ABSTRACTS

Epistemic Injustice: Its Moral Content and Its Scope
Ana Barandalla (The Aga Khan University)

Abstract
I argue that Fricker’s characterisation of epistemic injustice can resist an objection to which it is vulnerable, and that in doing so it reveals more starkly that contrary to her claim, epistemic injustice does not occur primarily in testimony, but that it obtains equally in all epistemic interactions which depend on a certain type of engagement.

Fricker’s characterisation of epistemic injustice is vulnerable to the objection that it relies on incompatible ethical frameworks. She characterises epistemic injustice as comprising a wrong and a harm. ‘Wrong’ and ‘harm’ have different intensions: ‘wrong’ pertains to what bears moral assessment ‘harm’ to the consequences of action. Individuation of moral phenomena should be guided by the bearers of moral assessment. Therefore, Fricker is entitled to characterise epistemic injustice as comprising a wrong and a harm only within a framework in which consequences of actions are the bearers of moral assessment. But Fricker cannot endorse such a framework because she pins the moral assessment of epistemic injustice on the agent’s motives. Conversely, if the bearer of moral assessment is the agent’s motives, then harm has no role in the individuation of moral phenomena. It looks like Fricker can characterise epistemic injustice by appeal to a wrong or to a harm, but not to both.

I argue that Fricker can appeal to both in light of what she ultimately identifies as the central ethical element in epistemic injustice: objectification. There are two senses of objectification. You can objectify me, or you can experience being objectified. The first sense is expressive
of your motives, the second is the consequence of something done to you. Objectification makes most sense within a Kantian framework. Within this framework, objectification as something you do is wrong because, like every other wrong, it violates your own rationality. But I argue that objectification as something you experience perversely forces you to violate your rationality too, because it compels you to regard yourself as a lesser agent. Therefore, within a Kantian framework, objectification both as a harm and as a wrong are each sufficient criteria for the individuation of moral phenomena.

Therefore Fricker is entitled to appeal to a wrong and to a harm to characterise the notion of epistemic injustice, albeit not in conjunction with each other, but in inclusive disjunction. This, alongside insights from Langton, Haslanger, and others, reveals that epistemic injustice obtains as prevalently and significantly in all epistemic interactions in which objectification (of either sense) might occur, and not, pace Fricker, primarily in testimony.

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The ethics of vulnerability - The social philosophy of Judith Butler
Anna Becker (University of Oldenburg, Institute of Philosophy)

Abstract
The vulnerability of marginalized groups is structured along institutionalized terms, which challenges the questioning of recognition for individuals facing social exclusion. In her latest works about vulnerability Judith Butler argues, that the mere possibility of having a vulnerable physiognomy which is being exposed to the other could be understood as the foundation of an inter subjective responsibility, but is in social and political reality used to oppress, to hurt and to kill the other. The ethical potential of vulnerability is highlighted when combined with the idea of grievability – a term Butler also addresses frequently in her latest theoretical stances. Compared to vulnerability which can only be understood with recourse to understanding the others body as equal with one’s own, grievability requires the other, as a potential griever. Without her/him the death of the subject would stay ungrieved. In this case the subject depends on the other to recall the worth of her/her life in the practices of commemoration. Unifying both terms leads to an innovative understanding of the ethical dimensions of vulnerability. During my latest research travel to Berkeley I had the chance to discuss the ethical benefit of the combination of these terms with Judith Butler and to evaluate their feminist potential concerning trans*gender issues and migrant politics.

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Elizabeth Anscombe’s unacknowledged contribution to the fact-value debate in meta-ethics
Abstract
The last few decades have seen a considerable weakening of the post-Humean fact-value dichotomy in philosophical ethics, and the most compelling arguments for the inseparability of facts and values are usually ascribed to Bernard Williams (Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy [1985]), John McDowell (Mind, Value, and Reality [1998]), and Hilary Putnam (The Collapse of the Fact/Value Dichotomy [2002]). By and large, in their anti-fact-value gap argumentation, all of these philosophers make use of what Williams called “thick” ethical concepts – such as ‘cruelty’, ‘honesty’ or ‘promising’. These concepts are distinguished from “thin” ethical concepts (e.g. ‘good’ or ‘bad’), and the key difference is that thickness manifests the fact-value entanglement. For example, if a historian factually described a ruler as cruel for taking pleasure in others’ pain, it would seem absurd to consider the ruler, in this respect, to be a good person.

Significant as their arguments are, however, they overlook the major and earlier contribution to the same debate by Elizabeth Anscombe, which was mainly formulated in her papers ‘On Brute Facts’ and ‘Modern Moral Philosophy’ (both 1958), ‘On Promising and its Justice’ (1969), and ‘Rules, Rights and Promises’ (1978). In this paper I shall argue for the need to consider Anscombe’s unacknowledged and original contribution to the bridging of the fact-value gap since the later arguments seem to suffer from inconsistencies. For clarity’s and brevity’s sake, this paper will address only the inconsistency present in Williams.

My case will be made in three steps. First, I present Anscombe’s own take on the role of the thick ethical concepts (the label she herself did not apply to them). Secondly, I juxtapose her account to that of Williams with a two-fold aim: on the one hand, to show a prima facie similarity in their reasoning about the concepts, and, on the other one, to point out an inconsistency in Williams’ stance (i.e. though it does not require “an Archimedean point”, it relies on a normativity that needs, but lacks, grounding) and consider whether or not Anscombe’s earlier view, with its robust articulation of human nature, could provide a remedy (or a substitute) for it. Finally, regardless of the resemblance, their accounts differ in a fundamental way, and, therefore, I want to conclude by briefly considering the challenge Williams’ account poses, in turn, to Anscombe.

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Catharine Trotter Cockburn and Mary Astell on the Possibility of Thinking Matter
Ruth Boeker (University College Dublin)

Abstract
This paper examines the reactions of Catharine Trotter Cockburn and Mary Astell to John Locke’s hypothesis that it is possible that matter can think. In her *Defence of Mr Locke’s Essay of Human Understanding* Cockburn responds to an anonymous critic of Locke and develops clever and interesting arguments of her own to defend Locke’s philosophical views. Mary Astell also responds to Locke’s thinking matter hypothesis, but she takes a critical stance and rejects the possibility of thinking matter in favour of the view that only immaterial substances can think. By contrasting Cockburn’s and Astell’s different reactions to Locke’s thinking matter hypothesis this paper aims to distil the philosophical commitments that explain the differences between Cockburn’s and Astell’s positions.

The first part of this paper will focus on a clever dilemma that Cockburn presents for philosophers who believe that only immaterial substances can have the power to think. Critics of the thinking matter hypothesis were worried that it would not be possible to distinguish thinking substance from matter and nothingness if thinking substances are material. In response Cockburn develops a dilemma by asking whether thinking substances have other essential properties besides thinking. If they do, then the problem of individuation vanishes. If they do not, then there is no reason to exclude the possibility of thinking matter.

The second part of the paper turns to Astell’s criticism of the possibility of thinking matter. I will show that Astell adopts Cartesian metaphysical commitments about essences and modes to reject the possibility of thinking matter. Moreover, I will ask what role her Christian faith plays in her defence of immaterialism.

In the final part of the paper I will contrast Cockburn’s more metaphysically agnostic stance with Astell’s metaphysical commitments. One point of disagreement between Cockburn and Astell concerns the question whether substances can have more than one essential property and I will consider the philosophical arguments on both sides of the dispute.

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**Nothing Is Simply One Thing**  
Re-Examining Conway’s Metaphysics of Substance  
*Julia Borcherding (NYU)*

**Abstract**  
Many historians of early modern philosophy now agree that Anne Conway’s *Principles of the Most Ancient and Modern Philosophy* is deserving of far closer attention than it has hitherto received. In her only surviving philosophical work, Conway offers a whole array of intricate arguments aimed at replacing Cartesian dualism with her own novel metaphysical system. But while certainly intriguing, these arguments can often seem dauntingly obscure. In this paper, I suggest that in order to gain a better understanding of Conway’s *Principles*, we need
to ask more forcefully what precisely her arguments are arguments for. What metaphysics exactly is it Conway is trying to establish in the *Principles*? Negatively, she rejects a dualist model that sharply separates mind and matter, endowing the former with an active principle, while constructing the latter as utterly devoid of life. Positively, she wants to replace this dualist picture of the created world with a monist theory. But what kind of monism is Conway trying to defend, and what motivates her to do so?

In the growing literature on Conway’s philosophy, one often finds the following two theses: First, that Conway is a vitalist monist; second, that this vitalist metaphysics closely resembles Leibniz’s system of spiritual monads. I argue that we need to qualify the first of these theses, and furthermore, that doing so ought to lead us to abandon the second altogether. Even though Conway’s vitalism and her talk of “monads” seems to move her views close to a Leibnizian metaphysics, a closer investigation of her ontology reveals her monism to be far more similar to a type of priority monism of the sort defended by Spinoza in the *Ethics*, or more recently by Jonathan Schaffer. What motivates this monism, I further suggest, is not merely Conway’s rejection of Cartesian dualism or “dead matter” theories, as commentators have claimed. Rather, the original insight that drives her to transcend a traditional ontology of individual substances is ultimately a moral one, conditioned by the demands of universal salvation: Each creature is ontologically dependent on a complex, interdependent whole, because it is only as part of such a whole that a creature can improve.

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**Naturalism and Anti-Naturalism in Feminist Epistemology**

*Valentina Bortolami, PhD Student (University of Padova)*

**Abstract**

In this paper I outline my PhD research project. The project addresses the issue of relativism within the debate in feminist epistemology, by classifying the various positions available on the basis of their naturalistic and anti-naturalistic view. My thesis is that it is productive to categorize feminist epistemological positions not exclusively according to the three orientations proposed by Harding in 1986 (namely, empiricism, postmodernism and standpoint theory), but also as naturalistic and anti-naturalistic, for at least three reasons:

1. Firstly, there is a tendency to naturalize issues that have traditionally concerned human sciences. This process is particularly evident in the case of concepts that fall within the scope of the philosophical inquiry (e.g., ‘consciousness,’ ‘nature,’ ‘humanity’). Moreover, natural sciences play a pivotal role in the public debate, thus influencing the economic and political policies that ultimately determine the research guidelines. The centrality of these processes requires us to address the issue of naturalism without underestimating its pervasiveness and the reasons for its theoretical and practical effectiveness.
2. The second reason is that the category of naturalism enables us to confront the accusation of relativism addressed to feminists by their detractors. In order to pursue the social and political change that feminist philosophy demands, it seems necessary to define the notions of “reality” and “truth”. Indeed, according to some feminists, it is crucial to preserve the normative character of epistemology and to maintain ‘strong,’ that is, normative and justified, definitions of concepts such as “reality” and “truth”. Other feminists reject this position and favour an anti-naturalistic option. In their view, naturalism can lead to deterministic and essentialistic outcomes, as it grants empirical sciences a central role in determining what the truth is.

