hereditary, in which case it represents a form of biological determinism.
- **Fatalism** is normally distinguished from "determinism" and it is a form of teleological determinism. Fatalism is the idea that everything is fated to happen, so that humans have no control over their future. Fate has arbitrary power, and need not follow any causal or otherwise deterministic laws. Types of Fatalism include hard theological determinism and the idea of predestination, where there is a God who determines all that humans will do. This may be accomplished either by knowing their actions in advance, via some form of omniscience or by decreeing their actions in advance.
- **Theological determinism** is a form of determinism which states that all events that happen are pre-ordained, or predestined to happen, by a monotheistic deity, or that they are destined to occur given its omniscience. Two forms of theological determinism exist, here referenced as strong and weak theological determinism. The first one, strong theological determinism, is based on

the concept of a creator deity dictating all events in history: "everything that happens has been predestined to happen by an omniscient, omnipotent divinity". The second form, weak theological determinism, is based on the concept of divine foreknowledge—"because God's omniscience is perfect, what God knows about the future will inevitably happen, which means, consequently, that the future is already fixed". There exist slight variations on the above categorisation. Some claim that theological determinism requires predestination of all events and outcomes by the divinity (i.e. they do not classify the weaker version as 'theological determinism' unless libertarian free will is assumed to be denied as a consequence), or that the weaker version does not constitute 'theological determinism' at all. With respect to free will, "theological determinism is the thesis that God exists and has infallible knowledge of all true propositions including propositions about our future actions", more minimal criteria designed to encapsulate all forms of theological determinism. Theological determinism can also be seen as a form of causal determinism, in which the antecedent conditions are the nature and will of God.

- **Logical determinism** or **Determinateness** is the notion that all propositions, whether about the past, present, or future, are either true or false. Note that one can support Causal Determinism without necessarily supporting Logical Determinism and vice versa (depending on one's views on the nature of time, but also randomness). The problem of free will is especially salient now with Logical Determinism: how can choices be free, given that propositions about the future already have a truth value in the present (i.e. it is already determined as either true or false)? This is referred to as the problem of future contingents.
- Often synonymous with Logical Determinism are the ideas behind **Spatio-temporal Determinism** or **Eternalism**: the view of special relativity. J. J. C. Smart, a proponent of this view, uses the term "tenselessness" to describe the simultaneous existence of past, present, and future. In physics, the "block universe" of Hermann Minkowski and Albert Einstein assumes that time is a fourth dimension (like the three spatial dimensions). In other words, all the other parts of time are real, like the city blocks up and down a street, although the order in which they appear depends on the driver (see Rietdijk–Putnam argument).
- **Adequate determinism** is the idea that quantum indeterminacy can be ignored for most macroscopic events. This is because of quantum decoherence. Random quantum events "average out" in the limit of large numbers of particles (where the laws of quantum mechanics asymptotically approach the laws of classical mechanics). Stephen Hawking explains a similar idea: he says that the microscopic world of quantum mechanics is one of determined probabilities. That is, quantum effects rarely alter the predictions of classical mechanics, which are quite accurate (albeit still not perfectly certain) at larger scales. Something as large as an animal cell, then, would be "adequately determined" (even in light of quantum indeterminacy).
- The **Many-worlds interpretation** accepts the linear casual sets of sequential events with adequate consistency yet also suggests constant forking of casual chains creating "multiple universes" to account for multiple outcomes from single events. Meaning the casual set of events leading to the present are all valid yet appear as a singular linear time stream within a much broader unseen conic probability field of other outcomes that "split off" from the locally observed timeline. Under this model causal sets are still "consistent" yet not exclusive to singular iterated outcomes. The interpretation side steps the exclusive retrospective casual chain problem of "could not have done otherwise" by suggesting "the other outcome does exist" in a set of parallel universe time streams that split off when the action occurred. This theory is sometimes described with the example of agent based choices but more involved models argue that recursive causal splitting occurs with all particle wave functions at play. This model is highly contested with multiple objections from the scientific community.

Philosophical connections

With nature/nurture controversy

Although some of the above forms of determinism concern human behaviors and cognition, others frame themselves as an answer to the debate on nature and nurture. They will suggest that one factor will entirely determine behavior. As scientific understanding has grown, however, the strongest versions of these theories have been widely rejected as a single-cause fallacy.

In other words, the modern deterministic theories attempt to explain how the interaction of both nature and nurture is entirely predictable. The concept of heritability has been helpful in making this distinction.

Biological determinism, sometimes called genetic determinism, is the idea that each of human behaviors, beliefs, and desires are fixed by human genetic nature.

Behaviorism involves the idea that all behavior can be traced to specific causes—either environmental or reflexive. John B. Watson and B. F. Skinner developed this nurture-focused determinism.

Cultural determinism or social determinism is the nurture-focused theory that the culture in which we are raised determines who we are.

Environmental determinism, also known as climatic or geographical determinism, proposes that the physical environment, rather than social conditions, determines culture. Supporters of environmental determinism often also support Behavioral determinism. Key proponents of this notion have included Ellen Churchill Semple, Ellsworth Huntington, Thomas Griffith Taylor and possibly Jared Diamond, although his status as an environmental determinist is debated.

With particular factors

Other 'deterministic' theories actually seek only to highlight the importance of a particular factor in predicting the future. These theories often use the factor as a sort of guide or constraint on the future. They need not suppose that complete knowledge of that one factor would allow us to make perfect predictions.

Psychological determinism can mean that humans must act according to reason, but it can also be synonymous with some sort of Psychological egoism. The latter is the view that humans will always act according to their perceived best interest.

Linguistic determinism claims that our language determines (at least limits) the things we can think and say and thus know. The Sapir–Whorf hypothesis argues that individuals experience the world based on the grammatical structures they habitually use.

Economic determinism is the theory which attributes primacy to the economic structure over politics in the development of human history. It is associated with the dialectical materialism of Karl Marx.

Technological determinism is a reductionist theory that presumes that a society's technology drives the development of its social structure and cultural values.

With free will

Philosophers have debated both the truth of determinism, and the truth of free will. Compatibilism refers to the view that free will is, in some sense, compatible with determinism. The three incompatibilist positions, on the other hand, deny this possibility. The hard incompatibilists hold that both determinism and free will do not exist, the libertarianists that determinism does not hold, and free will might exist, and the hard determinists that determinism does hold and free will does not exist.

The standard argument against free will, according to philosopher J. J. C. Smart focuses on the implications of determinism for 'free will'. However, he suggests free will is denied whether determinism is true or not. On one hand, if determinism is true, all our actions are predicted and we are assumed not to be free; on the other hand, if determinism is false, our actions are presumed to be random and as such we do not seem free because we had no part in controlling what happened.

In his book, The Moral Landscape, author and neuroscientist Sam Harris also argues against free will. He offers one thought experiment where a mad scientist represents determinism. In Harris' example, the mad scientist uses a machine to control all the desires, and thus all the behavior, of a particular human. Harris believes that it is no longer as tempting, in this case, to say the victim has "free will". Harris says nothing changes if the machine controls desires at random - the victim still seems to lack free will.

Harris then argues that we are also the victims of such unpredictable desires (but due to the unconscious machinations of our brain, rather than those of a mad scientist). Based on this introspection, he writes "This discloses the real mystery of free will: if our experience is compatible with its utter absence, how can we say that we see any evidence for it in the first place?" adding that "Whether they are predictable or not, we do not cause our causes." That is, he believes there is compelling evidence of absence of free will.

Some research (founded by the John Templeton Foundation) suggested that reducing a person's belief in free will is dangerous, making them less helpful and more aggressive. This could occur because the individual's sense of self-efficacy suffers.

With the soul

Some determinists argue that materialism does not present a complete understanding of the universe, because while it can describe determinate interactions among material things, it ignores the minds or souls of conscious beings.

A number of positions can be delineated:

1. Immaterial souls are all that exist (Idealism).
2. Immaterial souls exist and exert a non-deterministic causal influence on bodies. (Traditional free-will, interactionist dualism).
3. Immaterial souls exist, but are part of deterministic framework.
4. Immaterial souls exist, but exert no causal influence, free or determined (epiphenomenalism, occasionalism)

5. Immaterial souls do not exist — there is no mind-body dichotomy, and there is a Materialistic explanation for intuitions to the contrary.

With ethics and morality

Another topic of debate is the implication that Determinism has on morality. Hard determinism (a belief in determinism, and not free will) is particularly criticized for seeming to make traditional moral judgments impossible. Some philosophers, however, find this an acceptable conclusion.

Philosopher and incompatibilist Peter van Inwagen introduces this thesis as such:

Argument that Free Will is Required for Moral Judgments

1. The moral judgment that you shouldn't have done X implies that you should have done something else instead
2. That you should have done something else instead implies that there was something else for you to do
3. That there was something else for you to do implies that you could have done something else
4. That you could have done something else implies that you have free will
5. If you don't have free will to have done other than X we cannot make the moral judgment that you shouldn't have done X.

However, a compatibilist might have an issue with Inwagen's process because one can not change the past like his arguments center around. A compatibilist who centers around plans for the future might posit:

1. The moral judgment that you should not have done X implies that you can do something else instead
2. That you can do something else instead implies that there is something else for you to do
3. That there is something else for you to do implies that you can do something else
4. That you can do something else implies that you have free will for planning future recourse
5. If you have free will to do other than X we can make the moral judgment that you should do other than X, and punishing you as a responsible party for having done X that you know you should not have done can help you remember to not do X in the future.

4.3: The Illusion of Free Will

The Illusion of Free Will[35]

80. Theologians repeatedly tell us, that man is free, while all their principles conspire to destroy his liberty. By endeavouring to justify the Divinity, they in reality accuse him of the blackest injustice. They suppose, that without grace, man is necessitated to do evil. They affirm, that God will punish him, because God has not given him grace to do good!

Little reflection will suffice to convince us, that man is necessitated in all his actions, that his free will is a chimera, even in the system of theologians. Does it depend upon man to be born of such or such parents? Does it depend upon man to imbibe or not to imbibe the opinions of his parents or instructors? If I had been born of idolatrous or Mahometan parents, would it have depended upon me to become a Christian? Yet, divines gravely assure us, that a just God will damn without pity all those, to whom he has not given grace to know the Christian religion!

Man's birth is wholly independent of his choice. He is not asked whether he is willing, or not, to come into the world. Nature does not consult him upon the country and parents she gives him. His acquired ideas, his opinions, his notions true or false, are necessary fruits of the education which he has received, and of which he has not been the director. His passions and desires are necessary consequences of the temperament given him by nature. During his whole life, his volitions and actions are determined by his connections, habits, occupations, pleasures, and conversations; by the thoughts, that are involuntarily presented to his mind; in a word, by a multitude of events and accidents, which it is out of his power to foresee or prevent. Incapable of looking into futurity, he knows not what he will do. From the instant of his birth to that of his death, he is never free. You will say, that he wills, deliberates, chooses, determines; and you will hence conclude, that his actions are free. It is true, that man wills, but he is not master of his will or his desires; he can desire and will only what he judges advantageous to himself; he can neither love pain, nor detest pleasure. It will be said, that he sometimes prefers pain to pleasure; but then he prefers a momentary pain with a view of procuring a greater and more durable pleasure. In this case, the prospect of a greater good necessarily determines him to forego a less considerable good.

The lover does not give his mistress the features which captivate him; he is not then master of loving, or not loving the object of his tenderness; he is not master of his imagination or temperament. Whence it evidently follows, that man is not master of his volitions and desires. "But man," you will say, "can resist his desires; therefore he is free." Man resists his desires, when the motives, which divert him from an object, are stronger than those, which incline him towards it; but then his resistance is necessary. A man, whose fear of dishonour or punishment is greater than his love of money, necessarily resists the desire of stealing.

"Are we not free, when we deliberate?" But, are we masters of knowing or not knowing, of being in doubt or certainty? Deliberation is a necessary effect of our uncertainty respecting the consequences of our actions. When we are sure, or think we are sure, of these consequences, we necessarily decide, and we then act necessarily according to our true or false judgment. Our judgments, true or false, are not free; they are necessarily determined by the ideas, we have received, or which our minds have formed.

Man is not free in his choice; he is evidently necessitated to choose what he judges most useful and agreeable. Neither is he free, when he suspends his choice; he is forced to suspend it until he knows, or thinks he knows, the qualities of the objects presented to him, or, until he has weighed the consequences of his actions. "Man," you will say, "often decides in favour of actions, which he knows must be detrimental to himself; man sometimes kills himself; therefore he is free." I deny it. Is man master of reasoning well or ill? Do not his reason and wisdom depend upon the opinions he has formed, or upon the conformation of his machine? As neither one nor the other depends upon his will, they are no proof of liberty. "If I lay a wager, that I shall do, or not do a thing, am I not free? Does it not depend upon me to do it or not?" No, I answer; the desire of winning the wager will necessarily determine you to do, or not to do the thing in question. "But, supposing I consent to lose the wager?" Then the desire of proving to me, that you are free, will have become a stronger motive than the desire of winning the wager; and this motive will have necessarily determined you to do, or not to do, the thing in question.

"But," you will say, "I feel free." This is an illusion, that may be compared to that of the fly in the fable, who, lighting upon the pole of a heavy carriage, applauded himself for directing its course. Man, who thinks himself free, is a fly, who imagines he has power to move the universe, while he is himself unknowingly carried along by it.

The inward persuasion that we are free to do, or not to do a thing, is but a mere illusion. If we trace the true principle of our actions, we shall find, that they are always necessary consequences of our volitions and desires, which are never in our power. You think

yourself free, because you do what you will; but are you free to will, or not to will; to desire, or not to desire? Are not your volitions and desires necessarily excited by objects or qualities totally independent of you?

81. "If the actions of men are necessary, if men are not free, by what right does society punish criminals? Is it not very unjust to chastise beings, who could not act otherwise than they have done?" If the wicked act necessarily according to the impulses of their evil nature, society, in punishing them, acts necessarily by the desire of self-preservation. Certain objects necessarily produce in us the sensation of pain; our nature then forces us against them, and avert them from us. A tiger, pressed by hunger, springs upon the man, whom he wishes to devour; but this man is not master of his fear, and necessarily seeks means to destroy the tiger.

82. "If every thing be necessary, the errors, opinions, and ideas of men are fatal; and, if so, how or why should we attempt to reform them?" The errors of men are necessary consequences of ignorance. Their ignorance, prejudice, and credulity are necessary consequences of their inexperience, negligence, and want of reflection, in the same manner as delirium or lethargy are necessary effects of certain diseases. Truth, experience, reflection, and reason, are remedies calculated to cure ignorance, fanaticism and follies. But, you will ask, why does not truth produce this effect upon many disordered minds? It is because some diseases resist all remedies; because it is impossible to cure obstinate patients, who refuse the remedies presented to them; because the interest of some men, and the folly of others, necessarily oppose the admission of truth.

A cause produces its effect only when its action is not interrupted by stronger causes, which then weakens or render useless, the action of the former. It is impossible that the best arguments should be adopted by men, who are interested in error, prejudiced in its favour, and who decline all reflection; but truth must necessarily undeceive honest minds, who seek her sincerely. Truth is a cause; it necessarily produces its effects, when its impulse is not intercepted by causes, which suspend its effects.

83. "To deprive man of his free will," it is said, "makes him a mere machine, an automaton. Without liberty, he will no longer have either merit or virtue." What is merit in man? It is a manner of acting, which renders him estimable in the eyes of his fellow-beings. What is virtue? It is a disposition, which inclines us to do good to others. What can there be contemptible in machines, or automatons, capable of producing effects so desirable? Marcus Aurelius was useful to the vast Roman Empire. By what right would a machine despise a machine, whose springs facilitate its action? Good men are springs, which second society in its tendency to happiness; the wicked are ill-formed springs, which disturb the order, progress, and harmony of society. If, for its own utility, society cherishes and rewards the good, it also harasses and destroys the wicked, as useless or hurtful.