3. The last reason is that the naturalization of feminist empiricism has made it converge with standpoint and postmodernist theories. The growing relevance of the results of empirical sciences (in particular biology, neuroscience and genetics) in the public debate as well as in the humanities has compelled feminists to find political responses that could be as competitive (at least in theory) as the mainstream scientific discourse. Consequently, in recent years naturalistic feminist philosophies have assumed greater importance within the feminist epistemology debate. This has not led to the abandonment of deconstructivist and Marxist work. On the contrary, topics, methodologies and postures typical of each of the three stands are used, case by case, to respond to the philosophical and political needs that feminism encounters in contemporary world.

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Epistemic Emotions, Self-Esteem, and Being a Woman in Academic Philosophy
Anna Bortolan (University College Dublin)

Abstract
The paper explores the relationship between the so-called “epistemic emotions” and “epistemic feelings” and self-esteem, and the relevance of this relationship for the experience of women working in academic philosophy. It has been argued that affectivity plays a central role in intellectual activity and, in this context, attention has been drawn to a series of affective states – such as the feeling of knowing, curiosity, wonder, interest, certainty, scepticism, and doubt – which have been claimed to contribute in important ways to epistemic performance (Cf. de Sousa 2008; Hookway 2003; Morton 2010; Stocker 2009). In particular, it has been suggested that epistemic emotions and feelings play evaluative and motivational roles, highlighting also their connection with “intellectual virtues” (Candiotto 2017). Aiming to expand our understanding of these affects and of the way in which they can support or hinder the acquisition and communication of knowledge, in this study I explore
from a phenomenological perspective their connection with self-evaluative experiences and attitudes. I first argue that epistemic emotions and feelings are fundamentally modulated by the experience of self-esteem. More specifically, I suggest that, due to its nature as a particular background affective orientation (Bortolan 2018, Forthcoming 2019), self-esteem disposes us to experience specific patterns of epistemic emotions and feelings. On this basis, I claim that significant alterations of self-esteem are likely to disrupt the evaluative and motivational processes through which epistemic affects usually contribute to intellectual inquiry. I then move to investigate how these dynamics may affect the experience of women philosophers. It has been shown that self-focused affects related or integral to self-esteem - such as shame and loss of self-trust - can be closely connected to the experience of gender-related expectations, biases, and stereotypes (Cf. Bartky 1990; Jones 2012). In this section I explore how women and other under-represented groups in academic philosophy may be impacted upon by the weakening or lack of self-esteem and the alterations of epistemic emotions and feelings that this may bring about, focusing in particular on the processes involved in the development, dissemination, and promotion of one’s research.

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Repositioning Feminism: Between Care and Justice

Eileen Brennan (Dublin City University)

Abstract

Nel Noddings insists that there is no place in her feminist Care Ethics for the concept of justice. Her focus is on the dyad, on two people meeting. She continues to disregard the concept—and indeed all theories of justice—when her focus shifts to larger social groups, including “distant others.” The significance of Noddings’ bold stance in ethics has been interpreted in different ways, but it is her debt to Martin Heidegger and his concept of care (Sorge) that is most relevant to the argument that I want to make. As I try to show, Noddings’ Care Ethics, for all its strengths, is ultimately conservative in a way that is disadvantageous to both women and men. Using a dialectical argument structure, I then turn to consider Martha Nussbaum’s recent work on political emotions. There is certainly a place in Nussbaum’s feminist political liberalism for the concept of justice. Her recent work is focused on the question of how we can motivate citizens to make the kind of sacrifices that John Rawls’ two principles of justice require of them. The answer lies, she claims, in cultivating political emotions, notably patriotism. As I try to show, Nussbaum’s proposal, though accompanied by helpful suggestions for cultivating ‘the right sort’ of patriotism, is one that raises legitimate concerns about the inherently exclusionary character of that particular emotion. The third and final step of the argument looks to Hannah Arendt’s political theory as a means of retaining the best of Noddings and Nussbaum whilst eliminating their tendencies towards conservatism and exclusion.
Abstract
The central claim I will advance is that care ethics, although initiated by feminist ethicists, has a much wider appeal. Limiting discussions of care to the feminist sphere is a problem for two reasons: 1) when we identify care ethics as feminist ethics we lose sight of the potentially vast scope of care, and 2) if care ethics is not taken as logically prior to our explicitly feminist concerns then we risk failing to engage meaningfully with how care relates to feminist concerns.

In contrast, care ethics understood as a transcendentally necessary condition for the possibility of ethics provides us with a more nuanced understanding of care’s pervasive ethical role. This then allows us to more fully see the robust role of care within ethics, and better grasp how care relates to explicitly feminist concerns.

I will consider two central concerns with this approach. First, once care ethics is shown to be prior to feminist ethics and given this transcendental status, the notion of care we now have becomes so diluted it is almost meaningless. Second, once care ethics does not necessarily identify women as the primary care-givers in our society but takes care as the transcendental foundation of all ethics, the feminist motivation behind care ethics is lost.

To address the first problem, I will argue that a distinction between caring and uncaring modes prevents all agents and actions from becoming ethical simply because they all express some sort of care. This both maintains care’s transcendental status as a necessary mode of engagement for ethical perspectives, whilst also maintaining meaningful talk of the unethical. To address the second problem, I will argue that we may draw attention to gendered divisions of labour without references of care. Moreover, I will argue that women do not hold a monopoly on caring labour, and that identifying care outside of the work expected of women does not diminish or deny the disproportionate burdens put on women to do such caring work.

A major benefit of this approach is it can still identify women as primary care-givers, even if this care manifests in less traditional roles. For example, a single mother who works full time may outsource her childcare, but still manifests care in a morally comparable way to a mother who does not outsource childcare. Once disentangled from feminist considerations, care ethics should become a distinctive and serious rival to competing moral theories.
The Importance of Radical Women’s Voices in Philosophy
Melissa Burchard (University of North Carolina)

Abstract
As I think about what matters for the future of feminist philosophy, one of the things I realize is that I have a worry about losing a certain set of voices: radical voices. To that end, in this paper I offer a story of how crucial radical feminist voices have been for me, both in my formation of professional philosophical identity, and in the work that I have found most important, most fulfilling, and most sustaining over the course of my career. Marilyn Frye, Joyce Trebilcot, Sarah Lucia Hoagland and María Lugones are some of my “go-to” feminist philosophers because they have spoken so clearly about the need for profound change rather than mere or piece-meal reform. Their articulation of the depth and embedded nature of many injustices has provided a touchstone for me to depend on throughout my career. Because one of the roles that feminist philosophy has taken on for itself is that of being the voice that is willing to say things that need to be said but are often unpopular and unwelcome to the institutions and mainstream members of it, we need a critical mass of those voices for the future.

It seems to me that we are going to continue to need these voices for a long time. Radical voices help keep important issues visible and on the table, and can encourage and inspire those less radical not to give up when the going continues to be tough. I will mention two particular concerns for the future of women/feminists in philosophy for which I think we need radical voices/responses. One is that we will need to work actively and deliberately to avoid being institutionally “tokenized” by gaining “legitimation” in the academy, but then being shoved into a corner and merely tolerated rather than being taken seriously, or co-opted and institutionalized to the point that we lose our ability to challenge structural injustices. A second concern is that we need to work against a new kind of revisionism in mainstream philosophy, where we are seeing mainstream voices suddenly “discovering” and publishing on what women/feminists have been saying for decades, without crediting those earlier contributions. Radical voices can help with these concerns, and additionally, inspire new generations of women/feminist philosophers with their examples of speaking out strongly and in no uncertain terms against oppressions and injustices.

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What’s with scientific method? What’s with rigour?
Nancy Cartwright (Durham & UC San Diego)
Abstract
Lately I’ve been studying calls for rigour in scientific method, particularly in evidence-based policy (which is all the rage in the UK now with our 8 ‘What Works Centres’ and also, though to a lesser extent, in Ireland) where randomized controlled trials (RCTs) are taken to be ‘gold standard’ for evidencing causal claims -- because they are, it is claimed, the only rigorous methods around. So, what do they mean by rigour and what’s so good about it? This talk will use the ‘argument theory of evidence’ from Michael Scriven that I have been expanding on to tackle these questions. It gives the best account I can think of that both fits what these folks say and makes sense. The bad news for advocates is that on this account ‘rigorous’ methods establish very narrow conclusions that need to be combined with a warren of other scientific knowledge and practice that work together, as is typical in science, to stabilize conclusions of interest, non-formalishly and in train, non-rigorously.

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Hedwig Conrad-Martius: Between Faith, Philosophy and Science
Giovanna Caruso (Universität Koblenz-Landau)

Abstract
Hedwig Conrad-Martius was student of Husserl and is considered one of the first phenomenologists. However, Conrad-Martius distances herself from the transcendental phenomenology of Husserl. She calls her phenomenology ‘ontological phenomenology’. The particularity of this form of phenomenology consists in the fact that Conrad-Martius combines in it lucid philosophical reflections, deep religious convictions and knowledge of the most modern scientific theories of her time. The successful attempt of Conrad-Martius, to integrate these dimensions each other, is particularly interesting. This attempt can be seen in reference to her idea of the world. The factuality of the real word, its material reality, represents the starting point of Conrad-Martius’s philosophical investigation. Precisely this reality is the basis for questioning about the being of the entity.

Starting from this fundamental question Conrad-Martius confronts critically on one side with Kant and the Idealism, but also with Husserl and Heidegger, to affirm the reality of the world. On the other hand she shows a deep interest in science and a masterly knowledge of the most recent scientific theories of relativity and quantum physics, as well as of biology and astronomy. In this way the most radical realism fits perfectly with an unconditional faith, showing – beyond any religious belief – the original answers to questions about the existence of the real world and its structure, the nature of organic and inorganic matter, the nature of human being and his possibility to know the world.

But how is it possible to combine radical realism with the Christian faith? How is it possible to combine scientific theories about the origin of the world with religious beliefs, that affirm
that the world and the human being are divine creation? What can radical realism mean in this context?

My Paper proposes to show Hedwig Conrad-Martius’ original answers to these questions, which are extremely current. They also represent a successful attempt to support each other not only between faith and reason, but above all between natural and human sciences. And at least in this respect Conrad-Martius is without any doubt a precursor of today's times.

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Susan Stebbing: Early Analytic Philosophy and Present-Day Linguistics
Siobhan Chapman (University of Liverpool)

Abstract
Susan Stebbing was an early proponent of analytic philosophy whose work was well known in her day but is now relatively overlooked. In this talk I will assess Stebbing’s contribution to the formal analytic tradition, and will also consider some of the striking ways in which she departed from it. Her early work focussed on mathematical logic, but she became increasingly interested in the significance of everyday language, and in the social and ideological implications of how it is used in communication, particularly by those in positions of power. These aspects of her work have resonances with discussions of language in present-day linguistics. I will explore the prescience of Stebbing’s innovative writings in relation to some of the ways in which linguists now analyse and critique language in use.

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Murdoch’s Heidegger
Andrew Cooper (University College London)

Abstract
Iris Murdoch’s death in 1999 left an incomplete and unpublished manuscript introducing Heidegger’s Being and Time. The text is not simply a commentary on Heidegger’s monumental work, but a much broader reflection on the nature of philosophy as it stood at the close of the twentieth century. Murdoch’s central questions revolve around the possibility of a naturalistic metaphysics, a metaphysics after the death of metaphysics understood as the Greek pursuit of being qua being. ‘Testing’ Heidegger in this way, Murdoch states, raises a host of vital questions facing contemporary philosophy: ‘Can an empiricist be a metaphysician? Can the myths and pictures of traditional metaphysics be restated without loss in ordinary language, is this a fair criterion? Must a moral philosopher be a
metaphysician? How does religion relate to theology? Can undogmatic “religious views” be a part of philosophy? Can, or should, philosophy now be modest, unsystematic, concerned with conceptual problems here and there, morally neutral, unaware of religion? What sort of thinking is philosophical thinking?”

This paper will present the results of research conducted at the Murdoch archives at Kingston University library on Murdoch’s unpublished commentary on Heidegger’s Being and Time. I will present the major themes and challenges issuing from the manuscript, and anticipate a review essay I intend to publish in the near future.

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Parsimonies: Feminine Difference and its Non-Identity towards Resistance and Emancipation in Cixous, Butler, Kristeva and Irigaray
Jack Coopey (Durham University)

Abstract
The subject of feminine difference and non-identity within poststructuralism which stems from the psychoanalysis of Jacques Lacan, is problematized through the barred subject. Thereby three women writers all possess influence from him. For Cixous, the phallogocentrism she also developed with Kristeva highlights the critique of the Western tradition, and initiating the need to utilize these new critical understandings of texts to criticize the structures that repress the Other and perpetuates its nonidentity. For Butler, the problematization of the concept of the 'I' since Jacques Derrida and Emmanuel Levinas is central to the identity of the woman also, alongside Cixous's ecriture feminine. For Irigaray, the issue of sexual difference is inherent to the Western tradition of thought, and sees the woman as not only defined in reference to the man, but unable to assimilate an identity itself. For Kristeva, the semiotic represents the mother identity for women which is barred and repressed, and within this, she follows in her psychoanalytic view on how language constructs identity, forming particular identities and forestalling others. Essentially, the locus of politics for subject-formation is a topic for these thinkers that not only cements their ideological constructions and critiques. But essentially none of these thinkers, especially Butler and Irigaray are not distinctly apolitical, yet avertly political in their critiques by not subscribing to one political group or party. Furthermore, the concept of exclusion in Poststructuralism as a means of systemic and discursive existence and hegemony persists intertextually in Roland Barthes and Roman Jakobson also in their commentaries on Kristeva. Lacan's emphasis on the pre-oedipal infant mirror stage which symbolically, and in Kristeva's terms semiotically establishes the subject not only as barred, not able to access itself through itself, but as one 'in process'. Within this, the question of the woman is suspended in this conceptual space. For all these poststructuralist feminists, the iterability of identity in sexuality, gender, language and politics is essential, and how since Foucault in his History of
Sexuality claims that the Victorian censorship of sexuality propagates is where Butler concludes also. Within this reflexive space, the question of the subject from Lacan onwards is highly influential not only within French feminist poststructuralism, but also for Louis Althusser interpellating the structure and the subject who does not exist within the structure. The ethical limits of the undecidability of responsibility is precisely where the feminine difference is constructed, normalized, and given the means of resistance, and thereby, emancipation. I would therefore like to investigate the intersections between these writers in construction of feminine subjectivity and its relation to a feminist and woman's history of philosophy.

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Stebbing and Russell on Bergson: Early Analytics on Continental Thought

Ivory Day (Université 1 Paris Panthéon)

Abstract

In this paper I explore the work of Susan Stebbing. I argue that Stebbing, although an avowed analytic philosopher, had a keen ability to understand the subtleties of the differing methods used by distinct philosophical traditions. Because of this she was able to clearly state where her ideas, and those of early English analytic philosophy in general, diverged from those of other traditions. The purpose of this paper is to argue that Stebbing’s approach offers a better i) method of analysis of diverging philosophical traditions and (ii) exemplar for the analytical critique of continental philosophy than that of her more well-known contemporary, Bertrand Russell.

I begin with Stebbing’s discussion of French and English ‘mentalities’. She describes the post-scientific French philosophical mentality as one where each philosopher builds a system in its own right, by starting from general abstract concepts and works later toward individual details. She contrasts this with the early-analytic English mentality of common sense, which starts with individual concrete cases before going on to develop general claims. I proceed to a comparative case study of the analyses of Henri Bergson by both Stebbing and Russell, elaborating the relevant parts of Bergson’s philosophy throughout. I argue that Stebbing’s deep understanding of the difference between the English and French aforementioned philosophical mentalities allowed her to sensitively highlight the connections between Bergson’s methodology and his philosophy. She could then carefully drew out their points of disagreement. This is then contrasted to Russell’s analysis of Bergson which, I argue, subsumes Bergson’s thought to his own mentality, consequently missing the mark in almost every case.

In this comparison I will focus on two key aspects. Firstly, Bergson’s poetic and metaphorical writing. Russell decried this style as mere flourishment, whereas Stebbing
explained that Bergson’s philosophy necessitated metaphorical expression to move beyond what he saw as the limits of intellectual thinking. Secondly, Bergson’s references to mathematical theories in explaining his philosophy of time. I argue that Russell confuses Bergson’s explanations for justifications, making his ensuing criticism irrelevant. However, Stebbing, accurately notes that intellectual justification is nonsensical in Bergson’s methodology. She consequently critiques Bergson not as if he were justifying a theory in the style of an analytic philosopher, instead engaging with his work by arguing for unpalatable consequences of his methodological choices.

I conclude that the lessons gained from Stebbing’s work can also be applied to similar summative and critical analytic works on non-analytic traditions.

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**Disclosing Intersex: Sex Complementation and Exposing the Invisible Middle**

*Natalie Delimata (Institute of Technology, Sligo)*

**Abstract**

In 1972 John Money and Anke Ehrhardt published *Man & Woman, Boy & Girl*. Celebrated by feminists, this book highlights Money’s famous twin case in which a baby boy was successfully reared as a girl, supposedly providing evidence for the social construction of gender. A founding premise within Money and Ehrhardt gender development theory was the ‘complementation principle’ (Money and Ehrhardt, 1972: 13). This concept presumes that to be heathy, girls and boys had to develop opposite but complementary gender identities. This concept was not invented by Money and Ehrhardt. Versions of it exist within many Indo-European texts dating back to the first Sumerian writings. While in ancient Greece it was used to explain the intensity of romantic love – two complementary halves of a single whole – during the enlightenment it was used to justify the different and unequal social positions of women and men. Sex complementation was understood as a fundamental element within the social order. Anything that blurred this distinction was indicative of social disorder, thus all suggestions of a middle ground has to be eliminated. While feminists and LGBTQ activists have fought to create a middle ground by contesting gender normative and heteronormative assumptions in relation to gender identity, the middle ground relating to sex remains largely invisible. However, recent changes in bioethics that require full diagnostic disclosure have exposed this invisible middle with often devastating consequences.

This paper will describe empirical research undertaken by the author which highlights the difficulty clinicians face in disclosing a diagnosis of intersex to their patient. The paper will illustrate the complex ontological crisis that emerges at the moment of diagnostic disclosure. Through inverting Althusser’s concept of interpellation, the paper introduces a new term - *dis-interpellation* - which the author devised in order to refer to the consequences of intersex
assignment. While interpellation describes the subject’s hailing into socially coherent existence, dis-interpellation describes the subject’s hailing out of socially coherent existence. This incoherence emerges where two incompatible sex ontologies intersect; the social ideal of sex complementation and biomedicine’s exposure of sex variance. Biomedicine’s pathologisation of sex variance highlights our continued adherence to sex complementation and our discomfort with the middle.

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Equality and Pluralism.

How Feminism Has Changed Contemporary Philosophy of Science

Aleksandra Derra (Nicolaus Copernicus University)

Abstract

In 1999 Londa Schiebinger published the book entitled Has Feminism Changed Science (Schiebinger 1999) showing how the increasing number of female scientists has gradually changed different areas of scientific research. I would like to paraphrase her question and ask How Feminism Has Changed Philosophy of Science. This immediately leads to an array of further difficult philosophical queries. Is “being a female philosopher of science” sufficient to introduce new feminist currents in the discipline provided that we know that “woman” does not equal “feminist”? When and how can problematization of femininity cognitively enrich the contemporary struggle with science? What can women bring to existing approaches in philosophy of science and how can they reformulate its aims and methods?

Feminist-oriented researchers of science, while developing radically critical philosophy of science, value highly those scientific approaches which are informed by egalitarian goals and take into account factors like gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, and social class. Janet Kourany explains that reorientation of traditional directions of philosophy of science means that many classical epistemic values will be treated as less important than values which seem to allow development of more egalitarian conceptions and approaches (Kourany 2003: 6). Good values in this context are clearly announced and can be enumerated as follows: “…the ones that promote equality, pluralism, inclusion, democratization and progress, make gender power relations visible, produce knowledge that is useful for people in subordinate and marginalized situations, minimalize inequalities and dismantle gender and other hierarchies” (Amoretti, Vassallo 2016: 4). Although this discussion is far beyond the scope of my paper, but it is worth pointing out that scientific theories which promote them are supposed to advance not only ethically and politically, but also epistemically and cognitively.

I want to consider if the inspiring ideas which reconstruct the whole repertoire of philosophy of science can be fruitfully used for the purposes of a socially engaged feminist philosophical
approach to science. Additionally, I would like to give some thought to the problem of putting female philosophers of science in the ghetto of feminist philosophy (Barber 1994). In other words, I want to ask about the aim of bringing women to philosophy: is it creating female philosophy or rather including neglected female/feminist perspective into philosophy?

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**Kierkegaard: A call for equality**

*Sioibhan Doyle (University College Dublin)*

Abstract
Feminist interpretations of the works of the Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855) unanimously agree that his attitude toward women is, at best, ambiguous: his philosophy both affirms and condemns the nature and role of the woman. On the one hand, Kierkegaard insists upon the fundamental equality of the sexes; yet, on the other hand, his pseudonymous authorship provides us with many examples of stereotypical, and patriarchal attitudes towards women. Whilst the latter is highly problematic, and difficult to defend in terms of feminism; my argument is that Kierkegaard’s call for equality should not be overshadowed by the historical and sometimes prejudicial viewpoints put forward by a number his aesthetic (pseudonymous) authors.