84. The world is a necessary agent. All the beings, that compose it, are united to each other, and cannot act otherwise than they do, so long as they are moved by the same causes, and endued with the same properties. When they lose properties, they will necessarily act in a different way. God himself, admitting his existence, cannot be considered a free agent. If there existed a God, his manner of acting would necessarily be determined by the properties inherent in his nature; nothing would be capable of arresting or altering his will. This being granted, neither our actions, prayers, nor sacrifices could suspend, or change his invariable conduct and immutable designs; whence we are forced to infer, that all religion would be useless.

85. Were not divines in perpetual contradiction with themselves, they would see, that, according to their hypothesis, man cannot be reputed free an instant. Do they not suppose man continually dependent on his God? Are we free, when we cannot exist and be preserved without God, and when we cease to exist at the pleasure of his supreme will? If God has made man out of nothing; if his preservation is a continued creation; if God cannot, an instant, lose sight of his creature; if whatever happens to him, is an effect of the divine will; if man can do nothing of himself; if all the events, which he experiences, are effects of the divine decrees; if he does no good without grace from on high, how can they maintain, that a man enjoys a moment's liberty? If God did not preserve him in the moment of sin, how could man sin? If God then preserves him, God forces him to exist, that he may sin.

4.4: Compatibilism

Compatibilism[36]

Frankfurt Cases - The Principle of Alternate Possibilities

Alternative Possibilities are one of the key requirements for the freedom component of free will, critically needed for libertarian free will.

Alternative Possibilities have been part of the problem of free will at least from the time of Thomas Hobbes, who denied anyone ever "could have done otherwise".

In 1961, Harry Frankfurt famously defined what he called "The Principle of Alternate Possibilities" or PAP.

"a person is morally responsible for what he has done only if he could have done otherwise."

Frankfurt developed sophisticated arguments (thought experiments) to disprove this principle using what is known as a Frankfurt controller, but might be called Frankfurt's Demon.

The Frankfurt is a hypothetical agent who can control the minds of others, either a "nefarious neuroscientist or a demon inside one's mind that can intervene in our decisions. Considering the absurd nature of his counterfactual intervener, the recent philosophical literature is surprisingly full of articles with "Frankfurt-style cases" supporting Frankfurt, and logical counterexamples to his attack on the principle of alternate possibilities. This work is based on a logical fallacy

Frankfurt's basic claim is as follows:

"The principle of alternate possibilities is false. A person may well be morally responsible for what he has done even though he could not have done otherwise. The principle's plausibility is an illusion, which can be made to vanish by bringing the relevant moral phenomena into sharper focus."

Libertarians like Robert Kane, David Widerker, and Carl Ginet have mounted attacks on Frankfurt-type examples, in defense of free will.

The basic idea is that in an indeterministic world Frankfurt's demon cannot know in advance what an agent will do. As Widerker put it, there is no "prior sign" of the agent's de-liberate choice. This is the *epistemic* Kane-Widerker Objection to Frankfurt-style cases.

In information theoretic and *ontological* terms, the information about the choice does not yet exist in the universe. So in order to block an agent's decision, the intervening demon would have to act in advance.

That would eliminate the agent's control and destroy the presumed "responsibility" of the agent for the choice, despite no available alternative possibilities. This is the *ontological* Information Objection.

According to Daniel Dennett's Default Responsibility Principle, the Frankfurt controller is now responsible, not the agent.

Here is a discussion of the problem, from Kane's *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will*, 2005, (p.87)

5. The Indeterminist World Objection

While the "flicker of freedom" strategy will not suffice to refute Frankfurt, it does lead to a third objection that is more powerful. This third objection is one that has been developed by several philosophers, including myself, David Widerker, Carl Ginet, and Keith Wyma.[5] We might call it the Indeterministic World Objection. I discuss this objection in my book Free Will and Values. Following is a summary of this discussion:

Suppose Jones's choice is undetermined up to the moment when it occurs, as many incompatibilists and libertarians require of a free choice. Then a Frankfurt controller, such as Black, would face a problem in attempting to control Jones's choice. For if it is undetermined up to the moment when he chooses whether Jones will choose A or B, then the controller Black cannot know before Jones actually chooses what Jones is going to do. Black may wait until Jones actually chooses in order to see what Jones is going to do. But then it will be too late for Black to intervene. Jones will be responsible for the choice in that case, since Black stayed out of it. But Jones will also have had alternative possibilities, since Jones's choice of A or B was undetermined and therefore it could have gone either way. Suppose, by contrast, Black wants to ensure that Jones will make the choice Black wants (choice A). Then Black cannot stay out of it until Jones chooses. He must instead act in advance to bring it about that Jones chooses A. In that case,

Jones will indeed have no alternative possibilities, but neither will Jones be responsible for the outcome. Black will be responsible since Black will have intervened in order to bring it about that Jones would choose as Black wanted.

In other words, if free choices are undetermined, as incompatibilists require, a Frankfurt controller like Black cannot control them without actually intervening and making the agent choose as the controller wants. If the controller stays out of it, the agent will be responsible but will also have had alternative possibilities because the choice was undetermined. If the controller does intervene, by contrast, the agent will not have alternative possibilities but will also not be responsible (the controller will be). So responsibility and alternative possibilities go together after all, and PAP would remain true—moral responsibility requires alternative possibilities—when free choices are not determined.[6]

If this objection is correct, it would show that Frankfurt-type examples will not work in an indeterministic world in which some choices or actions are undetermined. In such a world, as David Widerker has put it, there will not always be a reliable prior sign telling the controller in advance what agents are going to do.[7] Only in a world in which all of our free actions arc determined can the controller always be certain in advance how the agent is going to act. This means that, if you are a compatibilist, who believes free will could exist in a determined world, you might be convinced by Frankfurt-type examples that moral responsibility does not require alternative possibilities. But if you are an incompatibilist or libertarian, who believes that some of our morally responsible acts must be undetermined you need not be convinced by Frankfurt-type examples that moral responsibility does not require alternative possibilities.

5. See Robert Kane, *Free Will and Values* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press 1985) p. 51; David Widerker "Libertarianism and Frankfurt's Attack or the Principle of Alternative Possibilities," *Philosophical Review*, 104 1995: 247-61; Carl Ginet "In Defense of the Principle of Alternative Possibilities: Why I Don't Find Frankfurt's Argument Convincing,' *Philosophical Perspectives* 10, 1996: 403-17; Keith Wyma, "Moral Responsibility and the Leeway for Action," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 34 (1997): 57-70.
6. Kane, 1985, p. 51.
7. Widerker, 1995, 248ff.

Alternative Possibilities Are NOT Probabilities

One of the major errors in thinking about alternative possibilities is to assume that they are the direct cause of action. This leads many philosophers to make the oversimplified assumption that if there are two possibilities, for example, that they are equally probable, or perhaps one has thirty percent chance of leading to action, the other seventy percent.

Alternative possibilities are simply that - possibilities. They only lead to action following an act of determination by the will that the action is in accord with the agent's character and values. And the will is adequately determined.

Most philosophers who use the standard argument against free will in their work assume that chance alternative possibilities will show up as random behavior. Here is an example from leading libertarian incompatibilist Peter van Inwagen. He imagines a God who can "replay" exactly the same circumstnces to demonstrate the random willings.

Now let us suppose that God a thousand times caused the universe to revert to exactly the state it was in at t_1 (and let us suppose that we are somehow suitably placed, metaphysically speaking, to observe the whole sequence of "replays"). What would have happened? What should we expect to observe? Well, again, we can't say what would have happened, but we can say what would probably have happened: sometimes Alice would have lied and sometimes she would have told the truth. As the number of "replays" increases, we observers shall — almost certainly — observe the ratio of the outcome "truth" to the outcome "lie" settling down to, converging on, some value. We may, for example, observe that, after a fairly large number of replays, Alice lies in thirty percent of the replays and tells the truth in seventy percent of them—and that the figures 'thirty percent' and 'seventy percent' become more and more accurate as the number of replays increases. But let us imagine the simplest case: we observe that Alice tells the truth in about half the replays and lies in about half the replays. If, after one hundred replays, Alice has told the truth fifty-three times and has lied forty-eight times, we'd begin strongly to suspect that the figures after a thousand replays would look something like this: Alice has told the truth four hundred and ninety-three times and has lied five hundred and eight times. Let us suppose that these are indeed the figures after a thousand [1001] replays. Is it not true that as we watch the number of replays increase we shall become convinced that what will happen in the next replay is a matter of chance.
("Free Will Remains a Mystery," in *Philosophical Perspectives*, vol. 14, 2000, p.14)

In our two-stage model of free will, if Alice is a generally honest person, her character will ensure that she rarely lies even if lying frequently "comes to mind" as one of her alternative possibilities.

4.5: The Prisoner’s Dilemma

The Prisoner’s Dilemma[37]

The prisoner's dilemma is a standard example of a game analyzed in **game theory** that shows why two completely "rational" individuals might not cooperate, even if it appears that it is in their best interests to do so. It was originally framed by Merrill Flood and Melvin Dresher working at RAND in 1950. Albert W. Tucker formalized the game with prison sentence rewards and named it, "prisoner's dilemma" (Poundstone, 1992), presenting it as follows:

Two members of a criminal gang are arrested and imprisoned. Each prisoner is in solitary confinement with no means of communicating with the other. The prosecutors lack sufficient evidence to convict the pair on the principal charge. They hope to get both sentenced to a year in prison on a lesser charge. Simultaneously, the prosecutors offer each prisoner a bargain. Each prisoner is given the opportunity either to: betray the other by testifying that the other committed the crime, or to cooperate with the other by remaining silent. The offer is:

- If A and B each betray the other, each of them serves 2 years in prison
- If A betrays B but B remains silent, A will be set free and B will serve 3 years in prison (and vice versa)
- If A and B both remain silent, both of them will only serve 1 year in prison (on the lesser charge)

It is implied that the prisoners will have no opportunity to reward or punish their partner other than the prison sentences they get, and that their decision will not affect their reputation in the future. Because betraying a partner offers a greater reward than cooperating with them, all purely rational self-interested prisoners would betray the other, and so the only possible outcome for two purely rational prisoners is for them to betray each other. The interesting part of this result is that pursuing individual reward logically leads both of the prisoners to betray, when they would get a better reward if they both kept silent. In reality, humans display a systemic bias towards cooperative behavior in this and similar games, much more so than predicted by simple models of "rational" self-interested action. A model based on a different kind of rationality, where people forecast how the game would be played if they formed coalitions and then maximized their forecasts, has been shown to make better predictions of the rate of cooperation in this and similar games, given only the payoffs of the game.

An extended "iterated" version of the game also exists, where the classic game is played repeatedly between the same prisoners, and consequently, both prisoners continuously have an opportunity to penalize the other for previous decisions. If the number of times the game will be played is known to the players, then (by backward induction) two classically rational players will betray each other repeatedly, for the same reasons as the single-shot variant. In an infinite or unknown length game there is no fixed optimum strategy, and Prisoner's Dilemma tournaments have been held to compete and test algorithms.

The prisoner's dilemma game can be used as a model for many real world situations involving cooperative behaviour. In casual usage, the label "prisoner's dilemma" may be applied to situations not strictly matching the formal criteria of the classic or iterative games: for instance, those in which two entities could gain important benefits from cooperating or suffer from the failure to do so, but find it merely difficult or expensive, not necessarily impossible, to coordinate their activities to achieve cooperation.

Strategy for the prisoner's dilemma

Both cannot communicate, they are separated in two individual rooms. The normal game is shown below:

- Prisoner A stays silent (cooperates) & Prisoner B stays silent (cooperates): Each serves 1 year
- Prisoner A stays silent (cooperates) & Prisoner B betrays (defects): Prisoner A gets 3 years & Prisoner B goes free
- Prisoner A betrays (defects) & Prisoner B stays silent (cooperates): Prisoner A goes free & Prisoner B gets 3 years
- Prisoner A betrays (defects) & Prisoner B betrays (defects): Each serves 2 years

It is assumed that both understand the nature of the game, and that despite being members of the same gang, they have no loyalty to each other and will have no opportunity for retribution or reward outside the game. Regardless of what the other decides, each prisoner gets a higher reward by betraying the other ("defecting"). The reasoning involves an argument by dilemma: B will either cooperate or defect. If B cooperates, A should defect, because going free is better than serving 1 year. If B defects, A should also defect, because serving 2 years is better than serving 3. So either way, A should defect. Parallel reasoning will show that B should defect.

Because defection always results in a better payoff than cooperation, regardless of the other player's choice, it is a dominant strategy. Mutual defection is the only strong Nash equilibrium in the game (i.e. the only outcome from which each player could only do worse by unilaterally changing strategy). The dilemma then is that mutual cooperation yields a better outcome than mutual

defection but it is not the rational outcome because from a self-interested perspective, the choice to cooperate, at the individual level, is irrational.

Real-life examples

The prisoner setting may seem contrived, but there are in fact many examples in human interaction as well as interactions in nature that have the same payoff matrix. The prisoner's dilemma is therefore of interest to the social sciences such as economics, politics, and sociology, as well as to the biological sciences such as ethology and evolutionary biology. Many natural processes have been abstracted into models in which living beings are engaged in endless games of prisoner's dilemma. This wide applicability of the PD gives the game its substantial importance.

In environmental studies

In environmental studies, the PD is evident in crises such as global climate-change. It is argued all countries will benefit from a stable climate, but any single country is often hesitant to curb CO_2 emissions. The immediate benefit to an individual country to maintain current behavior is perceived to be greater than the purported eventual benefit to all countries if behavior was changed, therefore explaining the impasse concerning climate-change in 2007.

An important difference between climate-change politics and the prisoner's dilemma is uncertainty; the extent and pace at which pollution can change climate is not known. The dilemma faced by government is therefore different from the prisoner's dilemma in that the payoffs of cooperation are unknown. This difference suggests that states will cooperate much less than in a real iterated prisoner's dilemma, so that the probability of avoiding a possible climate catastrophe is much smaller than that suggested by a game-theoretical analysis of the situation using a real iterated prisoner's dilemma.

Osang and Nandy provide a theoretical explanation with proofs for a regulation-driven win-win situation along the lines of Michael Porter's hypothesis, in which government regulation of competing firms is substantial.

In animals

Cooperative behavior of many animals can be understood as an example of the prisoner's dilemma. Often animals engage in long term partnerships, which can be more specifically modeled as iterated prisoner's dilemma. For example, guppies inspect predators cooperatively in groups, and they are thought to punish non-cooperative inspectors.

Vampire bats are social animals that engage in reciprocal food exchange. Applying the payoffs from the prisoner's dilemma can help explain this behavior:

- C/C: "Reward: I get blood on my unlucky nights, which saves me from starving. I have to give blood on my lucky nights, which doesn't cost me too much."
- D/C: "Temptation: You save my life on my poor night. But then I get the added benefit of not having to pay the slight cost of feeding you on my good night."
- C/D: "Sucker's Payoff: I pay the cost of saving your life on my good night. But on my bad night you don't feed me and I run a real risk of starving to death."
- D/D: "Punishment: I don't have to pay the slight costs of feeding you on my good nights. But I run a real risk of starving on my poor nights."

In psychology

In addiction research / behavioral economics, George Ainslie points out that addiction can be cast as an intertemporal PD problem between the present and future selves of the addict. In this case, *defecting* means *relapsing*, and it is easy to see that not defecting both today and in the future is by far the best outcome. The case where one abstains today but relapses in the future is the worst outcome — in some sense the discipline and self-sacrifice involved in abstaining today have been "wasted" because the future relapse means that the addict is right back where he started and will have to start over (which is quite demoralizing, and makes starting over more difficult). Relapsing today and tomorrow is a slightly "better" outcome, because while the addict is still addicted, they haven't put the effort in to trying to stop. The final case, where one engages in the addictive behavior today while abstaining "tomorrow" will be familiar to anyone who has struggled with an addiction. The problem here is that (as in other PDs) there is an obvious benefit to defecting "today", but tomorrow one will face the same PD, and the same obvious benefit will be present then, ultimately leading to an endless string of defections.

John Gottman in his research described in "the science of trust" defines good relationships as those where partners know not to enter the (D,D) cell or at least not to get dynamically stuck there in a loop.

In economics

Advertising is sometimes cited as a real-example of the prisoner's dilemma. When cigarette advertising was legal in the United States, competing cigarette manufacturers had to decide how much money to spend on advertising. The effectiveness of Firm A's advertising was partially determined by the advertising conducted by Firm B. Likewise, the profit derived from advertising for Firm B is affected by the advertising conducted by Firm A. If both Firm A and Firm B chose to advertise during a given period, then the advertising cancels out, receipts remain constant, and expenses increase due to the cost of advertising. Both firms would benefit from a reduction in advertising. However, should Firm B choose not to advertise, Firm A could benefit greatly by advertising. Nevertheless, the optimal amount of advertising by one firm depends on how much advertising the other undertakes. As the best strategy is dependent on what the other firm chooses there is no dominant strategy, which makes it slightly different from a prisoner's dilemma. The outcome is similar, though, in that both firms would be better off were they to advertise less than in the equilibrium. Sometimes cooperative behaviors do emerge in business situations. For instance, cigarette manufacturers endorsed the making of laws banning cigarette advertising, understanding that this would reduce costs and increase profits across the industry.[] This analysis is likely to be pertinent in many other business situations involving advertising.[]

Without enforceable agreements, members of a cartel are also involved in a (multi-player) prisoner's dilemma. 'Cooperating' typically means keeping prices at a pre-agreed minimum level. 'Defecting' means selling under this minimum level, instantly taking business (and profits) from other cartel members. Anti-trust authorities want potential cartel members to mutually defect, ensuring the lowest possible prices for consumers.

In sport

Doping in sport has been cited as an example of a prisoner's dilemma.

Two competing athletes have the option to use an illegal and/or dangerous drug to boost their performance. If neither athlete takes the drug, then neither gains an advantage. If only one does, then that athlete gains a significant advantage over their competitor, reduced by the legal and/or medical dangers of having taken the drug. If both athletes take the drug, however, the benefits cancel out and only the dangers remain, putting them both in a worse position than if neither had used doping.

Multiplayer dilemmas

Many real-life dilemmas involve multiple players. Although metaphorical, Hardin's tragedy of the commons may be viewed as an example of a multi-player generalization of the PD: Each villager makes a choice for personal gain or restraint. The collective reward for unanimous (or even frequent) defection is very low payoffs (representing the destruction of the "commons"). A commons dilemma most people can relate to is washing the dishes in a shared house. By not washing dishes an individual can gain by saving his time, but if that behavior is adopted by every resident the collective cost is no clean plates for anyone.

The commons are not always exploited: William Poundstone, in a book about the prisoner's dilemma (see References below), describes a situation in New Zealand where newspaper boxes are left unlocked. It is possible for people to take a paper without paying (*defecting*) but very few do, feeling that if they do not pay then neither will others, destroying the system. Subsequent research by Elinor Ostrom, winner of the 2009 Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel, hypothesized that the tragedy of the commons is oversimplified, with the negative outcome influenced by outside influences. Without complicating pressures, groups communicate and manage the commons among themselves for their mutual benefit, enforcing social norms to preserve the resource and achieve the maximum good for the group, an example of effecting the best case outcome for PD.

In international politics

In international political theory, the Prisoner's Dilemma is often used to demonstrate the coherence of strategic realism, which holds that in international relations, all states (regardless of their internal policies or professed ideology), will act in their rational self-interest given international anarchy. A classic example is an arms race like the Cold War and similar conflicts. During the Cold War the opposing alliances of NATO and the Warsaw Pact both had the choice to arm or disarm. From each side's point of view, disarming whilst their opponent continued to arm would have led to military inferiority and possible annihilation. Conversely, arming whilst their opponent disarmed would have led to superiority. If both sides chose to arm, neither could afford to attack the

other, but at the high cost of developing and maintaining a nuclear arsenal. If both sides chose to disarm, war would be avoided and there would be no costs.

Although the 'best' overall outcome is for both sides to disarm, the rational course for both sides is to arm, and this is indeed what happened. Both sides poured enormous resources into military research and armament in a war of attrition for the next thirty years until the Soviet Union could not withstand the economic cost. The same logic could be applied in any similar scenario, be it economic or technological competition between sovereign states.

4.6: The Trial of Leopold and Loeb

The Trial of Leopold and Loeb

Closing Argument

The State of Illinois v. Nathan Leopold & Richard Loeb

Delivered by Clarence Darrow

Chicago, Illinois, August 22, 1924

…

I insist, Your Honor, that had this been the case of two boys of these defendants' age, unconnected with families of great wealth, there is not a state's attorney in Illinois who could not have consented at once to a plea of guilty and a punishment in the penitentiary for life. Not one. No lawyer could have justified any other attitude. No prosecution could have justified it.

We are here with the lives of two boys imperiled, with the public aroused. For what? Because, unfortunately, the parents have money. Nothing else.

I have heard in the last six weeks nothing but the cry for blood. I have heard from the office of the state's attorney only ugly hate. I have heard precedents quoted which would be a disgrace to a savage race. I have seen a court urged almost to the point of threats to hang two boys, in the face of science, in the face of philosophy, in the face of humanity, in the face of experience, in the face of all the better and more humane thought of the age.

…

We have said to the public and to this court that neither the parents, nor the friends, nor the attorneys would want these boys released. Unfortunate though it be, it is true, and those the closest to them know perfectly well that they should not be released, and that they should be permanently isolated from society. We are asking this court to save their lives, which is the least and the most that a judge can do.

…

Who were these two boys? And how did it happen?

On a certain day they killed poor little Robert Franks. They were not to get $10,000; they were to get $5,000 if it worked; that is, $5,000 each. Neither one could get more than five, and either one was risking his; neck in the job. So each one of my clients was risking his neck for $5,000, if it had anything to do with it, which it did not.

Did they need the money? Why at this very time, and a few months before, Dickie Loeb had $3,000 [in his] checking account in the bank. Your Honor, I would be ashamed to talk about this except that in all apparent seriousness they are asking to kill these two boys on the strength of this flimsy foolishness. At that time, Richard Loeb had a three-thousand-dollar checking account in the bank. He had three Liberty Bonds, one of which was past due, and the interest on each of them had not been collected for three years. And yet they would ask to hang him on the theory that he committed this murder because he needed money.

How about Leopold? Leopold was in regular receipt of $125 a month; he had an automobile; paid nothing for board and clothes, and expenses; he got money whenever he wanted it, and he had arranged to go to Europe and had bought his ticket and was going to leave about the time he was arrested in this case. He passed his examination for the Harvard Law School, and was going to take a short trip to Europe before it was time for him to attend the fall term. His ticket had been bought, and his father was to give him $3,000 to make the trip. Your Honor, jurors sometimes make mistakes, and courts do, too. If on this evidence the court is to construe a motive out of this case, then I insist that a motive could be construed out of any set of circumstances and facts that might be imagined.

The boys had been reared in luxury, they had never been denied anything; no want or desire left unsatisfied; no debts; no need of money; nothing. And yet they murdered a little boy, against whom they had nothing in the world, without malice, without reason, to get $5,000 each. All right. All right, Your Honor, if the court believes it, if anyone believes it, I can't help it. That is what this case rests on. It could not stand up a minute without motive. without it, it was the senseless act of immature and diseased children, as it was; a senseless act of children, wandering around in the dark and moved by some motion, that we still perhaps have not the knowledge or the insight into life to thoroughly understand.

…

We have sought to tell this court why he should not hang these boys. We have sought to tell this court, and to make this court believe, that they were diseased of mind, and that they were of tender age. However, before I discuss that, I ought to say another word in reference to the question of motive in this case. If there was no motive, except the senseless act of immature boys, then of course there is taken from this case all of the feeling of deep guilt upon the part of these defendants.

There was neither cruelty to the deceased, beyond taking his life, nor was there any depth of guilt and depravity on the part of the defendants, for it was a truly motiveless act, without the slightest feeling of hatred or revenge, done by a couple of children for no sane reason.

But, Your Honor, we have gone further than that, and we have sought to show you, as I think we have, the condition of these boys' minds. Of course it is not an easy task to find out the condition of another person's mind. Now, I was about to say that it needs no expert, it needs nothing but a bare recitation of these facts, and a fair consideration of them, to convince any human being that this was the act of diseased brains.

But let's get to something stronger than that. Were these boys in their right minds? Here were two boys with good intellect, one eighteen and one nineteen. They had all the prospects that life could hold out for any of the young; one a graduate of Chicago and another of Ann Arbor; one who had passed his examination for the Harvard Law School and was about to take a trip in Europe, another who had passed at Ann Arbor, the youngest in his class, with $3,000 in the bank. Boys who never knew what it was to want a dollar; boys who could reach any position that was given to boys of that kind to reach; boys of distinguished and honorable families, families of wealth and position, with all the world before them. And they gave it all up for nothing, for nothing! They took a little companion of one of them, on a crowded street, and killed him, for nothing, and sacrificed everything that could be of value in human life upon the crazy scheme of a couple of immature lads.

Now, Your Honor, you have been a boy; I have been a boy. And we have known other boys. The best way to understand somebody else is to put yourself in his place. Is it within the realm of your imagination that a boy who was right, with all the prospects of life before him, who could choose what he wanted, without the slightest reason in the world would lure a young companion to his death, and take his place in the shadow of the gallows?

How insane they are I care not, whether medically or legally. They did not reason; they could not reason; they committed the most foolish, most unprovoked, most purposeless, most causeless act that any two boys ever committed, and they put themselves where the rope is dangling above their heads.

There are not physicians enough in the world to convince any thoughtful, fair-minded man that these boys are right. Was their act one of deliberation, of intellect, or were they driven by some force such as Dr. White and Dr. Glueck and Dr. Healy have told this court?

There are only two theories; one is that their diseased brains drove them to it; the other is the old theory of possession by devils, and my friend Marshall could have read you books on that, too, but it has been pretty well given up in Illinois. That they were intelligent, sane, sound, and reasoning is unthinkable. Let me call Your Honor's attention to another thing.

Why did they kill little Bobby Franks? Not for money, not for spite; not for hate. They killed him as they might kill a spider or a fly, for the experience. They killed him because they were made that way. Because somewhere in the infinite processes that go to the making up of the boy or the man something slipped, and those unfortunate lads sit here hated, despised, outcasts, with the community shouting for their blood. Mr. Savage, with the immaturity of youth and inexperience, says that if we hang them there will be no more killing. This world has been one long slaughterhouse from the beginning until today, and killing goes on and on and on, and will forever. Why not read something, why not study something, why not think instead of blindly shouting for death?

Kill them. Will that prevent other senseless boys or other vicious men or vicious women from killing? No! It will simply call upon every weak-minded person to do as they have done. I know how easy it is to I talk about mothers when you want to do something cruel. But I am thinking of the others, too. I know that any mother might be the mother of little Bobby Franks, who left his home and went to his school, and who never came back. I know that any mother might be the mother of Richard Loeb and Nathan Leopold, just the same. The trouble is this, that if she is the mother of a Nathan Leopold or of a Richard Loeb, she has to ask herself the question: "How come my children came to be what they are? From what ancestry did they get this strain? How far removed was the poison that destroyed their lives? Was I the bearer of the seed that brings them to death?" Any mother might be the mother of any of them. But these two are the victims.

No one knows what will be the fate of the child he gets or the child she bears; the fate of the child is the last thing they consider.

I am sorry for the fathers as well as the mothers, for the fathers who give their strength and their lives for educating and protecting and creating a fortune for the boys that they love; for the mothers who go down into the shadow of death for their children, who nourish them and care for them, and risk their lives, that they may live, who watch them with tenderness and fondness and longing, and who go down into dishonor and disgrace for the children that they love.

All of these are helpless. We are all helpless. But when you are pitying the father and the mother of poor Bobby Franks, what about the fathers and mothers of these two unfortunate boys, and what about the, unfortunate boys themselves, and what about all the fathers and all the mothers and all the boys and all the girls who tread a dangerous maze in darkness from birth to death?

Do you think you can cure the hatreds and the maladjustments of the world by hanging them? You simply show your ignorance and your hate when you say it. You may here and there cure hatred with love and understanding, but you can only add fuel to the flames by cruelty and hate.

Your Honor, that no human being could have done what these boys did, excepting through the operation of a diseased brain. I do not propose to go through each step of the terrible deed, it would take too long. But I do want to call the attention of this court to some of the other acts of these two boys, in this distressing and weird homicide; acts which show conclusively that there could be no reason for their conduct.

I want to come down now to the actions on the afternoon of the tragedy.

Without any excuse, without the slightest motive, not moved by money, not moved by passion or hatred, by nothing except the vague wanderings of children, about four o'clock in the afternoon they started out to find somebody to kill. For nothing.

They went over to the Harvard School. Dick's little brother was there, on the playground. Dick went there himself in open daylight, known by all of them; he had been a pupil there himself, the school was near his home, and he looked over the little boys. They first picked out a little boy named Levinson, and Dick trailed him around. Now, of course, that is a hard story. It is a story that shocks one. A boy bent on killing, not knowing where he would go or who he would get, but seeking some victim. Here is a little boy, but the circumstances are not opportune, and so he fails to get him. Dick abandons that lead; Dick and Nathan are in the car, and they see Bobby Franks on the street, and they call to him to get into the car. It is about five o'clock in the afternoon, in the long summer days, on a thickly settled street, built up with homes, the houses of their friends and their companions known to everybody, automobiles appearing and disappearing, and they take him in the car.

If there had been a question of revenge, yes; if there had been a question of hate, where no one cares for his own fate, intent only on accomplishing his end, yes. But without any motive or any reason they picked up this little boy right in sight of their own homes, and surrounded by their neighbors. They hit him over the head with a chisel and killed him, and go on about their business, driving this car within half a block of Loeb's home, within the same distance of the Franks's home, drive it past the neighbors that they knew, in the open highway, in broad daylight. And still men will say that they have a bright intellect.

I say again, whatever madness and hate and frenzy may do to the human mind, there is not a single person who reasons who can believe that one of these acts was the act of men, of brains that were not diseased. There is no other explanation for it. And had it not been for the wealth and the weirdness and the notoriety, they would have been sent to the psychopathic hospital for examination, and been taken care of, instead of the state demanding that this court take the last pound of flesh and the last drop of blood from two irresponsible lads.

They pull the dead boy into the backseat, and wrap him in a blanket, and this funeral car starts on its route. If ever any death car went over the same route or the same kind of a route driven by sane people, I have never heard of it, and I fancy no one else has ever heard of it.

This car is driven for twenty miles. The slightest accident, the slightest misfortune, a bit of curiosity, an arrest for speeding, anything would bring destruction. They go down the Midway, through the park, meeting hundreds of machines, in sight of thousands of eyes, with this dead boy. They go down a thickly populated street through South Chicago, and then for three miles take the longest street to go through this city; built solid with business, buildings, filled with automobiles backed upon the street, with streetcars on the track, with thousands of peering eyes; one boy driving and the other on the backseat, with the corpse of little Bobby Franks, the blood streaming from him, wetting everything in the car.

And yet they tell me that this is sanity; they tell me that the brains of these boys are not diseased. Their conduct shows exactly what it was, and shows that this court has before him two young men who should be examined in a psychopathic hospital and treated kindly and with care. They get through South Chicago, and they take the regular automobile road down toward Hammond. They

stop at the forks of the road, and leave little Bobby Franks, soaked with blood, in the machine, and get their dinner, and eat it without an emotion or a qualm.

I repeat, you may search the annals of crime, and you can find no parallel. It is utterly at variance with every motive, and every act and every part of conduct that influences normal people in the commission of crime. There is not a sane thing in all of this from the beginning to the end. There was not a normal act in any of it, from its inception in a diseased brain, until today, when they sit here awaiting their doom.