This paper will set about unfolding Kierkegaard’s ambivalence towards the status of women in the context of his own philosophical framework, which consists of three existential levels: i) aesthetic, ii) ethical, and iii) religious existence. Within this structure, which is reflected in Kierkegaard’s authorship, the aesthetic level is the lowest. Here, the life of the individual is said to be driven by basic inclinations and desires: the pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of pain. Kierkegaard’s argument is that the aesthetes’ lack of personal commitment to anything or anybody, along with his/her decision to simply follow the crowd, reduces the life of the aesthete to little more than a process of flux. The desire and decision to elevate oneself

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to the level of the ethical is really the individuals’ rejection of a life that is solely driven by basic inclinations. Once a person activates his/her own will (rather than submitting to the will of the crowd) he or she is actually deciding to be moral. The aesthetes’ transition to the ethical level is marked by an awareness of personal responsibility: his/her life is now governed by the principles of right and wrong, good and bad, and by justice and injustice. It is on this higher psychological level that Kierkegaard formulates his Christian ethic: it is here that he recognises and insists upon the equality of the sexes before God.

This paper, like many other feminist studies of the philosophy of Søren Kierkegaard, will expose the Danish philosopher’s apparent bias and discrimination towards the respective nature and status of woman. Unlike other studies, however, this work will also endeavour to amplify Kierkegaard’s call for equality, in an attempt to rescue it from: i) the detrimental shadow cast upon it by the patriarchal viewpoints of some of his own pseudonymous authors, and, ii) the darkness of the misogynistic views of a number of his contemporaries: Rousseau, Hegel, Schopenhauer, and later, Nietzsche. Kierkegaard’s Works of Love confirms that he himself recognised woman as being equal to man—even at a time when she may not have recognised this fact for herself. This work ignited a flame, albeit a fragile one, which has acted, and continues to act as a guiding beacon illuminating the truth of the equality of the sexes.

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Overcoming the Divide between Freedom and Nature: Clarisse Coignet on the Metaphysics of the Independent Morality
Jeremy Dunham (University of Durham)

Abstract
Clarisse Coignet (1823-1918) led a philosophical movement in France called La Morale indépendante. Inspired by the ethics of Kant’s Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals, this movement intended to free morality from divine authority and argued that its true source is the free human subject. Crucially, this subject is identified as a ‘self-legislating will’ that

stands outside the mechanism of inorganic nature. In this paper, I shall discuss her final (1911) philosophical work: De Kant à Bergson: réconciliation de la religion et de la science dans un spiritualisme nouveau. In this work, she aims to overcome the divide between the free subject and nature by combining Kant’s ethics with Bergson’s metaphysics. Bergson—through his engagement with biology—developed an understanding of nature that is fundamentally ‘creative’. Coignet argues that this provides us with a framework that overcomes the dualism between the determinism of mechanistic natural science and the free human being. This allows Coignet to bring the subject back into nature without undermining its freedom. Consequently, De Kant à Bergson is one of the most fruitful attempts to put classical German philosophy and nineteenth-century philosophy into dialogue.

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From Out of the Shadow:
Beauvoir’s Influence on Sartre’s Later Existentialism
Mary Edwards (Cardiff University)

“In The Second Sex we do not find any equivalent to Sartre’s inability to grasp oppression”
– Michelle Le Doeuff (2007, 118)

Abstract
Jean-Paul Sartre does not fully acknowledge his debt to Simone de Beauvoir for his later appreciation for what Beauvoir calls the force of circumstance (la force de la choses). This paper attempts to redress what Christine Daigle and Jacob Golomb describe as Beauvoir’s “occultation from the philosophical scene” (2009, 1) in a novel way. By focusing on Sartre’s less read later works, it aims to illuminate how Beauvoir’s reworking of Sartre’s early existentialism informs his later articulations of it, especially the revisions he makes to his account of individual freedom.

As Sonia Kruks observes, Beauvoir moves away from her initial, “Sartrean” account of the individual freedom in The Second Sex (Le Deuxième Sexe, 1949), towards an understanding of the subject as being “so thoroughly suffused by its situation that it is, to a significant degree, constituted by it” (2009, 161-2). The main contention of this paper is that after the publication of his Critique of Dialectical Reason (Critique de la raison dialectique) in 1960, Sartre endorses a more Beauvoirian account of freedom. However, Sartre’s choice not to formally cite Beauvoir in either the Critique or The Family Idiot (L’Idiot de la famille) – his two final, major philosophical works – obfuscates the influence that Beauvoir’s philosophical thought had on his own. It has also undoubtedly encouraged the tendency of commentators to read Beauvoir merely as a disciple of Sartre. For these reasons, I believe it is necessary for
Beauvoir scholars to peer deeper into Sartre’s shadow in order to reveal the extent of Beauvoir’s contribution to philosophy.

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De Beauvoir and Cassin:
Ambiguity, Translation, and Ethical Politics
Lisa Foran (University of New Castle)

Abstract
In her *Ethics of Ambiguity* (1947) Simone de Beauvoir proposes an ethics (and an implied politics) that navigates the relation between the particular and universal; an ethics that does not fall into the trap of thinking we are all the same but rather proceeds on the basis of our shared yet individual differences. At the heart of this existentialist project is of course the claim ‘existence precedes essence’ – that to be human is to freely create one’s own definition. Without an ‘essence of humanity’ upon which to hang its hat, ethics must rather begin from the affirmation of ambiguity, it must judge the specific rather than the general and consequently, justice is always in the particular application of a common law. This paradigm could by surmised by Barbara Cassin’s often stated aim of ‘complicating the universal’.

Cassin’s 2004 *Dictionary of Untranslatables*, celebrates differences between various European languages as philosophical opportunities. At the heart of the project is Cassin’s attempt to steer a path between the extremes of ‘Globish’ – a flat utilitarian English spoken for business by non-native English speakers – and ‘ontological nationalism’ – the kind of thinking found in Martin Heidegger’s claim that German and Greek are the most ‘philosophical’ of languages. Cassin argues that languages are rather best understood as *energiai*, that is, as incomplete forces that are constantly developing themselves. Understood as such, a language is ‘the operator of a consistent relativism, which allows us to complicate the universal’ (2018: 7). Cassin takes up Hannah Arendt’s claim that the plurality of languages inherent to the human condition contributes to an uncertainty about the essence of the world, and it is from this uncertainty, or ‘equivocity of meaning’, that politics must begin.

In this paper I bring de Beauvoir and Cassin into dialogue with each other to ask how we might respond to the current political climate of exclusion and far-right nationalism. Following both thinkers on the theme of ambiguity, I argue that the untranslatable – that which exceeds the universal – must act as the ethical moment of the political.

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Hunting Causes and Using Them… In Epidemiology

Katherine Furman (University College Cork)

Abstract

When Nancy Cartwright’s Hunting Causes and Using Them was published in 2007, causation was a prominent topic in the social sciences in general and economics in particular, and her book is directed at that debate. Currently the causation debate is especially pertinent in epidemiological practice and in the philosophy of epidemiology.

Much of the current epidemiological debate is about what kind of evidence is required to establish causal claims: Is probabilistic evidence alone sufficient, or do you also need evidence of a mechanism? This links straightforwardly to Cartwright’s criticism of overreliance on Randomised Control Trials (RCTs), which she has detailed extensively in numerous places. She tells us that a well-conducted RCT can show us than an intervention worked within the strict confines of the experiment, but that we need to do more to discover relevant “support factors” to make use of experimental results in new contexts. Given the role of RCTs as the central methodological tool of epidemiologists, and the role of epidemiological evidence in policy, this lesson is clear and has been noted.

The lesson from Hunting Causes and Using Them that has found less traction in current epidemiological debate is that of the ontological pluralism of causation. That is, the single term “cause” means various different things and that methodological pluralism tracks this ontological pluralism. We use different methods to discover different kinds of causes. Paying attention to this helps us understand the puzzlement experienced in response to claims like “poverty causes disease” versus “viruses cause disease”, and the various methodological quandaries thrown up by those claims.

In this paper I make use of Cartwright’s insights in Hunting Causes and Using Them, both ontological and methodological, to address recent debates in causation in epidemiology. I do this in the context of an ongoing epidemiological study at the University of Cambridge, where they have found that members of minority migrant groups in Western Europe experience disproportionately high levels of psychosis, compared to both those in their new European homes and those in the countries from which they migrated. The hunt is on for the causes of this finding. In particular, this case highlights issues of the ontological pluralism of causation that Cartwright addresses, due to the wide variety of types of causes that are likely to be responsible for this result.

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Forgiveness and Politics: A Comparison Between Arendt and Nussbaum

Diana Gianola (Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore)
Abstract
Forgiveness arises from empathy, from the "experience that confronts the existence of the other as other, uniqueness and difference" (Boella 2018). It is no coincidence that its main twentieth-century political revaluation as well as the contemporary philosophical reflection about its possible use against today's anger have been proposed by two female voices: Hannah Arendt and Martha Nussbaum.

The revaluation of the political value of forgiveness (Arendt 1958) is one of the most famous aspects of Arendt's philosophical thought: forgiveness is the remedy to the unpredictability of agency that frees the present from the burden of the past and opens to the possibility of a new beginning for freedom. For Arendt "the experience of doing and forgiving are one": whoever acts must be ready to forgive and whoever forgives in effect acts (Knott 2014).

Yet the relationship between the thought - and life - of Arendt and forgiveness should not be taken for granted. The recovery of forgiveness in Arendt is the result of an impervious path that starts exactly from the recognition of its impossibility: if forgiving means "to remain silent and go beyond" motivated by love of neighbor, it is a "fictitious procedure" useless from the political point of view (Knott 2014).

Even the outcome is not obvious: what is it possible to forgive? Arendt writes on the smoking ashes of the extermination camps, facing the unforgivable. For Arendt, forgiveness "does not apply to the extremes of crime and of voluntary evil" (Arendt 1958). It is not a protest against the radical and voluntary evil, but 'only' a remedy to face the limits of human action. A weakened forgiveness?

The perspective proposed by Martha Nussbaum in her recent *Anger and Forgiveness* (Nussbaum 2016) is different. Faced with the anger of contemporary society, Nussbaum meets forgiveness as a possible antidote, but she seems to liquidate it with the accusation of revealing "an excessively inquisitorial and rigorous mentality", which does not free from anger and proposes revenge desires in disguise.

Only the "unconditional love" which in the political sphere translates into "generosity as justice" would allow us to go "beyond the dramatization of anger and forgiveness to arrive at behaviours of effective support for trust and reconciliation". Only the generosity for Nussbaum is able to look at the person as distinct from his actions and to look forward without erasing the past against which one must assume responsibility and bring justice. Generosity as an alternative to forgiveness? Or rather is it a redefinition of forgiveness that reaches its most authentic heart, a forgiveness that arises in the aporia of the unforgivable and that can be the alley for a fairer justice than the retributive one?

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The Metaphilosophical Potential of
Judith Butler’s Critique of Feminist Identity Politics

*Paul Giladi (University College Dublin, Manchester Metropolitan University)*

**Abstract**

For Butler, the emancipatory function of feminism should not be predicated on any attempt to define ‘woman’ (1999: 9). The danger of defining ‘woman’ lies in how the definitional practice is itself ideological and risks deeming some women as ‘inauthentic’. Under this account, feminist identity politics presupposes gender essentialism in that feminist politics is said to be mobilised around women as a group, where membership in this group is fixed by a set of natural conditions, experiences or features that women supposedly share and that defines their gender.

Unitary gender notions fail to take differences amongst women into account thus failing to recognise the multiplicity of cultural, social, and political intersections in which “the concrete array of ‘women’ are constructed” (1999: 19–20). As such, in their attempt to undercut biologically deterministic ways of defining what it means to be a woman, feminist identity politics created a new form of ideology. The definition of ‘woman’ invariably fixes gender, and operates as a policing force which generates and legitimises certain practices, experiences, etc., and curtails and delegitimises others. In other words, the significant conceptual and practical problem with feminist identity politics is that if one does not satisfy the definition of ‘woman’, the implication is that one is not ‘really’ a member of women’s category nor does one properly qualify for feminist political representation: for Butler, the mistake of second-wave feminism was not that they gave a bad definition of ‘woman’, but that feminist identity politics aimed to define the term ‘woman’ at all. Feminist identity politics involves symbolic violence with material effects, insofar as ‘woman’ can never be defined in a way that does not prescribe some “unspoken normative requirements” (1999: 9) that women should conform to.

In this paper, I argue that Butler’s objections to the definitional practice constitutive of certain ways of construing feminism have metaphilosophical potential. The objection to establishing definitions can be understood as comparable to a Sellarsian critique of conceptual analysis as a starting-point for philosophic investigation: definitional practices as well as reductive analyses tend to oversimply and exclude other equally cogent and rich
sense-making enterprises in favour of a non-pluralistic explanatory scheme. For, moving away from definitions of ‘woman’ to more hermeneutic-phenomenological discussions concerning capability realisation formally parallels moving away from a definition of knowledge to a pragmatic-hermeneutic account of knowledge as a kind of cognitive competency and position in the space of reasons.

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In(corpor)ated epistemic injustice
Laura Gioscia (Universidad de la República, Uruguay)

Abstract
Epistemic injustice is an extended institutionalized practice. Women’s voices are routinely and unfairly dismissed in contemporary academic workplaces. Miranda Fricker’s hermeneutical injustice involves a structural prejudice in the economy of collective hermeneutical resources. She refers to two sorts of case. One where the person concerned is at least temporarily unable to make full sense of her own experience even to herself and another case where she understands the nature of her own experience perfectly well, and, furthermore, is able to communicate it to members of a social group to which she belongs, and yet she is unable to render it intelligible across social space to some significant social other to whom she needs to convey it (e.g. in academic meetings). Following Alcoff’s critique that this perspective needs a materialist work attentive to issues of embodiment I turn to the intertwining of emotions, body and reason. Epistemic injustice is drawn to the complex network of epistemic relations between embodied knowers. Embodied affects have no less influence in political relations than they do in interpersonal relations. As Sally Haslanger states, the schematic materiality of our social worlds is ubiquitous: universities and political science departments are schematically structured and practice-imbued material things. One’s workplace is a structured place inflected by gender, class, age, nationality and what Butler calls “the embarrassing etcetera”. Embodied epistemic injustice is still important to face the persistence of domination and oppression in workplaces. I agree with Butler that we still have to deal with traditional dichotomies of mind/body and associations of activity with masculinity and passivity with femininity, in order to show that the received definitions of agency as active and vulnerability as passive (in need of active protection) based on a disavowal of the human creature as “affected”) require a thorough going critique. With Susan Bordo I affirm that materiality impinges on us-shapes, constrains, and empower us-both as thinkers and knowers and also as “practical” fleshy bodies. Only an examination of concrete historial situations can determine whether we are being “rewritten” or dualisms being transcended. The bodies materiality is first and foremost about concretenesss and concrete (and limited) location. But there are no clear diagrams to appeal to become agents of social change. We cannot know with certainty how to deal with the blind spots of sexism and
androcentrism, opening up spaces for those marginal voices that colonial legacies have silenced or kept from being fully heard.

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Out of Oblivion: De Staël’s Hermeneutic Philosophy
Kristin Gjesdal (Temple University)

Abstract
Late nineteenth-century philosophy prides itself on a spirit of historical criticism. Be it morality (Nietzsche), social justice (Marx), or religion (Kierkegaard), no part of life, it seemed, evaded the scrutiny of critical reflection in this period. Yet for all their investments in what has later been called the hermeneutics of suspicion, none of the thinkers above paid much attention to gender. Nor did they question the curious absence of women in what was, in effect, to be the canon of nineteenth-century philosophy. There was, however, no shortage of women philosophers in this period. Their voices were many, their contributions were ample and of high quality. In my talk, I focus on one such voice: that of Germaine de Staël. Through the lens of de Staël’s hermeneutic program, I survey her approach to the history of philosophy, her discussion of the need for intercultural understanding, and her appreciation of the outlook of the émigré. I conclude by asking how de Staël, a hugely influential writer at the time, got written out of the history of nineteenth-century European philosophy—a history which she herself, in such important ways, had helped bring to existence.

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The Power to Start: Challenges to the Argument for Mechanical Causation in Émilie Du Châtelet's Fire Essay
Ashton L. Green (University of Notre Dame)

Abstract
It is clear from the changes in Émilie Du Châtelet's philosophy of science between the 1739 and 1744 versions of her essay Dissertation sur la nature et la propagation du feu, (also called, the 'Fire Essay') that her position on the nature and causes of forces changed. In an earlier paper, I suggested that this shift showed that Du Châtelet began from a naive metaphysical position, but then developed a sophisticated rational empiricist metaphysics based on mechanical explanation grounded in the principle of sufficient reason (PSR) in the years between 1739 and 1741. It is in the changes between these two versions of the essay that it becomes most clear how her commitments changed, first manifest in her dissatisfaction with the results of the experiments she performed with Voltaire in preparation for the writing
of this essay, and later due her own participation in the process of theory-development, and the adoption of the PSR. In this paper, I aim to dig deeper into her justifications for the requirement her philosophy of sciences puts on mechanical explanation, and address a counterexample in her seemingly separate treatment of living beings which seems to challenge the universal scope of these arguments.

First, I will outline her arguments that the mechanical explanation of phenomena follows from the PSR. Then, I will address a major challenge to Du Châtelet's argument: I will determine whether for Du Châtelet, living organisms are governed by the same forces she takes to be fundamental, or whether her philosophy of biology is inconsistently vitalistic, and whether this violates the PSR. Second, I will examine whether her argument for mechanical explanation is really a consequence of the PSR, and in fact how far-reaching the non-empirical PSR's role is in her empiricist philosophy of science. Last, I will attempt to explain the counterexample of living beings by claiming that Du Châtelet's adoption of the PSR comes in the form of a a sort of transcendental argument, and this use can be reconciled with her strong empiricism and prioritization of physics before metaphysics.

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Consciousness Raising and the Epistemology of Justice
Sally Haslanger (Massachusetts Institute of Technology)

Abstract
In the context of ideal theory, the Rawlsian original position has been a standard method for attempting to determine what justice is. The epistemology of justice in the context of non-ideal theory, especially the epistemology of consciousness raising, has been mostly neglected in contemporary philosophy. This paper makes a start on an epistemology of justice by considering how an epistemology of justice differs from a moral epistemology for individual action and explores the role of counter-publics and social movements in ideology critique.

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Insubordinate Plasticity: Judith Butler and Catherine Malabou
Natalie Helberg (University of Toronto)

Abstract
Catherine Malabou has transformed plasticity into a central philosophical concept. Plasticity names the ability to receive, bestow, and annihilate form: it is form’s capacity to re-form itself, sometimes radically. Part of Malabou’s discourse is concerned with brain-plasticity in
particular and thus has bearing on the subject’s capacity to transform. This paper tracks the relationship between Malabou’s ‘plasticity,’ which positions the subject between freedom and determinism, and Judith Butler’s ‘performativity.’ ‘Performativity’ names a process whereby a subject stabilizes itself by repeatedly conforming to, or by citing, particular social norms, but it can also name a process whereby a subject deviates from these constitutive norms, or, in other words, can also name an insubordinate mode of self-change. Butler and Malabou both, in different ways, hold that resistance to contemporary forms of power is contingent on a subject’s ability to become other than what it is. I use their respective discourses to think about the relationship ‘plasticity’ bears to language, and the extent to which the (political) project of thoroughgoing self-transformation is contingent upon changes in the discourse which surrounds the subject and constrains what it can think.

Butler and Malabou differ primarily on the question of whether there is a fundamental form of biological plasticity—a form of plasticity beyond language and unaffected by it. Malabou affirms the possibility, while Butler remains wary. Even Butler’s discourse, however, seems cornered into indirectly affirming a biologically-basic form of plasticity; I argue that the forms of insubordination she is preoccupied with end up looking impossible without it. Although Butler seems to privilege language, which she consistently understands as a technology of power, over bodies and would want to avoid positing anything in the way of a pre-discursive body as a result, what she calls ‘performativity’ ends up being structurally akin to what Malabou calls ‘plasticity.’

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Women, philosophy and patriarchy in the “land of democracy”

Stella Andrada Kasdovasili (Central European University)

Abstract

Plato, Aristotle, Parmenides, Pythagoras, Socrates. All great philosophers, all men. Greece has a long history of philosophical thinking, that comes to be embodied by the demos. Democracy and philosophy have become a tautology for Greek society, serving as the ultimate national myth for constructing Greek subjectivity. This tautology symbolizes our origin and our telos, in a linear conceptualization that formulates our historical continuum, connecting us to our ancestors. Through this constructed historical continuum, women’s involvement with philosophical thought appears to be naturalized and an always already confirmation of our national identity. This naturalization however, overshadows the exclusionary practices through which we are subjectivated and the restraints that exist within the very structure of power that is academia.

Drawing on the case study of Greece and personal anecdotes, I will use my paper to argue that this historical continuum has been instrumentalised by the relations of power, so as to
obscure the specifics of sexism women face within Greek academia. As an effect, certain
genres of philosophical thought become gendered. In that light, when it comes to political
philosophy, due to the heavy influence of the Enlightenment theory, traditional liberalism and
the notion of the humanist subject—which in most cases translates to white and male—
women’s work becomes marginalized. This deeply patriarchal argumentative logic is
dominant within philosophical circles in Greece, yet somehow overshadowed by the
normative technology of the above mentioned racial ontology. Women are constantly
challenged by the regulatory hegemony to an endless performative act of proving their
rationality. How are we then, to disrupt the citation of women in philosophy?
I conclude that this potentiality of disruption may be enfolded in forming coalitions with
scholarship that has been casted aside by androcentric, mainstream philosophical tradition. If
we are to radicalize our presence, we are to critically engage with the very power relations
that constitute us as academics and challenge their legitimacy.

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**Re-Defining the Role of Women qua Mothers:**
**A Biotechnological Vision for the Future of Women in Philosophy**
*Susan Kennedy (Boston University)*

**Abstract**
In this paper, I will argue that advances in biotechnology offer a vision for how to increase
the participation of women in activities like philosophy. Women have been sorely under-
represented in the history of philosophy and this makes it particularly difficult to improve the
present situation. New methodological practices will only effect limited improvements
insofar as they don’t address the underlying problem: Why are there fewer female
philosophers to begin with? Mary Midgley made a telling observation in “Rings and Books”
when she noted that most famous philosophers are lifelong bachelors. Perhaps what prevents
women from participating in philosophy are their institutional roles as wives and, most
importantly, as mothers.