But we are told that they planned. Well, what does that mean? A maniac plans, an idiot plans, an animal plans; any brain that functions may plan. But their plans were the diseased plans of the diseased mind. Is there any man with an air of intellect and a decent regard for human life, and the slightest bit of heart that does not understand this situation? And still, Your Honor, on account of its weirdness and its strangeness, and its advertising, we are forced to fight. For what? Forced to plead to this court that two boys, one eighteen and the other nineteen, may be permitted to live in silence and solitude and disgrace and spend all their days in the penitentiary. Asking this court and the state's attorney to be merciful enough to let these two boys be locked up in a prison until they die.

5: Ethics

Ethics or moral philosophy is a branch of philosophy that involves systematizing, defending, and recommending concepts of right and wrong conduct. The term *ethics* derives from the Ancient Greek word ἠθικός *ethikos*, which is derived from the word ἦθος *ethos* (habit, "custom"). The branch of philosophy axiology comprises the sub-branches of ethics and aesthetics, each concerned with values.

As a branch of philosophy, ethics investigates the questions "What is the best way for people to live?" and "What actions are right or wrong in particular circumstances?" In practice, ethics seeks to resolve questions of human morality, by defining concepts such as good and evil, right and wrong, virtue and vice, justice and crime. As a field of intellectual enquiry, moral philosophy also is related to the fields of moral psychology, descriptive ethics, and value theory.

Three major areas of study within ethics recognised today are:

1. Meta-ethics, concerning the theoretical meaning and reference of moral propositions, and how their truth values (if any) can be determined
2. Normative ethics, concerning the practical means of determining a moral course of action
3. Applied ethics, concerning what a person is obligated (or permitted) to do in a specific situation or a particular domain of action

Defining ethics

Rushworth Kidder states that "standard definitions of *ethics* have typically included such phrases as 'the science of the ideal human character' or 'the science of moral duty'". Richard William Paul and Linda Elder define ethics as "a set of concepts and principles that guide us in determining what behavior helps or harms sentient creatures". The *Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy* states that the word ethics is "commonly used interchangeably with 'morality' ... and sometimes it is used more narrowly to mean the moral principles of a particular tradition, group or individual." Paul and Elder state that most people confuse ethics with behaving in accordance with social conventions, religious beliefs and the law and don't treat ethics as a stand-alone concept.

The word "ethics" in English refers to several things. It can refer to philosophical ethics or moral philosophy—a project that attempts to use reason in order to answer various kinds of ethical questions. As the English philosopher Bernard Williams writes, attempting to explain moral philosophy: "What makes an inquiry a philosophical one is reflective generality and a style of argument that claims to be rationally persuasive." And Williams describes the content of this area of inquiry as addressing the very broad question, "how one should live" Ethics can also refer to a common human ability to think about ethical problems that is not particular to philosophy. As bioethicist Larry Churchill has written: "Ethics, understood as the capacity to think critically about moral values and direct our actions in terms of such values, is a generic human capacity." Ethics can also be used to describe a particular person's own idiosyncratic principles or habits. For example: "Joe has strange ethics."

The English word ethics is derived from an Ancient Greek word *êthikos*, which means "relating to one's character". The Ancient Greek adjective *êthikos* is itself derived from another Greek word, the noun *êthos* meaning "character, disposition".

Meta-ethics

Meta-ethics asks how we understand, know about, and what we mean when we talk about what is right and what is wrong. An ethical question fixed on some particular practical question—such as, "Should I eat this particular piece of chocolate cake?"—cannot be a meta-ethical question. A meta-ethical question is abstract and relates to a wide range of more specific practical questions. For example, "Is it ever possible to have secure knowledge of what is right and wrong?" would be a meta-ethical question.

Meta-ethics has always accompanied philosophical ethics. For example, Aristotle implies that less precise knowledge is possible in ethics than in other spheres of inquiry, and he regards ethical knowledge as depending upon habit and acculturation in a way that makes it distinctive from other kinds of knowledge. Meta-ethics is also important in G.E. Moore's *Principia Ethica* from 1903. In it he first wrote about what he called *the naturalistic fallacy*. Moore was seen to reject naturalism in ethics, in his Open Question Argument. This made thinkers look again at second order questions about ethics. Earlier, the Scottish philosopher David Hume had put forward a similar view on the difference between facts and values.

Studies of how we know in ethics divide into cognitivism and non-cognitivism; this is similar to the contrast between descriptivists and non-descriptivists. Non-cognitivism is the claim that when we judge something as right or wrong, this is neither true nor false.

We may for example be only expressing our emotional feelings about these things. Cognitivism can then be seen as the claim that when we talk about right and wrong, we are talking about matters of fact.

The ontology of ethics is about value-bearing things or properties, i.e. the kind of things or stuff referred to by ethical propositions. Non-descriptivists and non-cognitivists believe that ethics does not need a specific ontology, since ethical propositions do not refer. This is known as an anti-realist position. Realists on the other hand must explain what kind of entities, properties or states are relevant for ethics, how they have value, and why they guide and motivate our actions.

Normative Ethics

Normative ethics is the study of ethical action. It is the branch of ethics that investigates the set of questions that arise when considering how one ought to act, morally speaking. Normative ethics is distinct from meta-ethics because it examines standards for the rightness and wrongness of actions, while meta-ethics studies the meaning of moral language and the metaphysics of moral facts. Normative ethics is also distinct from descriptive ethics, as the latter is an empirical investigation of people's moral beliefs. To put it another way, descriptive ethics would be concerned with determining what proportion of people believe that killing is always wrong, while normative ethics is concerned with whether it is correct to hold such a belief. Hence, normative ethics is sometimes called prescriptive, rather than descriptive. However, on certain versions of the meta-ethical view called moral realism, moral facts are both descriptive and prescriptive at the same time.

Traditionally, normative ethics (also known as moral theory) was the study of what makes actions right and wrong. These theories offered an overarching moral principle one could appeal to in resolving difficult moral decisions.

At the turn of the 20th century, moral theories became more complex and are no longer concerned solely with rightness and wrongness, but are interested in many different kinds of moral status. During the middle of the century, the study of normative ethics declined as meta-ethics grew in prominence. This focus on meta-ethics was in part caused by an intense linguistic focus in analytic philosophy and by the popularity of logical positivism.

In 1971 John Rawls published *A Theory of Justice*, noteworthy in its pursuit of moral arguments and eschewing of meta-ethics. This publication set the trend for renewed interest in normative ethics.

5.1: The Myth of Gyges

25 The Myth of Gyges

The Myth of Gyges[39]

[Glaucon is speaking to Socrates on the topic of justice]

They say that to do injustice is, by nature, good; to suffer injustice, evil; but that the evil is greater than the good. And so when men have both done and suffered injustice and have had experience of both, not being able to avoid the one and obtain the other, they think that they had better agree among themselves to have neither; hence there arise laws and mutual covenants; and that which is ordained by law is termed by them lawful and just. This they affirm to be the origin and nature of justice; --it is a mean or compromise, between the best of all, which is to do injustice and not be punished, and the worst of all, which is to suffer injustice without the power of retaliation; and justice, being at a middle point between the two, is tolerated not as a good, but as the lesser evil, and honoured by reason of the inability of men to do injustice. For no man who is worthy to be called a man would ever submit to such an agreement if he were able to resist; he would be mad if he did. Such is the received account, Socrates, of the nature and origin of justice.

Now that those who practise justice do so involuntarily and because they have not the power to be unjust will best appear if we imagine something of this kind: having given both to the just and the unjust power to do what they will, let us watch and see whither desire will lead them; then we shall discover in the very act the just and unjust man to be proceeding along the same road, following their interest, which all natures deem to be their good, and are only diverted into the path of justice by the force of law. The liberty which we are supposing may be most completely given to them in the form of such a power as is said to have been possessed by Gyges the ancestor of Croesus the Lydian. According to the tradition, Gyges was a shepherd in the service of the king of Lydia; there was a great storm, and an earthquake made an opening in the earth at the place where he was feeding his flock. Amazed at the sight, he descended into the opening, where, among other marvels, he beheld a hollow brazen horse, having doors, at which he stooping and looking in saw a dead body of stature, as appeared to him, more than human, and having nothing on but a gold ring; this he took from the finger of the dead and reascended. Now the shepherds met together, according to custom, that they might send their monthly report about the flocks to the king; into their assembly he came having the ring on his finger, and as he was sitting among them he chanced to turn the collet of the ring inside his hand, when instantly he became invisible to the rest of the company and they began to speak of him as if he were no longer present. He was astonished at this, and again touching the ring he turned the collet outwards and reappeared; he made several trials of the ring, and always with the same result-when he turned the collet inwards he became invisible, when outwards he reappeared. Whereupon he contrived to be chosen one of the messengers who were sent to the court; where as soon as he arrived he seduced the queen, and with her help conspired against the king and slew him, and took the kingdom. Suppose now that there were two such magic rings, and the just put on one of them and the unjust the other;,no man can be imagined to be of such an iron nature that he would stand fast in justice. No man would keep his hands off what was not his own when he could safely take what he liked out of the market, or go into houses and lie with any one at his pleasure, or kill or release from prison whom he would, and in all respects be like a God among men. Then the actions of the just would be as the actions of the unjust; they would both come at last to the same point. And this we may truly affirm to be a great proof that a man is just, not willingly or because he thinks that justice is any good to him individually, but of necessity, for wherever any one thinks that he can safely be unjust, there he is unjust. For all men believe in their hearts that injustice is far more profitable to the individual than justice, and he who argues as I have been supposing, will say that they are right. If you could imagine any one obtaining this power of becoming invisible, and never doing any wrong or touching what was another's, he would be thought by the lookers-on to be a most wretched idiot, although they would praise him to one another's faces, and keep up appearances with one another from a fear that they too might suffer injustice. Enough of this.

Now, if we are to form a real judgment of the life of the just and unjust, we must isolate them; there is no other way; and how is the isolation to be effected? I answer: Let the unjust man be entirely unjust, and the just man entirely just; nothing is to be taken away from either of them, and both are to be perfectly furnished for the work of their respective lives. First, let the unjust be like other distinguished masters of craft; like the skilful pilot or physician, who knows intuitively his own powers and keeps within their limits, and who, if he fails at any point, is able to recover himself. So let the unjust make his unjust attempts in the right way, and lie hidden if he means to be great in his injustice (he who is found out is nobody): for the highest reach of injustice is: to be deemed just when you are not. Therefore I say that in the perfectly unjust man we must assume the most perfect injustice; there is to be no deduction, but we must allow him, while doing the most unjust acts, to have acquired the greatest reputation for justice. If he have taken a false step he must be able to recover himself; he must be one who can speak with effect, if any of his deeds come to light,

and who can force his way where force is required his courage and strength, and command of money and friends. And at his side let us place the just man in his nobleness and simplicity, wishing, as Aeschylus says, to be and not to seem good. There must be no seeming, for if he seem to be just he will be honoured and rewarded, and then we shall not know whether he is just for the sake of justice or for the sake of honours and rewards; therefore, let him be clothed in justice only, and have no other covering; and he must be imagined in a state of life the opposite of the former. Let him be the best of men, and let him be thought the worst; then he will have been put to the proof; and we shall see whether he will be affected by the fear of infamy and its consequences. And let him continue thus to the hour of death; being just and seeming to be unjust. When both have reached the uttermost extreme, the one of justice and the other of injustice, let judgment be given which of them is the happier of the two.

5.2: The Euthyphro Dilemma

The Euthyphro Dilemma[40]

The Euthyphro dilemma is found in Plato's dialogue *Euthyphro*, in which Socrates asks

Euthyphro, "Is the pious (τὸ ὅσιον) loved by the gods because it is pious, or is it pious because it is loved by the gods?" (10a)

The dilemma has had a major effect on the philosophical theism of the monotheistic religions, but in a modified form: "Is what is morally good commanded by God because it is morally good, or is it morally good because it is commanded by God?" Ever since Plato's original discussion, this question has presented a problem for some theists, though others have thought it a false dilemma, and it continues to be an object of theological and philosophical discussion today.

The dilemma

Socrates and Euthyphro discuss the nature of piety in Plato's *Euthyphro*. Euthyphro proposes (6e) that the pious (τὸ ὅσιον) is the same thing as that which is loved by the gods (τὸ θεοφιλές), but Socrates finds a problem with this proposal: the gods may disagree among themselves (7e). Euthyphro then revises his definition, so that piety is only that which is loved by all of the gods unanimously (9e).

At this point the dilemma surfaces. Socrates asks whether the gods love the pious because it is the pious, or whether the pious is pious only because it is loved by the gods (10a). Socrates and Euthyphro both accept the first option: surely the gods love the pious because it is the pious. But this means, Socrates argues, that we are forced to reject the second option: the fact that the gods love something cannot explain why the pious is the pious (10d). Socrates points out that if both options were true, they together would yield a vicious circle, with the gods loving the pious because it is the pious, and the pious being the pious because the gods love it. And this in turn means, Socrates argues, that the pious is not the same as the god-beloved, for what makes the pious the pious is not what makes the god-beloved the god-beloved. After all, what makes the god-beloved the god-beloved is the fact that the gods love it, whereas what makes the pious the pious is something else (9d-11a). Thus Euthyphro's theory does not give us the very *nature* of the pious, but at most a *quality* of the pious (11ab).

In philosophical theism

The dilemma can be modified to apply to philosophical theism, where it is still the object of theological and philosophical discussion, largely within the Christian, Jewish, and Islamic traditions. As German philosopher and mathematician Gottfried Leibniz presented this version of the dilemma: "It is generally agreed that whatever God wills is good and just. But there remains the question whether it is good and just because God wills it or whether God wills it because it is good and just; in other words, whether justice and goodness are arbitrary or whether they belong to the necessary and eternal truths about the nature of things."

Explanation of the dilemma

The first horn

The first horn of the dilemma (i.e. that which is right is commanded by God *because it is right*) goes by a variety of names, including intellectualism, rationalism, realism, naturalism, and objectivism. Roughly, it is the view that there are independent moral standards: some actions are right or wrong in themselves, independent of God's commands. This is the view accepted by Socrates and Euthyphro in Plato's dialogue. The Mu'tazilah school of Islamic theology also defended the view (with, for example, Nazzam maintaining that God is powerless to engage in injustice or lying), as did the Islamic philosopher Averroes. Thomas Aquinas never explicitly addresses the Euthyphro dilemma, but Aquinas scholars often put him on this side of the issue. Aquinas draws a distinction between what is good or evil in itself and what is good or evil because of God's commands, with unchangeable moral standards forming the bulk of natural law. Thus he contends that not even God can change the Ten Commandments (adding, however, that God *can* change what individuals deserve in particular cases, in what might look like special dispensations to murder or steal). Among later Scholastics, Gabriel Vásquez is particularly clear-cut about obligations existing prior to anyone's will, even God's. Modern natural law theory saw Grotius and Leibniz also putting morality prior to God's will, comparing moral truths to unchangeable mathematical truths, and engaging voluntarists like Pufendorf in philosophical controversy. Cambridge Platonists like Benjamin Whichcote and Ralph Cudworth mounted seminal attacks on voluntarist theories, paving the way for the later rationalist metaethics of Samuel Clarke and Richard Price; what emerged was a view on which eternal moral standards, though dependent on God in some way, exist independently of God's will and prior to God's commands. Contemporary philosophers of religion who embrace this horn of the Euthyphro dilemma include Richard Swinburne and T. J. Mawson (though see below for complications).

Problems

Sovereignty: If there are moral standards independent of God's will, then "[t]here is something over which God is not sovereign. God is bound by the laws of morality instead of being their establisher. Moreover, God depends for his goodness on the extent to which he conforms to an independent moral standard. Thus, God is not absolutely independent." 18th-century philosopher Richard Price, who takes the first horn and thus sees morality as "necessary and immutable", sets out the objection as follows: "It may seem that this is setting up something distinct from God, which is independent of him, and equally eternal and necessary."

Omnipotence: These moral standards would limit God's power: not even God could oppose them by commanding what is evil and thereby making it good. This point was influential in Islamic theology: "In relation to God, objective values appeared as a limiting factor to His power to do as He wills... Ash'ari got rid of the whole embarrassing problem by denying the existence of objective values which might act as a standard for God's action." Similar concerns drove the medieval voluntarists Duns Scotus and William of Ockham. As contemporary philosopher Richard Swinburne puts the point, this horn "seems to place a restriction on God's power if he cannot make any action which he chooses obligatory... [and also] it seems to limit what God can command us to do. God, if he is to be God, cannot command us to do what, independently of his will, is wrong."