Parental duties and rights are largely a matter of convention. If society had different
arrangements for child-rearing, such as communal parenting or state-run orphanages, the
burden of being a parent would surely be mitigated. However, there would still exist
inequalities between mothers and fathers based on the fact that women undergo pregnancy.
This experience comes with a unique set of burdens and benefits. Until this changes, women
qua mothers are going to have an institutional role that limits their participation in activities
outside the family.

I will argue that advances in biotechnology, specifically ectogenesis, whereby an embryo
goes through gestation in an artificial womb, offers a way of revolutionizing biological
reproduction. It would equalize the causal role of men and women in procreation and subsequently allow the institutional role of parenting to be re-defined in a way that resembles the voluntarist account offered by Onora O’Neill and Elizabeth Brake. On the voluntarist account, a person acquires parental duties by making a decision to undertake them. However, this account faces a serious objection because it implies that a person who does not have the intention to be a parent is absolved of responsibility. As a result, it might seem that the causal account of parenting advanced by Jeffrey Blustein, whereby a person acquires parental duties simply in virtue of causing a child to come into existence, is indispensable. I intend to show that the best way to save the voluntarist account is by re-envisioning biological reproduction in such a way that includes ectogenesis. I will also show how this strategy for re-defining the role of parents fares better than attempts made by Anca Gheaus and Veronique Munoz-Darde, which would require eliminating the family as society’s primary child-rearing institution.

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**Stronger Together: Analytic Feminism and the Community Imperative**

*Elizabeth Lanphier and Shannon Fyfe (Vanderbilt University)*

**Abstract**

We might say that a traditional analytic approach to philosophy appears both democratic and inclusive, yet at the same time marginalizing and exclusionary. In favor of democracy is the methodological feature that seemingly anyone can have a thought about a philosophical problem and engage in a debate about it: “It looks like there is a problem X, and I can analyze X with my own tools of thinking and reasoning.” In favor of exclusion are the ways in which this kind of philosophizing has historically overlooked differences, assuming a standard (let’s be honest, usually white, male, economically equipped) subject who will reason the same way in all cases. It also tends to privilege the ability to engage with a known canon of literature and philosophical vocabulary.

One feature of feminist interventions into philosophy is the recognition of a plurality of subjects, whose experiences may be vastly different, as philosophical subjects. Another feature is the recognition that first person accounts are both valid and necessary points of philosophical departure and reasoning. However, we now see divisive debates internal to feminist philosophy about which experiences afford one the perspective, position, or authority to tackle certain philosophical questions. As philosophers we might wonder how best to practice Socratic humility and recognize what we do not know, while also acknowledging that we have philosophical thoughts about things outside of our first-hand experiences.
In reply to these debates we make a case for the necessity of practicing analytic feminism in community, and we argue for conceptualizing analytic feminism as didactic. It is easy to identify the instrumental values of a philosophical community, but there is considerably less focus on its intrinsic worth. Instrumentally a philosophical community might support an individual in improving and publishing her research, networking, or and generally progressing professionally. In this paper we claim that philosophical community is intrinsically valuable, and in fact methodologically necessary, for feminist philosophy.

We do not argue that one must have first-hand experience to engage with a particular philosophical topic, nor do we argue against the methodology traditionally employed in analytic philosophy. Rather, we argue that a commitment to feminist philosophy requires that we acknowledge our potential blind spots. By practicing philosophy in community, we engage in conversation with others who can help mitigate the negative impact of these blind spots on our discipline. In order to achieve this, we must foster diverse communities of philosophical practice.

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Curiosity’s Awakening: Women desiring knowledge in the early modern period

Alissa MacMillan (University of Antwerp)

Abstract

In Milton’s Paradise Lost, Eve wonders to Adam, just before eating from the tree, whether they can ever really be happy if her virtue goes untested and if he is always by her side (9.270-340). Eve desires the challenge, she desires the test, she longs to get to know herself, for herself. In Aphra Behn’s The Rover (1677), Willmore makes a similar point to Hellena, who is supposed to become a nun, that if she tests her desire, ‘twill be a virtue in thee, which now will be pure ignorance’ (Act I, scene II). In both, women desire, or are encouraged to desire, and seek knowledge for themselves, their knowledge coming in their own first-person experience. For each, virtue is no virtue without knowledge of that virtue, which can only be had by testing it and first longing to know and test it for oneself.

In the early modern period, the cognitive passion of curiosity, this longing to know about creation, virtue, causes, and the future, was the subject of continued critique and reassessment. Long considered, thanks to Augustine’s painful lament in his Confessions, a ‘lust of the mind’s eye,’ one that should be tamed like any other lust, curiosity came to be seen as a natural and necessary desire, motivating science and philosophy. Thomas Hobbes and others transform curiosity from a theological to an anthropological concept, rendering what was once condemned by theologians into the very source and ground of that theology, the root of religion and science.
This paper explores some of the consequences of the transformation of curiosity in the early modern period, in particular to do with curiosity as it connects to women, and how this desire for knowledge is portrayed by women. Looking to the work of Hobbes and Behn, alongside aspects of Milton and Margaret Cavendish, this paper argues for the ways in which new perspectives on curiosity transform views of the human being, and women in particular. The new psychologizing of curiosity sees it as part of human nature and part of a mechanistic worldview. In this transformation, characterizations of curiosity also change, from feminine, negative, and passive to what motivates action, proves piety, and, if exercised deliberately and thoroughly, secures true knowledge.

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How Bracha Ettinger’s reworking of the Levinasian concept of the feminine contributes to a broader account of political community

Noirin MacNamara (Queen’s University Belfast)

Abstract

This paper argues that Bracha Ettinger’s reworking of the feminine as a philosophical concept undermines the notion of the masculine as universal and neutral with the feminine as particular and the marker of sexual difference. Accounting for Ettinger’s broader Symbolic and the function of the feminine at the matrixial level of subjectivity provides a more nuanced account of how sociality reiterates itself, and indeed fails to reiterate itself in non-exclusionary modes.

Levinas elaborates sociality in terms of paternity and fraternity which reinforces the already dominant notion that sociality and public life are properly characterized as masculine with the feminine belonging to the private realm and functioning as a condition of interiority and gentleness. In elaborating ontology as continuity in discontinuity and insisting on the separation of the self and Other, Levinas also ends up aligning the feminine principle as anarchic passivity with death and disappearance. For Levinas this denotes the relative unimportance of the power of the ‘I’ and contributes to his emphasis on sacrifice.

Ettinger’s feminine-matrixial is clearly linked to creative principles and to a more nuanced understanding of how forms of sociality emerge and evolve. Ettinger posits that Levinas is right in his intuition that a kind of withdrawal is needed for creativity and futurity. She also agrees that this could be thought of as a feminine principle. However Ettinger elaborates it as feminine because she posits that the psychic mechanisms which enable these transformative processes are developed in the late prenatal stage, at the level of partial subjectivities and regardless of later gender identity. The feminine-matrixial principle Ettinger proposes means that both I and non-I’s must stay alive and work through affect in order for transformation to occur. This shifts the notion of the ethical relation away from self-sacrifice and toward co-
emergence. It also shifts it away from a self-other logic and toward a notion of subjectivity as multi-levelled each with different processes of meaning donation. Ettinger’s feminine-matrixial principle is therefore an active-passivity.

I argue that Ettinger calls us to see that these modes are necessary for all humans and should not be considered a ‘weakness’. I further argue that they have much to offer in terms of how we think sociality beyond any notion of fraternity, which implicitly and/or explicitly still associates political responsibility primarily with men.

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Beyond Empathy? Hannah Arendt on Respect and Belonging

Elisa Magri (University College Dublin)

Abstract
According to Hannah Arendt, practices that establish the sense of belonging to a common world are not based on empathy. Both in Eichmann in Jerusalem and in On Revolution, Arendt holds that feelings such as love and sympathy do not play any relevant role in morals and politics. Drawing on Kant’s Critique of the Power of Judgement, she defends an “enlarged mentality” that enables individuals to judge by making oneself representative of everyone else. To this end, she emphasised that «this is a question neither of empathy, as though I tried to be or to feel like somebody else, nor of counting noses and joining a majority but of being and thinking in my own identity where actually I am not» (Truth and Politics). By and large, Arendt’s dismissive view of empathy stands in opposition to the phenomenological explorations of empathy developed, for example, by Husserl, Stein, or Scheler. At the same time, Arendt’s account of participation and critical engagement does not aim to introduce any divide between reason and passions. In fact, for Arendt, our capacity to be two-in-one is a requisite for a lively and joyful engagement with the other in outer world.

In this paper, I wish to explore further Arendt’s criticism of empathy, which is twofold. On the one hand, Arendt’s dismissal of empathy from politics is essential to avoid the ambiguity inherent in the notion of tolerance. Like Kant in An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?, Arendt defends the public use of reason, bringing to light the problem of participation and critical engagement in political contexts. In doing so, she posits a fundamental issue that consists in the need to acknowledge different existing sources of belonging.

On the other hand, Arendt’s misconception of empathy leaves room for further investigation on the place of affectivity in intersubjective relationships. To this end, I shall argue that Arendt endorses a Kantian standpoint that allows her to redefine the problem of empathy in terms of affective intersubjectivity, which is grounded on the a priori feeling of respect for
Iris Murdoch and the Epistemic Significance of Love
Cathy Mason (University of Cambridge)

Abstract
Murdoch claims that love is epistemically valuable: it enables one to discern objective truths about moral reality. This view seems puzzling: if objective truths are those in something like Williams’ (1978) ‘absolute conception’ of reality, objectivity necessarily abstracts away from the personal and particular, and thus love seems to be ruled out from playing an epistemically valuable role in discerning such truths. What is more, given the way in which many have opposed knowing and feeling it is unclear why an emotion like love should have anything to do with recognizing moral truths. Here, I offer an interpretation of Murdochian love such that the apparent tension between her claim about love’s epistemic role and the objectivity of moral truth is dissolved.

One obvious connection between love and morality is causal: love can be a powerful factor in motivating us to act in morally admirable ways. However, Murdoch’s claim is that love is also epistemically ethically significant: ‘Loving thy neighbour’, on the Murdochian interpretation, entails not only being motivationally affected by one’s neighbour’s wellbeing, but standing in a valuable epistemic relation to them: standing in a relation to them that involves true understanding of them. This may seem somewhat counter-intuitive, but I will suggest that there are good reasons to take Murdoch’s account seriously; her claim is not as puzzling as it first appears.

Here, I shall first outline Murdoch’s ethical framework, and the role of love within it. I shall next explore models of Murdochian love proposed by Velleman (1999) and Hopwood (2014), and the ways in which they fail to do justice to the epistemic role she assigns it. I shall then argue that Murdoch is best interpreted as conceiving of love as a virtue, with a particular position in the hierarchy of the virtues. This allows Murdoch’s claims about love’s epistemic value to be understood whilst retaining her claims about moral realism. However, my aims are not only exegetical, and I shall conclude by suggesting that this reconstructive exercise yields an illuminating and plausible account of love.
**Simone Weil, Iris Murdoch, and Jan Zwicky**  
*Jacquelyn Maxwell (Graduate Student, Queen’s University, Canada)*

**Abstract**
Simone Weil describes attention as an inherently moral gesture that helps us overcome selfish desires and fantasies. Attention is a technical term for Weil and does not merely involve noticing facts but also involves certain forms of affect and care. Therefore, attention is a moral capacity that serves a motivational function in addition to an epistemic one. Weil’s loving attention seems to describe a real moral phenomenon and has been referenced by other philosophers such as Nel Noddings, Lawrence Blum, and Elaine Scarry, although Weil is not always recognized as the source of the concept ‘loving attention’ in their work. Weil’s account of attention is intertwined with her concept of the self which is in turn deeply shaped by her religious views. Weil’s notion of attention is therefore not obviously separable from her harsh view of the self and her idiosyncratic theological views. Two other female philosophers, Iris Murdoch and Jan Zwicky, both take up the idea of attention as a vehicle for genuine ethical engagement with others, yet neither of the two take up Weil’s conception of self or the theological views that underlie Weil’s attention.

In this paper, I will trace the concept of attention through the writings of Weil, Murdoch, and Zwicky to identify how each develops the concept of attention and the views of the self that underlie it. I will argue that Weil’s idiosyncratic religious thought, and especially her focus on annihilating the self, results in a moral system that does not represent a realistic view of how we interact with the world. Attention is more helpfully interpreted by Murdoch and Zwicky. Murdoch and Zwicky suggest more plausible ways of controlling or reorienting the self through attention. Murdoch’s innovation is to successfully secularize Weil’s thought and to reformulate Weil’s concept of decreation of the self into a more realistic setting the self aside, and Zwicky, writing after Murdoch and Weil, takes up their explanation of attention and works to integrate attention into other moral practices.

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**Re-weaving the tapestry of history: Rose Rand and the Vienna Circle**  
*Katarina Mihaljević (University of Groningen)*

**Abstract**
*NB: this is my PhD project, during the presentation, I will focus on the one aspect of it: the discussion of the most suitable methodology for studying her archives. My thesis that deals with this aspect of my project is currently in progress and I hope to present some of my findings at the Conference.*

The Vienna Circle was a philosophical movement whose activities took part in the first half of the twentieth century and whose members endorsed various interpretations of logical positivism, the comprehensive but austere philosophy of science. The Circle’s publications
during the inter-war period, as well as its members’ continued post-war activities in exile, have both partially shaped modern analytic philosophy and strongly influenced the course of psychology and the social sciences.

While it is well known that members of the Circle were strongly motivated by socio-political concerns, it remains largely unclear how these factors influenced the group’s internal and external dynamics. What is more, although the Circle’s philosophical views have been extensively studied, we still lack a comprehensive image of one of the most prominent female members of the Vienna Circle: Rose Rand. By addressing both Rand’s work and the status of women in the Vienna Circle, this project will shed light on the socio-epistemological context in which the Circle’s ideas were developed.

By disclosing Rand’s unexamined academic and personal archives, collected at the University of Pittsburgh, I aim to (1) reconstruct Rand’s life and work between 1928, when the Circle published its seminal manifesto, and 1934, when the Verein was closed down for political reasons; (2) reconstruct Rand’s philosophical contribution through her work on logic and the philosophy of language, and (3) use findings to develop a clear and comprehensive account of the Circle’s socio-epistemological dynamics. As such, this project provides the pivotal first steps towards a more inclusive account of one of the twentieth-century’s principal philosophical movements.

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On Discovering That He Hates You
Clare Moriarty (Kings College London)

Abstract
I am an early career philosopher working in early modern mathematical philosophy and have been thinking, talking and writing about George Berkeley’s views on mathematics, metaphysics and perception for six years. In this talk, I describe my experience of having gradually come to realise that my intellectual preoccupation and idol was a bigot who would have advocated for my silencing as well as the silencing of those much worse represented in my field than me. In what I hope can be a sustained shift, I eschew a style of philosophy in which I put my fingers in my ears while sourcing the politically safe (and morally detached) technical philosophy from its eugenicist, sexist and racist accompaniments. Here, I will try to be open about the humiliation and guilt I feel looking back over years spent underestimating, and probably wilfully under-investigating, toxic elements of the philosophy that is now my subject of expertise.
There is great safety in working in those domains of philosophy cloistered from the comparatively tense worlds of political and ethical philosophy. Philosophy of mathematics is particularly safe, since the sense in which it is normative is so minimal. Historical mathematical philosophy is safer still since the politics in which it is embedded is so remote. In discovering that a lot of Berkeley’s hostile mathematical views were deeply related to his religious views, and a kind of moral panic over increasing scientism and the future of religion, my research has naturally led me towards a more holistic approach and some unpleasant realisations.

I will discuss my feelings of humiliation in discovering that the man whose strange and (to many) ridiculous metaphysical views I have defended at length in many quarters would have encouraged me to sit down and be quiet on the basis of my gender and religious heritage. Having been supervised almost exclusively by men in my career thus far, this is not an experience I share with my mentors. I will discuss how skimming over the objectionable parts of his philosophy that apply to me and not to them has made me feel isolated, and how ignoring the parts that apply to other people but not me has made me feel shameful. I will share how increasingly I feel like a person embarrassed in a romantic relationship breaking down as a result of a betrayal, and how that embarrassment is compounded by the feeling that my job prospects largely depend on continuing in that vein. I will finish by reflecting on the exhausting nature of this kind of engagement with our canon. If, as a person of considerable privilege in most respects, I find this dispiriting and embarrassing, what are we asking of those we are apparently trying to welcome to the discipline?

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Agonism and Pluralism: Arendt on Common Sense
Anandita Mukherji (Boston University)

Abstract
The controversy surrounding Eichmann in Jerusalem partially revolves around the question of what kind of judgment Arendt was passing on Eichmann. Arendt argues that he was not a unique type of evil, but rather a normal product of the system that he was in. However, she also passes judgment on him, claiming that his incompetence in the prevention of evil stemmed from his inability to think. At the heart of this inability to think, she argues, is a lack of common sense, a notion she derives from Kant. I show that we can shed some light on the ambiguity in the notion by considering Rousseau’s vision of the general will. I argue that Arendt draws on the notion of the general will in formulating her thoughts on common sense. Both notions have commitments to pluralism, yet they both involve appeals to seemingly very objective a priori principles.
In order to show this similarity, I consider a common interpretation of Arendt’s idea of common sense. According to this reading, politics, for Arendt, is entirely centered on pluralism. However, I argue against this view, because if Arendtian politics began and ended merely with pluralism, she would lack sufficient grounds for her criticism of Eichmann. I therefore argue that thinking of common sense as simply a political process is mistaken, and that if we look closer at Kant's *Critique of Judgment*, we can see the dual nature of common sense: both public and private. The purpose of common sense for Kant seems to bring a measure of objectivity to communal thought, so it is not merely subjective, arbitrary or based on the power of rhetoric. In the paper, I describe the way in which Arendt applies this aesthetic theory to politics, and I thereby argue for a new reading of common sense.

I find that exploring Rousseau's idea of the general will is helpful for understanding what Arendt means by common sense, as both concepts are visions of what a communal decision-making process should be like. Rousseau's notion of the general will is often misunderstood as entirely non-pluralistic, but I argue that scholars have argued so by glossing over the fact that for Rousseau the will is a divided faculty, and a major motivating factor of the individual will is the desire for the fulfillment of the general will.

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On The Philosophical Friendship of Anscombe, Foot, Murdoch, Midgley and Warnock

*Evgenia Mylonaki (University of Athens)*

**Abstract**

In a letter to the Guardian in 2013 Mary Midgley explains the rise to prominence of herself and her four classmates (Elizabeth Anscombe, Philippa Foot, Iris Murdoch and Mary Warnock) in the mid 20th century as a result of WW2. Midgley claims that the war made room for a women's *way of doing philosophy* by keeping most men away. Roughly, her idea is that this consisted in a non agressive and non-combative way of arguing. But even a cursory reading of the written work of the five philosopher friends shows their work to be both combative and agressive. In this paper I contemplate the premise that what these women had that the war gave them was a way to be agressive and combative *in common with each other* without *having to exclude the other sex* in order to do so. It is this aspect of the historical contingency, I believe, which lies at the heart of their philosophical friendship. On my interpretation, the very idea of a women’s *way of doing philosophy* relies on the idea of a philosophical *friendship* among women. The claim may seem trivially true but it is not. We see this if we consider that among the conditions for the establishment of friendship in general we find a lack of a certain kind of purposiveness. To echo a well-known discussion in

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epistemology, one cannot be friends at will. But to be in a position in which one has to exclude the other sex in order to do philosophy together is to face the predicament of having to be friends at will. Freedom from this predicament was what the war gave to the five friends and what most of us women philosophers lack today. This does not mean that women philosophers can add nothing distinctively gendered to the philosophical mix of a certain era. It means that what is thus added cannot be decided ahead of time. The distinctively gendered thing that the five friends added to the philosophical mix of the analytical moral subjectivism and rationalism of prewar England was a renewed interest in human nature, virtue and action in moral philosophy. What we can add to the philosophical mix today will depend on whether we have enough women in all fields and all schools to make room for genuine philosophical friendships among us women.

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Catharine MacKinnon’s Thought as Philosophy
Natalie Nenadic (University of Kentucky)

Abstract
Catharine MacKinnon’s political and legal thought is a major intellectual contribution to our time. It has given rise to or significantly informed groundbreaking real-world changes in law and in policy towards women’s equality domestically and globally. It has also given direction to and been a resource for inquiry across disciplines, including most recently academic philosophy. However, there has been little recognition of MacKinnon’s thought as philosophy. I spell out how MacKinnon’s project is indeed philosophical. I claim that she exhibits a notion of philosophy that, in good part, has been implicitly operative in the practice of many who, often only in hindsight, we recognise as original thinkers. It is a notion of philosophy that has been most explicitly and comprehensively articulated in the works of Martin Heidegger.

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Effeminate Edmund Burke and the Masculine Voice of Mary Wollstonecraft
Katherine O’Donnell (University College Dublin)

Abstract
Nancy Fraser and Joan B. Landes (among others) have outlined the symbolic and material difficulties that women had in participating in the enlightened bourgeois public sphere, even
as the participants who co-created that space claimed that they were universally open to all who wished to rationally dialogue and reasonably debate.