Freedom of the will: Moreover, these moral standards would limit God's freedom of will: God could not command anything opposed to them, and perhaps would have no choice but to command in accordance with them. As Mark Murphy puts the point, "if moral requirements existed prior to God's willing them, requirements that an impeccable God could not violate, God's liberty would be compromised."

Morality without God: If there are moral standards independent of God, then morality would retain its authority even if God did not exist. This conclusion was explicitly (and notoriously) drawn by early modern political theorist Hugo Grotius: "What we have been saying [about the natural law] would have a degree of validity even if we should concede that which cannot be conceded without the utmost wickedness, that there is no God, or that the affairs of men are of no concern to him" On such a view, God is no longer a "law-giver" but at most a "law-transmitter" who plays no vital role in the foundations of morality. Nontheists have capitalized on this point, largely as a way of disarming moral arguments for God's existence: if morality does not depend on God in the first place, such arguments stumble at the starting gate.

The second horn

The second horn of the dilemma (i.e. that which is right is right *because it is commanded by God*) is sometimes known as divine command theory or voluntarism. Roughly, it is the view that there are no moral standards other than God's will: without God's commands, nothing would be right or wrong. This view was partially defended by Duns Scotus, who argued that not all Ten Commandments belong to the Natural Law. Scotus held that while our duties to God (found on the first tablet) are self-evident, true by definition, and unchangeable even by God, our duties to others (found on the second tablet) were arbitrarily willed by God and are within his power to revoke and replace. William of Ockham went further, contending that (since there is no contradiction in it) God could command us not to love God and even to *hate* God. Later Scholastics like Pierre D'Ailly and his student Jean de Gerson explicitly confronted the Euthyphro dilemma, taking the voluntarist position that God does not "command good actions because they are good or prohibit evil ones because they are evil; but... these are therefore good because they are commanded and evil because prohibited." Protestant reformers Martin Luther and John Calvin both stressed the absolute sovereignty of God's will, with Luther writing that "for [God's] will there is no cause or reason that can be laid down as a rule or measure for it", and Calvin writing that "everything which [God] wills must be held to be righteous by the mere fact of his willing it." The voluntarist emphasis on God's absolute power was carried further by Descartes, who notoriously held that God had freely created the eternal truths of logic and mathematics, and that God was therefore capable of giving circles unequal radii, giving triangles other than 180 internal degrees, and even making contradictions true. Descartes explicitly seconded Ockham: "why should [God] not have been able to give this command [i.e., the command to hate God] to one of his creatures?" Thomas Hobbes notoriously reduced the justice of God to "irresistible power" (drawing the complaint of Bishop Bramhall that this "overturns... all law"). And William Paley held that all moral obligations bottom out in the self-interested "urge" to avoid Hell and enter Heaven by acting in accord with God's commands. Islam's Ash'arite theologians, al-Ghazali foremost among them, embraced voluntarism: scholar George Hourani writes that the view "was probably more prominent and widespread in Islam than in any other civilization." Wittgenstein said that of "the two interpretations of the Essence of the Good", that which holds that "the Good is good, in virtue of the fact that God wills it" is "the deeper", while that which holds that "God wills the good, because it is good" is "the shallow, rationalistic one, in that it behaves 'as though' that which is good could be given some further foundation". Today, divine command theory is defended by many philosophers of religion, though typically in a restricted form (see below).

Problems

This horn of the dilemma also faces several problems:

No reasons for morality: If there is no moral standard other than God's will, then God's commands are arbitrary (i.e., based on pure whimsy or caprice). This would mean that morality is ultimately not based on reasons: "if theological voluntarism is true, then God's commands/intentions must be arbitrary; [but] it cannot be that morality could wholly depend on something arbitrary... [for] when we say that some moral state of affairs obtains, we take it that there is a reason for that moral state of affairs obtaining rather than another." And as Michael J. Murray and Michael Rea put it, this would also "cas[t] doubt on the notion that morality is genuinely objective." An additional problem is that it is difficult to explain how true moral actions can exist if one acts only out of fear of God or in an attempt to be rewarded by him.

No reasons for God: This arbitrariness would also jeopardize God's status as a wise and rational being, one who always acts on good reasons. As Leibniz writes: "Where will be his justice and his wisdom if he has only a certain despotic power, if arbitrary will takes the place of reasonableness, and if in accord with the definition of tyrants, justice consists in that which is pleasing to the most powerful? Besides it seems that every act of willing supposes some reason for the willing and this reason, of course, must precede the act."

Anything goes: This arbitrariness would also mean that *anything* could become good, and *anything* could become bad, merely upon God's command. Thus if God commanded us "to gratuitously inflict pain on each other" or to engage in "cruelty for its own sake" or to hold an "annual sacrifice of randomly selected ten-year-olds in a particularly gruesome ritual that involves excruciating and prolonged suffering for its victims", then we would be morally obligated to do so. As 17th-century philosopher Ralph Cudworth put it: "nothing can be imagined so grossly wicked, or so foully unjust or dishonest, but if it were supposed to be commanded by this omnipotent Deity, must needs upon that hypothesis forthwith become holy, just, and righteous."

Moral contingency: If morality depends on the perfectly free will of God, morality would lose its necessity: "If nothing prevents God from loving things that are different from what God actually loves, then goodness can change from world to world or time to time. This is obviously objectionable to those who believe that claims about morality are, if true, necessarily true." In other words, no action is necessarily moral: any right action could have easily been wrong, if God had so decided, and an action which is right today could easily become wrong tomorrow, if God so decides. Indeed, some have argued that divine command theory is incompatible with ordinary conceptions of moral supervenience.

Why do God's commands obligate?: Mere commands do not create obligations unless the commander has some commanding authority. But this commanding authority cannot itself be based on those very commands (i.e., a command to obey commands), otherwise a vicious circle results. So, in order for God's commands to obligate us, he must derive commanding authority from some source other than his own will. As Cudworth put it: "For it was never heard of, that any one founded all his authority of commanding others, and others [*sic*] obligation or duty to obey his commands, in a law of his own making, that men should be required, obliged, or bound to obey him. Wherefore since the thing willed in all laws is not that men should be bound or obliged to obey; this thing cannot be the product of the meer [*sic*] will of the commander, but it must proceed from something else; namely, the right or authority of the commander." To avoid the circle, one might say our obligation comes from gratitude to God for creating us. But this presupposes some sort of independent moral standard obligating us to be grateful to our benefactors. As 18th-century philosopher Francis Hutcheson writes: "Is the Reason exciting to concur with the Deity this, 'The Deity is our Benefactor?' Then what Reason excites to concur with Benefactors?" Or finally, one might resort to Hobbes's view: "The right of nature whereby God reigneth over men, and punisheth those that break his laws, is to be derived, not from his creating them (as if he required obedience, as of gratitude for his benefits), but from his *irresistible power*." In other words, might makes right.

God's goodness: If *all* goodness is a matter of God's will, then what shall become of *God's* goodness? Thus William P. Alston writes, "since the standards of moral goodness are set by divine commands, to say that God is morally good is just to say that he obeys his own commands... that God practises what he preaches, whatever that might be;" Hutcheson deems such a view "an insignificant tautology, amounting to no more than this, 'That God wills what he wills.'" Alternatively, as Leibniz puts it, divine command theorists "deprive God of the designation *good*: for what cause could one have to praise him for what he does, if in doing something quite different he would have done equally well?" A related point is raised by C. S. Lewis: "if good is to be *defined* as what God commands, then the goodness of God Himself is emptied of meaning and the commands of an omnipotent fiend would have the same claim on us as those of the 'righteous Lord.'" Or again Leibniz: "this opinion would hardly distinguish God from the devil." That is, since divine command theory trivializes God's goodness, it is incapable of explaining the difference between God and an all-powerful demon.

The is-ought problem and the naturalistic fallacy: According to David Hume, it is hard to see how moral propositions featuring the relation *ought* could ever be deduced from ordinary *is* propositions, such as "the being of a God." Divine command theory is thus

guilty of deducing moral *oughts* from ordinary *ises* about God's commands. In a similar vein, G. E. Moore argued (with his open question argument) that the notion *good* is indefinable, and any attempts to analyze it in naturalistic or metaphysical terms are guilty of the so-called "naturalistic fallacy." This would block any theory which analyzes morality in terms of God's will: and indeed, in a later discussion of divine command theory, Moore concluded that "when we assert any action to be right or wrong, we are not merely making an assertion about the attitude of mind towards it of any being or set of beings whatever."

No morality without God: If all morality is a matter of God's will, then if God does not exist, there is no morality. This is the thought captured in the slogan (often attributed to Dostoevsky) "If God does not exist, everything is permitted." Divine command theorists disagree over whether this is a problem for their view or a virtue of their view. Many argue that morality does indeed require God's existence, and that this is in fact a problem for atheism. But divine command theorist Robert Merrihew Adams contends that this idea ("that no actions would be ethically wrong if there were not a loving God") is one that "will seem (at least initially) implausible to many", and that his theory must "dispel [an] air of paradox."

Responses to the dilemma

Many philosophers and theologians have addressed the Euthyphro dilemma since the time of Plato, though not always with reference to the Platonic dialogue. According to scholar Terence Irwin, the issue and its connection with Plato was revived by Ralph Cudworth and Samuel Clarke in the 17th and 18th centuries. More recently, it has received a great deal of attention from contemporary philosophers working in metaethics and the philosophy of religion. Philosophers and theologians aiming to defend theism against the threat of the dilemma have developed a variety of responses.

Independent moral standards

Contemporary philosophers Joshua Hoffman and Gary S. Rosenkrantz take the first horn of the dilemma, branding divine command theory a "subjective theory of value" that makes morality arbitrary. They accept a theory of morality on which "right and wrong, good and bad, are in a sense independent of what *anyone* believes, wants, or prefers." They do not address the aforementioned problems with the first horn, but do consider a related problem concerning God's omnipotence: namely, that it might be handicapped by his inability to bring about what is independently evil. To this they reply that God is omnipotent, even though there are states of affairs he cannot bring about: omnipotence is a matter of "maximal power", not an ability to bring about all possible states of affairs. And supposing that it is impossible for God not to exist, then since there cannot be more than one omnipotent being, it is therefore impossible for any being to have more power than God (e.g., a being who is omnipotent but not omnibenevolent). Thus God's omnipotence remains intact.

Richard Swinburne and T. J. Mawson have a slightly more complicated view. They both take the first horn of the dilemma when it comes to *necessary* moral truths. But divine commands are not totally irrelevant, for God and his will can still affect *contingent* moral truths. On the one hand, the most fundamental moral truths hold true regardless of whether God exists or what God has commanded: "Genocide and torturing children are wrong and would remain so whatever commands any person issued." This is because, according to Swinburne, such truths are true as a matter of logical necessity: like the laws of logic, one cannot deny them without contradiction.

This parallel offers a solution to the aforementioned problems of God's sovereignty, omnipotence, and freedom: namely, that these necessary truths of morality pose no more of a threat than the laws of logic. On the other hand, there is still an important role for God's will. First, there are some divine commands that can directly create moral obligations: e.g., the command to worship on Sundays instead of on Tuesdays. Notably, not even these commands, for which Swinburne and Mawson take the second horn of the dilemma, have ultimate, underived authority. Rather, they create obligations only because of God's role as creator and sustainer and indeed owner of the universe, together with the necessary moral truth that we owe some limited consideration to benefactors and owners. Second, God can make an *indirect* moral difference by deciding what sort of universe to create. For example, whether a public policy is morally good might indirectly depend on God's creative acts: the policy's goodness or badness might depend on its effects, and those effects would in turn depend on the sort of universe God has decided to create.

Restricted divine command theory

One common response to the Euthyphro dilemma centers on a distinction between *value* and *obligation*. Obligation, which concerns rightness and wrongness (or what is required, forbidden, or permissible), is given a voluntarist treatment. But value, which concerns goodness and badness, is treated as independent of divine commands. The result is a *restricted* divine command theory that applies only to a specific region of morality: the deontic region of obligation. This response is found in Francisco Suárez's discussion of natural law and voluntarism in *De legibus* and has been prominent in contemporary philosophy of religion, appearing in the work of Robert M. Adams, Philip L. Quinn, and William P. Alston.

A significant attraction of such a view is that, since it allows for a non-voluntarist treatment of goodness and badness, and therefore of God's own moral attributes, some of the aforementioned problems with voluntarism can perhaps be answered. God's commands are not arbitrary: there are reasons which guide his commands based ultimately on this goodness and badness. God could not issue horrible commands: God's own essential goodness or loving character would keep him from issuing any unsuitable commands. Our obligation to obey God's commands does not result in circular reasoning; it might instead be based on a gratitude whose appropriateness is itself independent of divine commands. These proposed solutions are controversial, and some steer the view back into problems associated with the first horn.

One problem remains for such views: if God's own essential goodness does not depend on divine commands, then on what *does* it depend? Something other than God? Here the restricted divine command theory is commonly combined with a view reminiscent of Plato: God is identical to the ultimate standard for goodness. Alston offers the analogy of the standard meter bar in France. Something is a meter long inasmuch as it is the same length as the standard meter bar, and likewise, something is good inasmuch as it approximates God. If one asks why *God* is identified as the ultimate standard for goodness, Alston replies that this is "the end of the line," with no further explanation available, but adds that this is no more arbitrary than a view that invokes a fundamental moral standard. On this view, then, even though goodness is independent of God's *will*, it still depends on *God*, and thus God's sovereignty remains intact.

This solution has been criticized by Wes Morriston. If we identify the ultimate standard for goodness with God's nature, then it seems we are identifying it with certain properties of God (e.g., being loving, being just). If so, then the dilemma resurfaces: is God good because he has those properties, or are those properties good because God has them? Nevertheless, Morriston concludes that the appeal to God's essential goodness is the divine-command theorist's best bet. To produce a satisfying result, however, it would have to give an account of God's goodness that does not trivialize it and does not make God subject to an independent standard of goodness.

Moral philosopher Peter Singer, disputing the perspective that "God is good" and could never advocate something like torture, states that those who propose this are "caught in a trap of their own making, for what can they possibly mean by the assertion that God is good? That God is approved of by God?"

False dilemma response

Augustine, Anselm, and Aquinas all wrote about the issues raised by the Euthyphro dilemma, although, like William James and Wittgenstein later, they did not mention it by name. As philosopher and Anselm scholar Katherin A. Rogers observes, many contemporary philosophers of religion suppose that there are true propositions which exist as platonic abstracta independently of God. Among these are propositions constituting a moral order, to which God must conform in order to be good. Classical Judaeo-Christian theism, however, rejects such a view as inconsistent with God's omnipotence, which requires that God and what he has made is all that there is. "The classical tradition," Rogers notes, "also steers clear of the other horn of the Euthyphro dilemma, divine command theory." From a classical theistic perspective, therefore, the Euthyphro dilemma is false. As Rogers puts it, "Anselm, like Augustine before him and Aquinas later, rejects both horns of the Euthyphro dilemma. God neither conforms to nor invents the moral order. Rather His very nature is the standard for value."

Jewish thought

The basis of the false dilemma response—God's nature is the standard for value—predates the dilemma itself, appearing first in the thought of the eighth-century BC Hebrew prophets, Amos, Hosea, Micah and Isaiah. (Amos lived some three centuries before Socrates and two before Thales, traditionally regarded as the first Greek philosopher.) "Their message," writes British scholar Norman H. Snaith, "is recognized by all as marking a considerable advance on all previous ideas," not least in its "special consideration for the poor and down-trodden." As Snaith observes, *tsedeq*, the Hebrew word for righteousness, "actually stands for the establishment of God's will in the land." This includes justice, but goes beyond it, "because God's will is wider than justice. He has a particular regard for the helpless ones on earth." *Tsedeq* "is the norm by which all must be judged" and it "depends entirely upon the Nature of God."

Hebrew has few abstract nouns. What the Greeks thought of as ideas or abstractions, the Hebrews thought of as activities. In contrast to the Greek *dikaiosune* (justice) of the philosophers, *tsedeq* is not an idea abstracted from this world of affairs. As Snaith writes:

Tsedeq is something that happens here, and can be seen, and recognized, and known. It follows, therefore, that when the Hebrew thought of *tsedeq* (righteousness), he did not think of Righteousness in general, or of Righteousness as an Idea. On the contrary, he thought of a particular righteous act, an action, concrete, capable of exact description, fixed in time and space.... If the word had

anything like a general meaning for him, then it was as it was represented by a whole series of events, the sum-total of a number of particular happenings.

The Hebrew stance on what came to be called the problem of universals, as on much else, was very different from that of Plato and precluded anything like the Euthyphro dilemma. This has not changed. In 2005, Jonathan Sacks wrote, "In Judaism, the Euthyphro dilemma does not exist." Jewish philosophers Avi Sagi and Daniel Statman criticized the Euthyphro dilemma as "misleading" because "it is not exhaustive": it leaves out a third option, namely that God "acts only out of His nature."

St. Thomas Aquinas

Like Aristotle, Aquinas rejected Platonism. In his view, to speak of abstractions not only as existent, but as more perfect exemplars than fully designated particulars, is to put a premium on generality and vagueness. On this analysis, the abstract "good" in the first horn of the Euthyphro dilemma is an unnecessary obfuscation. Aquinas frequently quoted with approval Aristotle's definition, "Good is what all desire." As he clarified, "When we say that good is what all desire, it is not to be understood that every kind of good thing is desired by all, but that whatever is desired has the nature of good." In other words, even those who desire evil desire it "only under the aspect of good," i.e., of what is desirable. The difference between desiring good and desiring evil is that in the former, will and reason are in harmony, whereas in the latter, they are in discord.

Aquinas's discussion of sin provides a good point of entry to his philosophical explanation of why the nature of God is the standard for value. "Every sin," he writes, "consists in the longing for a passing [i.e., ultimately unreal or false] good." Thus, "in a certain sense it is true what Socrates says, namely that no one sins with full knowledge." "No sin in the will happens without an ignorance of the understanding." God, however, has full knowledge (omniscience) and therefore by definition (that of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle as well as Aquinas) can never will anything other than what is good. It has been claimed — for instance, by Nicolai Hartmann, who wrote: "There is no freedom for the good that would not be at the same time freedom for evil" — that this would limit God's freedom, and therefore his omnipotence. Josef Pieper, however, replies that such arguments rest upon an impermissibly anthropomorphic conception of God. In the case of humans, as Aquinas says, to be able to sin is indeed a consequence, or even a sign, of freedom (*quodam libertatis signum*). Humans, in other words, are not puppets manipulated by God so that they always do what is right. However, "it does not belong to the essence of the free will to be able to decide for evil." "To will evil is neither freedom nor a part of freedom." It is precisely humans' creatureliness — that is, their not being God and therefore omniscient — that makes them capable of sinning. Consequently, writes Pieper, "the inability to sin should be looked on as the very signature of a higher freedom — contrary to the usual way of conceiving the issue." Pieper concludes: "Only *the* will [i.e., God's] can be the right standard of its own willing and must will what is right necessarily, from within itself, and always. A deviation from the norm would not even be thinkable. And obviously only the absolute divine will is the right standard of its own act" — and consequently of all human acts. Thus the second horn of the Euthyphro dilemma, divine command theory, is also disposed of.

William James

William James, in his essay "The Moral Philosopher and the Moral Life", dismisses the first horn of the Euthyphro dilemma and stays clear of the second. He writes: "Our ordinary attitude of regarding ourselves as subject to an overarching system of moral relations, true 'in themselves,' is ... either an out-and-out superstition, or else it must be treated as a merely provisional abstraction from that real Thinker ... to whom the existence of the universe is due." Moral obligations are created by "personal demands," whether these demands come from the weakest creatures, from the most insignificant persons, or from God. It follows that "ethics have as genuine a foothold in a universe where the highest consciousness is human, as in a universe where there is a God as well." However, whether "the purely human system" works "as well as the other is a different question."

For James, the deepest practical difference in the moral life is between what he calls "the easy-going and the strenuous mood." In a purely human moral system, it is hard to rise above the easy-going mood, since the thinker's "various ideals, known to him to be mere preferences of his own, are too nearly of the same denominational value; he can play fast and loose with them at will. This too is why, in a merely human world without a God, the appeal to our moral energy falls short of its maximum stimulating power." Our attitude is "entirely different" in a world where there are none but "finite demanders" from that in a world where there is also "an infinite demander." This is because "the stable and systematic moral universe for which the ethical philosopher asks is fully possible only in a world where there is a divine thinker with all-enveloping demands", for in that case, "actualized in his thought already must be that ethical philosophy which we seek as the pattern which our own must evermore approach." Even though "exactly what the thought of this infinite thinker may be is hidden from us", our postulation of him serves "to let loose in us the strenuous mood" and confront us with an existential "challenge" in which "our total character and personal genius ... are on trial; and if we invoke any so-called philosophy, our choice and use of that also are but revelations of our personal aptitude or incapacity for moral life. From this unsparing practical ordeal no professor's lectures and no array of books can save us." In the words of

Richard M. Gale, "God inspires us to lead the morally strenuous life in virtue of our conceiving of him as unsurpassably *good*. This supplies James with an adequate answer to the underlying question of the *Euthyphro*."

In popular culture

In the song "No Church in the Wild" from the album *Watch the Throne*, rapper Jay Z references the dilemma with the line, "Is pious pious 'cause God loves pious? Socrates asked whose bias do y'all seek."

5.3: Utilitarianism

27 Utilitarianism

Utilitarianism[41]

Chapter 2

What Utilitarianism Is.

…The creed which accepts as the foundation of morals, Utility, or the Greatest Happiness Principle, holds that actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness. By happiness is intended pleasure, and the absence of pain; by unhappiness, pain, and the privation of pleasure. To give a clear view of the moral standard set up by the theory, much more requires to be said; in particular, what things it includes in the ideas of pain and pleasure; and to what extent this is left an open question. But these supplementary explanations do not affect the theory of life on which this theory of morality is grounded- namely, that pleasure, and freedom from pain, are the only things desirable as ends; and that all desirable things (which are as numerous in the utilitarian as in any other scheme) are desirable either for the pleasure inherent in themselves, or as means to the promotion of pleasure and the prevention of pain.

Now, such a theory of life excites in many minds, and among them in some of the most estimable in feeling and purpose, inveterate dislike. To suppose that life has (as they express it) no higher end than pleasure- no better and nobler object of desire and pursuit- they designate as utterly mean and grovelling; as a doctrine worthy only of swine, to whom the followers of Epicurus were, at a very early period, contemptuously likened; and modern holders of the doctrine are occasionally made the subject of equally polite comparisons by its German, French, and English assailants.

When thus attacked, the Epicureans have always answered, that it is not they, but their accusers, who represent human nature in a degrading light; since the accusation supposes human beings to be capable of no pleasures except those of which swine are capable. If this supposition were true, the charge could not be gainsaid, but would then be no longer an imputation; for if the sources of pleasure were precisely the same to human beings and to swine, the rule of life which is good enough for the one would be good enough for the other. The comparison of the Epicurean life to that of beasts is felt as degrading, precisely because a beast's pleasures do not satisfy a human being's conceptions of happiness. Human beings have faculties more elevated than the animal appetites, and when once made conscious of them, do not regard anything as happiness which does not include their gratification. I do not, indeed, consider the Epicureans to have been by any means faultless in drawing out their scheme of consequences from the utilitarian principle. To do this in any sufficient manner, many Stoic, as well as Christian elements require to be included. But there is no known Epicurean theory of life which does not assign to the pleasures of the intellect, of the feelings and imagination, and of the moral sentiments, a much higher value as pleasures than to those of mere sensation. It must be admitted, however, that utilitarian writers in general have placed the superiority of mental over bodily pleasures chiefly in the greater permanency, safety, uncostliness, etc., of the former- that is, in their circumstantial advantages rather than in their intrinsic nature. And on all these points utilitarians have fully proved their case; but they might have taken the other, and, as it may be called, higher ground, with entire consistency. It is quite compatible with the principle of utility to recognise the fact, that some kinds of pleasure are more desirable and more valuable than others. It would be absurd that while, in estimating all other things, quality is considered as well as quantity, the estimation of pleasures should be supposed to depend on quantity alone.

If I am asked, what I mean by difference of quality in pleasures, or what makes one pleasure more valuable than another, merely as a pleasure, except its being greater in amount, there is but one possible answer. Of two pleasures, if there be one to which all or almost all who have experience of both give a decided preference, irrespective of any feeling of moral obligation to prefer it, that is the more desirable pleasure. If one of the two is, by those who are competently acquainted with both, placed so far above the other that they prefer it, even though knowing it to be attended with a greater amount of discontent, and would not resign it for any quantity of the other pleasure which their nature is capable of, we are justified in ascribing to the preferred enjoyment a superiority in quality, so far outweighing quantity as to render it, in comparison, of small account.

Now it is an unquestionable fact that those who are equally acquainted with, and equally capable of appreciating and enjoying, both, do give a most marked preference to the manner of existence which employs their higher faculties. Few human creatures would consent to be changed into any of the lower animals, for a promise of the fullest allowance of a beast's pleasures; no intelligent human being would consent to be a fool, no instructed person would be an ignoramus, no person of feeling and conscience would be selfish and base, even though they should be persuaded that the fool, the dunce, or the rascal is better satisfied with his lot than they are with theirs. They would not resign what they possess more than he for the most complete satisfaction of

all the desires which they have in common with him. If they ever fancy they would, it is only in cases of unhappiness so extreme, that to escape from it they would exchange their lot for almost any other, however undesirable in their own eyes. A being of higher faculties requires more to make him happy, is capable probably of more acute suffering, and certainly accessible to it at more points, than one of an inferior type; but in spite of these liabilities, he can never really wish to sink into what he feels to be a lower grade of existence. We may give what explanation we please of this unwillingness; we may attribute it to pride, a name which is given indiscriminately to some of the most and to some of the least estimable feelings of which mankind are capable: we may refer it to the love of liberty and personal independence, an appeal to which was with the Stoics one of the most effective means for the inculcation of it; to the love of power, or to the love of excitement, both of which do really enter into and contribute to it: but its most appropriate appellation is a sense of dignity, which all human beings possess in one form or other, and in some, though by no means in exact, proportion to their higher faculties, and which is so essential a part of the happiness of those in whom it is strong, that nothing which conflicts with it could be, otherwise than momentarily, an object of desire to them.

Whoever supposes that this preference takes place at a sacrifice of happiness- that the superior being, in anything like equal circumstances, is not happier than the inferior- confounds the two very different ideas, of happiness, and content. It is indisputable that the being whose capacities of enjoyment are low, has the greatest chance of having them fully satisfied; and a highly endowed being will always feel that any happiness which he can look for, as the world is constituted, is imperfect. But he can learn to bear its imperfections, if they are at all bearable; and they will not make him envy the being who is indeed unconscious of the imperfections, but only because he feels not at all the good which those imperfections qualify. It is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied; better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied. And if the fool, or the pig, are a different opinion, it is because they only know their own side of the question. The other party to the comparison knows both sides.

It may be objected, that many who are capable of the higher pleasures, occasionally, under the influence of temptation, postpone them to the lower. But this is quite compatible with a full appreciation of the intrinsic superiority of the higher. Men often, from infirmity of character, make their election for the nearer good, though they know it to be the less valuable; and this no less when the choice is between two bodily pleasures, than when it is between bodily and mental. They pursue sensual indulgences to the injury of health, though perfectly aware that health is the greater good.

It may be further objected, that many who begin with youthful enthusiasm for everything noble, as they advance in years sink into indolence and selfishness. But I do not believe that those who undergo this very common change, voluntarily choose the lower description of pleasures in preference to the higher. I believe that before they devote themselves exclusively to the one, they have already become incapable of the other. Capacity for the nobler feelings is in most natures a very tender plant, easily killed, not only by hostile influences, but by mere want of sustenance; and in the majority of young persons it speedily dies away if the occupations to which their position in life has devoted them, and the society into which it has thrown them, are not favourable to keeping that higher capacity in exercise. Men lose their high aspirations as they lose their intellectual tastes, because they have not time or opportunity for indulging them; and they addict themselves to inferior pleasures, not because they deliberately prefer them, but because they are either the only ones to which they have access, or the only ones which they are any longer capable of enjoying. It may be questioned whether any one who has remained equally susceptible to both classes of pleasures, ever knowingly and calmly preferred the lower; though many, in all ages, have broken down in an ineffectual attempt to combine both.

From this verdict of the only competent judges, I apprehend there can be no appeal. On a question which is the best worth having of two pleasures, or which of two modes of existence is the most grateful to the feelings, apart from its moral attributes and from its consequences, the judgment of those who are qualified by knowledge of both, or, if they differ, that of the majority among them, must be admitted as final. And there needs be the less hesitation to accept this judgment respecting the quality of pleasures, since there is no other tribunal to be referred to even on the question of quantity. What means are there of determining which is the acutest of two pains, or the intensest of two pleasurable sensations, except the general suffrage of those who are familiar with both? Neither pains nor pleasures are homogeneous, and pain is always heterogeneous with pleasure. What is there to decide whether a particular pleasure is worth purchasing at the cost of a particular pain, except the feelings and judgment of the experienced? When, therefore, those feelings and judgment declare the pleasures derived from the higher faculties to be preferable in kind, apart from the question of intensity, to those of which the animal nature, disjoined from the higher faculties, is suspectible, they are entitled on this subject to the same regard.

I have dwelt on this point, as being a necessary part of a perfectly just conception of Utility or Happiness, considered as the directive rule of human conduct. But it is by no means an indispensable condition to the acceptance of the utilitarian standard; for that standard is not the agent's own greatest happiness, but the greatest amount of happiness altogether; and if it may possibly be doubted whether a noble character is always the happier for its nobleness, there can be no doubt that it makes other people happier,

and that the world in general is immensely a gainer by it. Utilitarianism, therefore, could only attain its end by the general cultivation of nobleness of character, even if each individual were only benefited by the nobleness of others, and his own, so far as happiness is concerned, were a sheer deduction from the benefit. But the bare enunciation of such an absurdity as this last, renders refutation superfluous.

According to the Greatest Happiness Principle, as above explained, the ultimate end, with reference to and for the sake of which all other things are desirable (whether we are considering our own good or that of other people), is an existence exempt as far as possible from pain, and as rich as possible in enjoyments, both in point of quantity and quality; the test of quality, and the rule for measuring it against quantity, being the preference felt by those who in their opportunities of experience, to which must be added their habits of self-consciousness and self-observation, are best furnished with the means of comparison. This, being, according to the utilitarian opinion, the end of human action, is necessarily also the standard of morality; which may accordingly be defined, the rules and precepts for human conduct, by the observance of which an existence such as has been described might be, to the greatest extent possible, secured to all mankind; and not to them only, but, so far as the nature of things admits, to the whole sentient creation…

…I must again repeat, what the assailants of utilitarianism seldom have the justice to acknowledge, that the happiness which forms the utilitarian standard of what is right in conduct, is not the agent's own happiness, but that of all concerned. As between his own happiness and that of others, utilitarianism requires him to be as strictly impartial as a disinterested and benevolent spectator. In the golden rule of Jesus of Nazareth, we read the complete spirit of the ethics of utility. To do as you would be done by, and to love your neighbour as yourself, constitute the ideal perfection of utilitarian morality. As the means of making the nearest approach to this ideal, utility would enjoin, first, that laws and social arrangements should place the happiness, or (as speaking practically it may be called) the interest, of every individual, as nearly as possible in harmony with the interest of the whole; and secondly, that education and opinion, which have so vast a power over human character, should so use that power as to establish in the mind of every individual an indissoluble association between his own happiness and the good of the whole; especially between his own happiness and the practice of such modes of conduct, negative and positive, as regard for the universal happiness prescribes; so that not only he may be unable to conceive the possibility of happiness to himself, consistently with conduct opposed to the general good, but also that a direct impulse to promote the general good may be in every individual one of the habitual motives of action, and the sentiments connected therewith may fill a large and prominent place in every human being's sentient existence. If the, impugners of the utilitarian morality represented it to their own minds in this its, true character, I know not what recommendation possessed by any other morality they could possibly affirm to be wanting to it; what more beautiful or more exalted developments of human nature any other ethical system can be supposed to foster, or what springs of action, not accessible to the utilitarian, such systems rely on for giving effect to their mandates…

Chapter 4

Of what sort of Proof the Principle of Utility is Susceptible.

IT HAS already been remarked, that questions of ultimate ends do not admit of proof, in the ordinary acceptation of the term. To be incapable of proof by reasoning is common to all first principles; to the first premises of our knowledge, as well as to those of our conduct. But the former, being matters of fact, may be the subject of a direct appeal to the faculties which judge of fact- namely, our senses, and our internal consciousness. Can an appeal be made to the same faculties on questions of practical ends? Or by what other faculty is cognisance taken of them?

Questions about ends are, in other words, questions what things are desirable. The utilitarian doctrine is, that happiness is desirable, and the only thing desirable, as an end; all other things being only desirable as means to that end. What ought to be required of this doctrine- what conditions is it requisite that the doctrine should fulfil- to make good its claim to be believed?

The only proof capable of being given that an object is visible, is that people actually see it. The only proof that a sound is audible, is that people hear it: and so of the other sources of our experience. In like manner, I apprehend, the sole evidence it is possible to produce that anything is desirable, is that people do actually desire it. If the end which the utilitarian doctrine proposes to itself were not, in theory and in practice, acknowledged to be an end, nothing could ever convince any person that it was so. No reason can be given why the general happiness is desirable, except that each person, so far as he believes it to be attainable, desires his own happiness. This, however, being a fact, we have not only all the proof which the case admits of, but all which it is possible to require, that happiness is a good: that each person's happiness is a good to that person, and the general happiness, therefore, a good to the aggregate of all persons. Happiness has made out its title as one of the ends of conduct, and consequently one of the criteria of morality.

But it has not, by this alone, proved itself to be the sole criterion. To do that, it would seem, by the same rule, necessary to show, not only that people desire happiness, but that they never desire anything else. Now it is palpable that they do desire things which, in common language, are decidedly distinguished from happiness. They desire, for example, virtue, and the absence of vice, no less really than pleasure and the absence of pain. The desire of virtue is not as universal, but it is as authentic a fact, as the desire of happiness. And hence the opponents of the utilitarian standard deem that they have a right to infer that there are other ends of human action besides happiness, and that happiness is not the standard of approbation and disapprobation.

But does the utilitarian doctrine deny that people desire virtue, or maintain that virtue is not a thing to be desired? The very reverse. It maintains not only that virtue is to be desired, but that it is to be desired disinterestedly, for itself. Whatever may be the opinion of utilitarian moralists as to the original conditions by which virtue is made virtue; however they may believe (as they do) that actions and dispositions are only virtuous because they promote another end than virtue; yet this being granted, and it having been decided, from considerations of this description, what is virtuous, they not only place virtue at the very head of the things which are good as means to the ultimate end, but they also recognise as a psychological fact the possibility of its being, to the individual, a good in itself, without looking to any end beyond it; and hold, that the mind is not in a right state, not in a state conformable to Utility, not in the state most conducive to the general happiness, unless it does love virtue in this manner- as a thing desirable in itself, even although, in the individual instance, it should not produce those other desirable consequences which it tends to produce, and on account of which it is held to be virtue. This opinion is not, in the smallest degree, a departure from the Happiness principle. The ingredients of happiness are very various, and each of them is desirable in itself, and not merely when considered as swelling an aggregate. The principle of utility does not mean that any given pleasure, as music, for instance, or any given exemption from pain, as for example health, is to be looked upon as means to a collective something termed happiness, and to be desired on that account. They are desired and desirable in and for themselves; besides being means, they are a part of the end. Virtue, according to the utilitarian doctrine, is not naturally and originally part of the end, but it is capable of becoming so; and in those who love it disinterestedly it has become so, and is desired and cherished, not as a means to happiness, but as a part of their happiness.

To illustrate this farther, we may remember that virtue is not the only thing, originally a means, and which if it were not a means to anything else, would be and remain indifferent, but which by association with what it is a means to, comes to be desired for itself, and that too with the utmost intensity. What, for example, shall we say of the love of money? There is nothing originally more desirable about money than about any heap of glittering pebbles. Its worth is solely that of the things which it will buy; the desires for other things than itself, which it is a means of gratifying. Yet the love of money is not only one of the strongest moving forces of human life, but money is, in many cases, desired in and for itself; the desire to possess it is often stronger than the desire to use it, and goes on increasing when all the desires which point to ends beyond it, to be compassed by it, are falling off. It may, then, be said truly, that money is desired not for the sake of an end, but as part of the end. From being a means to happiness, it has come to be itself a principal ingredient of the individual's conception of happiness. The same may be said of the majority of the great objects of human life- power, for example, or fame; except that to each of these there is a certain amount of immediate pleasure annexed, which has at least the semblance of being naturally inherent in them; a thing which cannot be said of money. Still, however, the strongest natural attraction, both of power and of fame, is the immense aid they give to the attainment of our other wishes; and it is the strong association thus generated between them and all our objects of desire, which gives to the direct desire of them the intensity it often assumes, so as in some characters to surpass in strength all other desires. In these cases the means have become a part of the end, and a more important part of it than any of the things which they are means to. What was once desired as an instrument for the attainment of happiness, has come to be desired for its own sake. In being desired for its own sake it is, however, desired as part of happiness. The person is made, or thinks he would be made, happy by its mere possession; and is made unhappy by failure to obtain it. The desire of it is not a different thing from the desire of happiness, any more than the love of music, or the desire of health. They are included in happiness. They are some of the elements of which the desire of happiness is made up. Happiness is not an abstract idea, but a concrete whole; and these are some of its parts. And the utilitarian standard sanctions and approves their being so. Life would be a poor thing, very ill provided with sources of happiness, if there were not this provision of nature, by which things originally indifferent, but conducive to, or otherwise associated with, the satisfaction of our primitive desires, become in themselves sources of pleasure more valuable than the primitive pleasures, both in permanency, in the space of human existence that they are capable of covering, and even in intensity.

Virtue, according to the utilitarian conception, is a good of this description. There was no original desire of it, or motive to it, save its conduciveness to pleasure, and especially to protection from pain. But through the association thus formed, it may be felt a good in itself, and desired as such with as great intensity as any other good; and with this difference between it and the love of money, of power, or of fame, that all of these may, and often do, render the individual noxious to the other members of the society to which he belongs, whereas there is nothing which makes him so much a blessing to them as the cultivation of the disinterested love of virtue.

And consequently, the utilitarian standard, while it tolerates and approves those other acquired desires, up to the point beyond which they would be more injurious to the general happiness than promotive of it, enjoins and requires the cultivation of the love of virtue up to the greatest strength possible, as being above all things important to the general happiness.

It results from the preceding considerations, that there is in reality nothing desired except happiness.

Whatever is desired otherwise than as a means to some end beyond itself, and ultimately to happiness, is desired as itself a part of happiness, and is not desired for itself until it has become so.

5.4: The Categorical Imperative

28 The Categorical Imperative

The Categorical Imperative[42]

…Now all imperatives command either hypothetically or categorically. The former represent the practical necessity of a possible action as means to something else that is willed (or at least which one might possibly will). The categorical imperative would be that which represented an action as necessary of itself without reference to another end, i. e., as objectively necessary…

Finally, there is an imperative which commands a certain conduct immediately, without having as its condition any other purpose to be attained by it. This imperative is categorical. It concerns not the matter of the action, or its intended result, but its form and the principle of which it is itself a result; and what is essentially good in it consists in the mental disposition, let the consequence be what it may. This imperative may be called that of morality. There is a marked distinction also between the volitions on these three sorts of principles in the dissimilarity of the obligation of the will. In order to mark this difference more clearly, I think they would be most suitably named in their order if we said they are either rules of skill, or counsels of prudence, or commands (laws) of morality. For it is law only that involves the conception of an unconditional and objective necessity, which is consequently universally valid; and commands are laws which must be obeyed, that is, must be followed, even in opposition to inclination…

There is therefore but one categorical imperative, namely, this: Act only on that maxim whereby thou canst at the same time will that it should become a universal law. Now if all imperatives of duty can be deduced from this one imperative as from their principle, then, although it should remain undecided what is called duty is not merely a vain notion, yet at least we shall be able to show what we understand by it and what this notion means. Since the universality of the law according to which effects are produced constitutes what is properly called nature in the most general sense (as to form), that is the existence of things so far as it is determined by general laws, the imperative of duty may be expressed thus: Act as if the maxim of thy action were to become by thy will a universal law of nature. We will now enumerate a few duties, adopting the usual division of them into duties to ourselves and ourselves and to others, and into perfect and imperfect duties…

1. A man reduced to despair by a series of misfortunes feels wearied of life, but is still so far in possession of his reason that he can ask himself whether it would not be contrary to his duty to himself to take his own life. Now he inquires whether the maxim of his action could become a universal law of nature. His maxim is: “From self-love I adopt it as a principle to shorten my life when its longer duration is likely to bring more evil than satisfaction.” It is asked then simply whether this principle founded on self-love can become a universal law of nature. Now we see at once that a system of nature of which it should be a law to destroy life by means of the very feeling whose special nature it is to impel to the improvement of life would contradict itself and, therefore, could not exist as a system of nature; hence that maxim cannot possibly exist as a universal law of nature and, consequently, would be wholly inconsistent with the supreme principle of all duty.

2. Another finds himself forced by necessity to borrow money. He knows that he will not be able to repay it, but sees also that nothing will be lent to him unless he promises stoutly to repay it in a definite time. He desires to make this promise, but he has still so much conscience as to ask himself: “Is it not unlawful and inconsistent with duty to get out of a difficulty in this way?” Suppose however that he resolves to do so: then the maxim of his action would be expressed thus: “When I think myself in want of money, I will borrow money and promise to repay it, although I know that I never can do so.” Now this principle of self-love or of one’s own advantage may perhaps be consistent with my whole future welfare; but the question now is, “Is it right?” I change then the suggestion of self-love into a universal law, and state the question thus: “How would it be if my maxim were a universal law?” Then I see at once that it could never hold as a universal law of nature, but would necessarily contradict itself. For supposing it to be a universal law that everyone when he thinks himself in a difficulty should be able to promise whatever he pleases, with the purpose of not keeping his promise, the promise itself would become impossible, as well as the end that one might have in view in it, since no one would consider that anything was promised to him, but would ridicule all such statements as vain pretences.

3. A third finds in himself a talent which with the help of some culture might make him a useful man in many respects. But he finds himself in comfortable circumstances and prefers to indulge in pleasure rather than to take pains in enlarging and improving his happy natural capacities. He asks, however, whether his maxim of neglect of his natural gifts, besides agreeing with his inclination to indulgence, agrees also with what is called duty. He sees then that a system of nature could indeed subsist with such a universal law although men (like the South Sea islanders) should let their talents rest and resolve to devote their lives merely to idleness, amusement, and propagation of their species- in a word, to enjoyment; but he cannot possibly will that this should be a universal

law of nature, or be implanted in us as such by a natural instinct. For, as a rational being, he necessarily wills that his faculties be developed, since they serve him and have been given him, for all sorts of possible purposes.

4. A fourth, who is in prosperity, while he sees that others have to contend with great wretchedness and that he could help them, thinks: “What concern is it of mine? Let everyone be as happy as Heaven pleases, or as be can make himself; I will take nothing from him nor even envy him, only I do not wish to contribute anything to his welfare or to his assistance in distress!” Now no doubt if such a mode of thinking were a universal law, the human race might very well subsist and doubtless even better than in a state in which everyone talks of sympathy and good-will, or even takes care occasionally to put it into practice, but, on the other side, also cheats when he can, betrays the rights of men, or otherwise violates them. But although it is possible that a universal law of nature might exist in accordance with that maxim, it is impossible to will that such a principle should have the universal validity of a law of nature. For a will which resolved this would contradict itself, inasmuch as many cases might occur in which one would have need of the love and sympathy of others, and in which, by such a law of nature, sprung from his own will, he would deprive himself of all hope of the aid he desires. These are a few of the many actual duties, or at least what we regard as such, which obviously fall into two classes on the one principle that we have laid down.

We must be able to will that a maxim of our action should be a universal law. This is the canon of the moral appreciation of the action generally. Some actions are of such a character that their maxim cannot without contradiction be even conceived as a universal law of nature, far from it being possible that we should will that it should be so. In others this intrinsic impossibility is not found, but still it is impossible to will that their maxim should be raised to the universality of a law of nature, since such a will would contradict itself It is easily seen that the former violate strict or rigorous (inflexible) duty; the latter only laxer (meritorious) duty. Thus it has been completely shown how all duties depend as regards the nature of the obligation (not the object of the action) on the same principle. If now we attend to ourselves on occasion of any transgression of duty, we shall find that we in fact do not will that our maxim should be a universal law, for that is impossible for us; on the contrary, we will that the opposite should remain a universal law, only we assume the liberty of making an exception in our own favour or (just for this time only) in favour of our inclination.

Consequently if we considered all cases from one and the same point of view, namely, that of reason, we should find a contradiction in our own will, namely, that a certain principle should be objectively necessary as a universal law, and yet subjectively should not be universal, but admit of exceptions. As however we at one moment regard our action from the point of view of a will wholly conformed to reason, and then again look at the same action from the point of view of a will affected by inclination, there is not really any contradiction, but an antagonism of inclination to the precept of reason, whereby the universality of the principle is changed into a mere generality, so that the practical principle of reason shall meet the maxim half way. Now, although this cannot be justified in our own impartial judgement, yet it proves that we do really recognise the validity of the categorical imperative and (with all respect for it) only allow ourselves a few exceptions, which we think unimportant and forced from us. We have thus established at least this much, that if duty is a conception which is to have any import and real legislative authority for our actions, it can only be expressed in categorical and not at all in hypothetical imperatives. We have also, which is of great importance, exhibited clearly and definitely for every practical application the content of the categorical imperative, which must contain the principle of all duty if there is such a thing at all.

5.5: Beyond Good and Evil

29 Beyond Good and Evil

Beyond Good and Evil[43]

In a tour through the many finer and coarser moralities which have hitherto prevailed or still prevail on the earth, I found certain traits recurring regularly together, and connected with one another, until finally two primary types revealed themselves to me, and a radical distinction was brought to light.

There is MASTER-MORALITY and SLAVE-MORALITY,—I would at once add, however, that in all higher and mixed civilizations, there are also attempts at the reconciliation of the two moralities, but one finds still oftener the confusion and mutual misunderstanding of them, indeed sometimes their close juxtaposition—even in the same man, within one soul. The distinctions of moral values have either originated in a ruling caste, pleasantly conscious of being different from the ruled—or among the ruled class, the slaves and dependents of all sorts.

In the first case, when it is the rulers who determine the conception "good," it is the exalted, proud disposition which is regarded as the distinguishing feature, and that which determines the order of rank. The noble type of man separates from himself the beings in whom the opposite of this exalted, proud disposition displays itself he despises them. Let it at once be noted that in this first kind of morality the antithesis "good" and "bad" means practically the same as "noble" and "despicable",—the antithesis "good" and "EVIL" is of a different origin. The cowardly, the timid, the insignificant, and those thinking merely of narrow utility are despised; moreover, also, the distrustful, with their constrained glances, the self-abasing, the dog-like kind of men who let themselves be abused, the mendicant flatterers, and above all the liars:—it is a fundamental belief of all aristocrats that the common people are untruthful. "We truthful ones"—the nobility in ancient Greece called themselves.

It is obvious that everywhere the designations of moral value were at first applied to MEN; and were only derivatively and at a later period applied to ACTIONS; it is a gross mistake, therefore, when historians of morals start with questions like, "Why have sympathetic actions been praised?" The noble type of man regards HIMSELF as a determiner of values; he does not require to be approved of; he passes the judgment: "What is injurious to me is injurious in itself;" he knows that it is he himself only who confers honour on things; he is a CREATOR OF VALUES. He honours whatever he recognizes in himself: such morality equals self-glorification. In the foreground there is the feeling of plenitude, of power, which seeks to overflow, the happiness of high tension, the consciousness of a wealth which would fain give and bestow:—the noble man also helps the unfortunate, but not—or scarcely—out of pity, but rather from an impulse generated by the super-abundance of power. The noble man honours in himself the powerful one, him also who has power over himself, who knows how to speak and how to keep silence, who takes pleasure in subjecting himself to severity and hardness, and has reverence for all that is severe and hard. "Wotan placed a hard heart in my breast," says an old Scandinavian Saga: it is thus rightly expressed from the soul of a proud Viking. Such a type of man is even proud of not being made for sympathy; the hero of the Saga therefore adds warningly: "He who has not a hard heart when young, will never have one." The noble and brave who think thus are the furthest removed from the morality which sees precisely in sympathy, or in acting for the good of others, or in DESINTERESSEMENT, the characteristic of the moral; faith in oneself, pride in oneself, a radical enmity and irony towards "selflessness," belong as definitely to noble morality, as do a careless scorn and precaution in presence of sympathy and the "warm heart."

It is the powerful who KNOW how to honour, it is their art, their domain for invention. The profound reverence for age and for tradition—all law rests on this double reverence,—the belief and prejudice in favour of ancestors and unfavourable to newcomers, is typical in the morality of the powerful; and if, reversely, men of "modern ideas" believe almost instinctively in "progress" and the "future," and are more and more lacking in respect for old age, the ignoble origin of these "ideas" has complacently betrayed itself thereby.

A morality of the ruling class, however, is more especially foreign and irritating to present-day taste in the sternness of its principle that one has duties only to one's equals; that one may act towards beings of a lower rank, towards all that is foreign, just as seems good to one, or "as the heart desires," and in any case "beyond good and evil": it is here that sympathy and similar sentiments can have a place. The ability and obligation to exercise prolonged gratitude and prolonged revenge—both only within the circle of equals,—artfulness in retaliation, RAFFINEMENT of the idea in friendship, a certain necessity to have enemies (as outlets for the emotions of envy, quarrelsomeness, arrogance—in fact, in order to be a good FRIEND): all these are typical characteristics of the noble morality, which, as has been pointed out, is not the morality of "modern ideas," and is therefore at present difficult to realize, and also to unearth and disclose.

It is otherwise with the second type of morality, SLAVE-MORALITY. Supposing that the abused, the oppressed, the suffering, the unemancipated, the weary, and those uncertain of themselves should moralize, what will be the common element in their moral estimates? Probably a pessimistic suspicion with regard to the entire situation of man will find expression, perhaps a condemnation of man, together with his situation. The slave has an unfavourable eye for the virtues of the powerful; he has a skepticism and distrust, a REFINEMENT of distrust of everything "good" that is there honoured—he would fain persuade himself that the very happiness there is not genuine. On the other hand, THOSE qualities which serve to alleviate the existence of sufferers are brought into prominence and flooded with light; it is here that sympathy, the kind, helping hand, the warm heart, patience, diligence, humility, and friendliness attain to honour; for here these are the most useful qualities, and almost the only means of supporting the burden of existence. Slave-morality is essentially the morality of utility.

Here is the seat of the origin of the famous antithesis "good" and "evil":—power and dangerousness are assumed to reside in the evil, a certain dreadfulness, subtlety, and strength, which do not admit of being despised. According to slave-morality, therefore, the "evil" man arouses fear; according to master-morality, it is precisely the "good" man who arouses fear and seeks to arouse it, while the bad man is regarded as the despicable being.

The contrast attains its maximum when, in accordance with the logical consequences of slave-morality, a shade of depreciation—it may be slight and well-intentioned—at last attaches itself to the "good" man of this morality; because, according to the servile mode of thought, the good man must in any case be the SAFE man: he is good-natured, easily deceived, perhaps a little stupid, un bonhomme. Everywhere that slave-morality gains the ascendancy, language shows a tendency to approximate the significations of the words "good" and "stupid."

5.6: Virtue Ethics

30 Virtue Ethics

Aristotle's Virtues[44]

Book I

vii

Presumably, however, to say that happiness is the chief good seems a platitude, and a clearer account of what it is still desired. This might perhaps be given, if we could first ascertain the function of man. For just as for a flute-player, a sculptor, or an artist, and, in general, for all things that have a function or activity, the good and the 'well' is thought to reside in the function, so would it seem to be for man, if he has a function. Have the carpenter, then, and the tanner certain functions or activities, and has man none? Is he born without a function? Or as eye, hand, foot, and in general each of the parts evidently has a function, may one lay it down that man similarly has a function apart from all these? What then can this be? Life seems to be common even to plants, but we are seeking what is peculiar to man. Let us exclude, therefore, the life of nutrition and growth. Next there would be a life of perception, but it also seems to be common even to the horse, the ox, and every animal. There remains, then, an active life of the element that has a rational principle; of this, one part has such a principle in the sense of being obedient to one, the other in the sense of possessing one and exercising thought. And, as 'life of the rational element' also has two meanings, we must state that life in the sense of activity is what we mean; for this seems to be the more proper sense of the term. Now if the function of man is an activity of soul which follows or implies a rational principle, and if we say 'so-and-so-and 'a good so-and-so' have a function which is the same in kind, e.g. a lyre, and a good lyre-player, and so without qualification in all cases, eminence in respect of goodness being idded to the name of the function (for the function of a lyre-player is to play the lyre, and that of a good lyre-player is to do so well): if this is the case, and we state the function of man to be a certain kind of life, and this to be an activity or actions of the soul implying a rational principle, and the function of a good man to be the good and noble performance of these, and if any action is well performed when it is performed in accordance with the appropriate excellence: if this is the case, human good turns out to be activity of soul in accordance with virtue, and if there are more than one virtue, in accordance with the best and most complete.

But we must add 'in a complete life.' For one swallow does not make a summer, nor does one day; and so too one day, or a short time, does not make a man blessed and happy…

viii

We must consider it, however, in the light not only of our conclusion and our premisses, but also of what is commonly said about it; for with a true view all the data harmonize, but with a false one the facts soon clash. Now goods have been divided into three classes, and some are described as external, others as relating to soul or to body; we call those that relate to soul most properly and truly goods, and psychical actions and activities we class as relating to soul. Therefore our account must be sound, at least according to this view, which is an old one and agreed on by philosophers. It is correct also in that we identify the end with certain actions and activities; for thus it falls among goods of the soul and not among external goods. Another belief which harmonizes with our account is that the happy man lives well and does well; for we have practically defined happiness as a sort of good life and good action. The characteristics that are looked for in happiness seem also, all of them, to belong to what we have defined happiness as being. For some identify happiness with virtue, some with practical wisdom, others with a kind of philosophic wisdom, others with these, or one of these, accompanied by pleasure or not without pleasure; while others include also external prosperity. Now some of these views have been held by many men and men of old, others by a few eminent persons; and it is not probable that either of these should be entirely mistaken, but rather that they should be right in at least some one respect or even in most respects.

With those who identify happiness with virtue or some one virtue our account is in harmony; for to virtue belongs virtuous activity. But it makes, perhaps, no small difference whether we place the chief good in possession or in use, in state of mind or in activity. For the state of mind may exist without producing any good result, as in a man who is asleep or in some other way quite inactive, but the activity cannot; for one who has the activity will of necessity be acting, and acting well. And as in the Olympic Games it is not the most beautiful and the strongest that are crowned but those who compete (for it is some of these that are victorious), so those who act win, and rightly win, the noble and good things in life.

Their life is also in itself pleasant. For pleasure is a state of soul, and to each man that which he is said to be a lover of is pleasant; e.g. not only is a horse pleasant to the lover of horses, and a spectacle to the lover of sights, but also in the same way just acts are pleasant to the lover of justice and in general virtuous acts to the lover of virtue. Now for most men their pleasures are in conflict with one another because these are not by nature pleasant, but the lovers of what is noble find pleasant the things that are by nature pleasant; and virtuous actions are such, so that these are pleasant for such men as well as in their own nature. Their life, therefore, has no further need of pleasure as a sort of adventitious charm, but has its pleasure in itself. For, besides what we have said, the man who does not rejoice in noble actions is not even good; since no one would call a man just who did not enjoy acting justly, nor any man liberal who did not enjoy liberal actions; and similarly in all other cases. If this is so, virtuous actions must be in themselves pleasant. But they are also good and noble, and have each of these attributes in the highest degree, since the good man judges well about these attributes; his judgement is such as we have described. Happiness then is the best, noblest, and most pleasant thing in the world, and these attributes are not severed as in the inscription at Delos-

Most noble is that which is justest, and best is health;
But pleasantest is it to win what we love.

For all these properties belong to the best activities; and these, or one- the best- of these, we identify with happiness.

Yet evidently, as we said, it needs the external goods as well; for it is impossible, or not easy, to do noble acts without the proper equipment. In many actions we use friends and riches and political power as instruments; and there are some things the lack of which takes the lustre from happiness, as good birth, goodly children, beauty; for the man who is very ugly in appearance or ill-born or solitary and childless is not very likely to be happy, and perhaps a man would be still less likely if he had thoroughly bad children or friends or had lost good children or friends by death. As we said, then, happiness seems to need this sort of prosperity in addition; for which reason some identify happiness with good fortune, though others identify it with virtue…

x

…When then should we not say that he is happy who is active in accordance with complete virtue and is sufficiently equipped with external goods, not for some chance period but throughout a complete life? Or must we add 'and who is destined to live thus and die as befits his life'? Certainly the future is obscure to us, while happiness, we claim, is an end and something in every way final. If so, we shall call happy those among living men in whom these conditions are, and are to be, fulfilled- but happy men. So much for these questions….

Book II

i

Virtue, then, being of two kinds, intellectual and moral, intellectual virtue in the main owes both its birth and its growth to teaching (for which reason it requires experience and time), while moral virtue comes about as a result of habit, whence also its name (ethike) is one that is formed by a slight variation from the word ethos (habit). From this it is also plain that none of the moral virtues arises in us by nature; for nothing that exists by nature can form a habit contrary to its nature. For instance the stone which by nature moves downwards cannot be habituated to move upwards, not even if one tries to train it by throwing it up ten thousand times; nor can fire be habituated to move downwards, nor can anything else that by nature behaves in one way be trained to behave in another. Neither by nature, then, nor contrary to nature do the virtues arise in us; rather we are adapted by nature to receive them, and are made perfect by habit.

Again, of all the things that come to us by nature we first acquire the potentiality and later exhibit the activity (this is plain in the case of the senses; for it was not by often seeing or often hearing that we got these senses, but on the contrary we had them before we used them, and did not come to have them by using them); but the virtues we get by first exercising them, as also happens in the case of the arts as well. For the things we have to learn before we can do them, we learn by doing them, e.g. men become builders by building and lyreplayers by playing the lyre; so too we become just by doing just acts, temperate by doing temperate acts, brave by doing brave acts.

This is confirmed by what happens in states; for legislators make the citizens good by forming habits in them, and this is the wish of every legislator, and those who do not effect it miss their mark, and it is in this that a good constitution differs from a bad one.

Again, it is from the same causes and by the same means that every virtue is both produced and destroyed, and similarly every art; for it is from playing the lyre that both good and bad lyre-players are produced. And the corresponding statement is true of builders and of all the rest; men will be good or bad builders as a result of building well or badly. For if this were not so, there would have been no need of a teacher, but all men would have been born good or bad at their craft. This, then, is the case with the virtues also; by doing the acts that we do in our transactions with other men we become just or unjust, and by doing the acts that we do in the presence of danger, and being habituated to feel fear or confidence, we become brave or cowardly. The same is true of appetites and feelings of anger; some men become temperate and good-tempered, others self-indulgent and irascible, by behaving in one way or the other in the appropriate circumstances. Thus, in one word, states of character arise out of like activities. This is why the activities we exhibit must be of a certain kind; it is because the states of character correspond to the differences between these. It makes no small difference, then, whether we form habits of one kind or of another from our very youth; it makes a very great difference, or rather all the difference…

ii

…First, then, let us consider this, that it is the nature of such things to be destroyed by defect and excess, as we see in the case of strength and of health (for to gain light on things imperceptible we must use the evidence of sensible things); both excessive and defective exercise destroys the strength, and similarly drink or food which is above or below a certain amount destroys the health, while that which is proportionate both produces and increases and preserves it. So too is it, then, in the case of temperance and courage and the other virtues. For the man who flies from and fears everything and does not stand his ground against anything becomes a coward, and the man who fears nothing at all but goes to meet every danger becomes rash; and similarly the man who indulges in every pleasure and abstains from none becomes self-indulgent, while the man who shuns every pleasure, as boors do, becomes in a way insensible; temperance and courage, then, are destroyed by excess and defect, and preserved by the mean…

vi

…If it is thus, then, that every art does its work well- by looking to the intermediate and judgling its works by this standard (so that we often say of good works of art that it is not possible either to take away or to add anything, implying that excess and defect destroy the goodness of works of art, while the mean preserves it; and good artists, as we say, look to this in their work), and if, further, virtue is more exact and better than any art, as nature also is, then virtue must have the quality of aiming at the intermediate. I mean moral virtue; for it is this that is concerned with passions and actions, and in these there is excess, defect, and the intermediate. For instance, both fear and confidence and appetite and anger and pity and in general pleasure and pain may be felt both too much and too little, and in both cases not well; but to feel them at the right times, with reference to the right objects, towards the right people, with the right motive, and in the right way, is what is both intermediate and best, and this is characteristic of virtue. Similarly with regard to actions also there is excess, defect, and the intermediate. Now virtue is concerned with passions and actions, in which excess is a form of failure, and so is defect, while the intermediate is praised and is a form of success; and being praised and being successful are both characteristics of virtue. Therefore virtue is a kind of mean, since, as we have seen, it aims at what is intermediate.

Again, it is possible to fail in many ways (for evil belongs to the class of the unlimited, as the Pythagoreans conjectured, and good to that of the limited), while to succeed is possible only in one way (for which reason also one is easy and the other difficult- to miss the mark easy, to hit it difficult); for these reasons also, then, excess and defect are characteristic of vice, and the mean of virtue;

For men are good in but one way, but bad in many.

Virtue, then, is a state of character concerned with choice, lying in a mean, i.e. the mean relative to us, this being determined by a rational principle, and by that principle by which the man of practical wisdom would determine it. Now it is a mean between two vices, that which depends on excess and that which depends on defect; and again it is a mean because the vices respectively fall short of or exceed what is right in both passions and actions, while virtue both finds and chooses that which is intermediate. Hence in respect of its substance and the definition which states its essence virtue is a mean, with regard to what is best and right an extreme.

But not every action nor every passion admits of a mean; for some have names that already imply badness, e.g. spite, shamelessness, envy, and in the case of actions adultery, theft, murder; for all of these and suchlike things imply by their names that they are themselves bad, and not the excesses or deficiencies of them. It is not possible, then, ever to be right with regard to them;

one must always be wrong. Nor does goodness or badness with regard to such things depend on committing adultery with the right woman, at the right time, and in the right way, but simply to do any of them is to go wrong. It would be equally absurd, then, to expect that in unjust, cowardly, and voluptuous action there should be a mean, an excess, and a deficiency; for at that rate there would be a mean of excess and of deficiency, an excess of excess, and a deficiency of deficiency. But as there is no excess and deficiency of temperance and courage because what is intermediate is in a sense an extreme, so too of the actions we have mentioned there is no mean nor any excess and deficiency, but however they are done they are wrong; for in general there is neither a mean of excess and deficiency, nor excess and deficiency of a mean.

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