This paper focuses on the strategies of the philosopher of education and society, Mary Wollstonecraft, (1759-1797), to insert her voice into the public sphere and argues that it is in her work *The Vindication of the Rights of Man, in a Letter to the Right Honorable Edmund Burke* (1790) that she achieves the breakthrough that allows her the opportunity to publish her most famous work, *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792). This work is routinely heralded as modernity’s first feminist theoretical tract, however, we see most of the key ideas of *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* not merely introduced but detailed in Wollstonecraft’s epistle to Burke. This paper argues that it is Wollstonecraft’s systematic feminising of Burke and his ideas and her concomitant adoption of a masculine perspective and voice for her ideas that allows Wollstonecraft’s arguments to gain an audience and considered attention in the public sphere. Wollstonecraft’s *Vindication of the Rights of Man* was written in a month as a response to Edmund Burke’s (1729-1797) *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, which many found to be a surprisingly enraged denunciation of the revolt against the French monarchy.

Prior to the rupture of the French Revolution, Wollstonecraft’s philosophical writing was typical of other learned eighteenth century women in her engagement with John Locke’s (1632-1704) *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1689). By following Locke’s work on education, Wollstonecraft was enabled to (legitimately) philosophize on the broader issues of the formation of self and the development of morals. In common with other female philosophers, Wollstonecraft was able to argue (in *Thoughts on the education of daughters: with reflections on female conduct, in the more important duties of life*, 1787) that girls’ God-given capacity to reason should be encouraged through intellectual and moral education to befit their role as parents and educators of the young.

This paper will make brief mention of how the political shocks of the American, French and Irish Republican Revolution of 1798 allowed women (invariably disguising their gender) the opportunity to engage in print in political debates and hence put forward theories of power and public governance. In her (initially) anonymous riposte to Burke and her characterisation of him as defending “profligates of rank, emasculated by hereditary effeminacy”, Wollstonecraft was paradoxically able to use sexism to circumvent violating the constitutive principles of the bourgeois public sphere. In place of putting forward just one perspective Wollstonecraft was enabled to claim an urgent need to speak on behalf of many, and she could accuse Burke of violating the code of disinterestedness, while she put forward the interest of the many from the middling classes. As these strategies and tropes of Wollstonecraft’s *Vindication of the Rights of Man* were accepted in the public space of reasonable debate and enquiry and as the true gender of the author was made known without significant backlash, the ground was suitably prepared for the subsequent publication of the *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*. 
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Feminizing the Public Sphere: The German Salon in Early 19th Century
Anne Pollok (University of South Carolina)

Abstract
The philosophical world at the beginning of the 19th century certainly benefitted from the contributions by female intellectuals. But almost as certainly, these intellectuals struggled to be accepted as thinkers in their own right. It is my contention that this is not just because male intellectuals resisted the intrusion, but also because the exact outline of such a role was unclear to the women themselves. Arguably, the most important – and successful – such strategy was the establishment of the salon as an intellectual meeting place. It established a social room that made it possible for women to fulfill a plethora of new roles, and reform old ones: as the center, the caregiver, the nurturer, the presenter, and, last but not least, the discussant, the intellectual equal. The salon thus became an important stage for individual character development, enabling women to make their new roles visible. At the same time, the salon was an oddly peaceful motor of social change. As such, it was a peculiar “space of appearance” (Arendt), since in its intimate setting it mixed the public and the private realm, allowing its members to question and re-form these appearances. Hermeneutically speaking, it allowed women to draw out their new forms, and enable their male counterparts to start engaging in an actual exchange that could change role-expectations.

In my presentation, I will concentrate on the Jewish salonières Rahel Varnhagen and Henriette Herz, who also happen to complicate an already complex issue: both are ‘other’ not just because of their gender, but also because of their religion. Thus, the issue of re-invention and re-establishment of the self in order to be seen and understood, even by the actors themselves, becomes the more poignant. I will investigate into the ways in which their roles were seen by the salon goers, and in which ways their self-understanding changed through their occupation.

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Transhuman Gender and Becoming  
Alyx Robinson (University of Kent)

Abstract

“Woman is losing herself; woman is lost.” It is hard to know any longer if women still exist, if they will always exist, if there should be women at all, what place they hold in this world, what place they should hold. (Simone de Beauvoir The Second Sex 1949 pp 8)

If I believe becoming a woman is a project of time and deliberate effort, a performative rather than a simple act of being, then it is possible I find my being a woman is significantly less stable in an environment of further reach and faster pace of technological enhancement than someone’s being male, or my being a human is stable.

Perhaps these striking and obvious changes in approach to and understanding of womanhood, driven by the synthesis of social change in gender with catalytic transhuman ideals of species flexibility, subject to appropriate scrutiny, will be a more useful case study for understanding transhuman/future-human identity.

If we must decide to be women in different approaches, in different areas of life, what does it mean to be a woman in philosophy? Is it a fundamental characteristic of my being in philosophy, being a woman in philosophy? Will my philosophy change necessarily if gender changes with the times. Is the philosophy of women, therefore, more changeable, alert, fast-paced, vulnerable than that of men?

I will argue that although it might seem more vulnerable, that the careers of women and their trajectory might be more defined by norms of gender, the philosophy espoused is no more changeable, in the ways we might prefer.

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Philosophy as a Woman:  
Reflections on Sophia in The Consolation of Philosophy by Boethius  

Sigridur Thorgeirsdottir (University of Iceland)

Abstract

In some early medieval and medieval texts, such as in The Consolation of Philosophy by Boethius and The City of Ladies by Christine Pizan, the figure of Lady Philosophy has a prime place. Sophia is a principle of integrated wisdom, combining theoretical and practical knowledge, thinking and feeling. I will show how historical interpretations of the figure of Sophia in The Consolation of Philosophy represent a tension between pagan and Christian outlooks. This history has left us with interpretations of Sophia as disembodied principle
which only display certain features of her and conceal others, hence disregarding Sophia as a principle of integrated wisdom.

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Looking for women where there are none

Sara Uckelman (University of Durham)

Abstract
A lot of attention has recently been devoted to the re-discovery and incorporation of women philosophers into the standard story of the history of philosophy, both in terms of research and teaching. But sometimes, despite our greatest efforts, there are no women to be discovered. How then should we guide our research and teaching of these subjects without perpetuating problematic images of the nature of philosophy? In this talk I address these questions and issues with the concrete case of women and logic in medieval Western Europe.

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Women Unboxed: The Myth of Pandora in Plotinus

Panayiota Vassilopoulou (Durham University)

Abstract
The Myth of Pandora, has been one of the most influential and appealing myths in literature and art, with traditional interpretations finding therein the symbolic expression of the inferiority of women and the dangers associated with them: women are the source of evil, presented as gifts that wise men should decline. The dualist understanding of reality informing this reading would have the male element represent the spiritual or ‘form’ and the female the embodied or ‘matter’—any association with the latter leading necessarily to a ‘fall’ or demise. Such account resonates historically with elements of Platonic metaphysics (especially in the Timaeus, where the female is the passive receptacle of the universe), the Aristotelian theory of procreation (especially in the Generation of Animals, where ‘mother is matter’), and the Hebraic religious tradition (especially Genesis Chapter 3). Focusing on Plotinus, my aim in this paper is to discuss his rendering of the myth of Pandora (Enneads, IV.3.14), which although radical, or because it was radical, has been neglected in the history of philosophy. I shall be arguing that Plotinus, who has often been accused of disdain for the body, advances a richer and more positive account of what the female principle brings to the cosmos, one that challenges the misogynist tendencies with which ancient philosophy is often, and not unjustifiably, charged. Plotinus does this by both offering a revised
interpretation of the myth, and also drawing attention to the pervasive role of myths and other metaphorical narratives in the way we understand and situate ourselves in the world, especially from a moral point of view and in connection to what Murdoch calls the ‘inner life’ of the moral agent. Although to identify Plotinus as a feminist would be anachronistic and therefore misleading, a renewed understanding of his philosophy, as I have also argued elsewhere, has a lot to contribute to contemporary feminist discussions not only on the status of women, but also on the nature of philosophy itself.

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Women in Chinese Philosophy: Concept of Yinyang in Constructing Feminism

Qinghua ZHU (Capital Normal University, Beijing, China; Visiting scholar of UCD)

Abstract
The traditional way of thinking about women in ancient Chinese philosophy was grounded on the concepts of Yin and Yang. Yin and Yang are the basic principles of the world, the interrelation and interaction of which provide the original force for the emergence of all beings in the world. In this duality, Yang is the part of strength, power, and outgoing, while the Yin is the part of quietness, gentleness, passiveness and suffering. It is said that Yin represents the character of women, and Yang represents the character of men. In the relationship of men and women, women should be passive, suffering, weak. In the traditional family construction, the men master the affairs outside the family, the women master the affairs inside the family (男主外, 女主内), which meant that the women normally had no voice in the social affairs. Her field is limited inside the family. Furthermore, according to Confucian doctrine, “husband guides wife” (夫为妻纲), husband is the decision maker of a family, as a king in a state.

This paper will show that, although the position of women in society has been developed significantly alongside with the withdrawal of Confucianism from the dominant ideology, the oppressive situation of women in society still lasts explicitly and implicitly. It could be argued that within the Confucian tradition the ontological principles of Yin and Yang were abused in to a certain degree, and the women became the sacrifice of the interpretation with prejudice. I will argue in this paper, that the principle itself is very flexible. It contains much richer possibilities of interpretation than that had been interpreted in the Confucian tradition.

My argument is that if we recognized that each person is a complete yin-yang system, we would understand, that every human being is an independent person. From this perspective, every woman has the potentiality to reach her universality and individuality. My claim is that in building a feminism with the resource of ancient Chinese thought, the concepts of Yin and Yang can be revived and given a new life if we think about them in a functionalist way. In
this framework, Yin and Yang are correlative functions in social and family operation. The properties of Yin and Yang are determined only in each particular affair. People who practice functions are Yin or Yang in temporality. Yin is not a substance which restricts women, neither Yang to men.

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Panel I
The Place of Utilitarian Reasoning in Feminist Theory
Molly Brown (The University of Chicago)
Ruth Groenhout (University of North Carolina Charlotte).
Christina Van Dyke (Calvin College)

Abstract
This panel examines the history of women’s thought in relation to the central commitments of utilitarianism. We consider the place of utilitarian reasoning in feminist theory and, further, what that place ought to be going forward.

The first paper, (‘Medieval Mystics on Final Ends, Fungibility, and the Common Good’), addresses how female contemplatives in the 12 th -15 th centuries – such as Hildegard of Bingen, Hadewijch, and Catherine of Siena – balanced considerations for the common good against their belief in the inherent worth of human beings. Although they felt an obligation to work for the good of all creation, their recognition of the intrinsic dignity of individuals means that they would have found the moral interchangeability assumed by contemporary utilitarianism highly objectionable. In fact, their work makes a case for striving for the common good on other bases, such as achieving the final end of humanity – a goal both personal and communal. This paper develops an account of how these philosophically neglected medieval theorists could inform contemporary feminist approaches to ethics, particularly with respect to resisting the idea that we can quantify the value of individual human lives.

The second paper, (‘Foot’s Critique of Utilitarianism: Lessons for Feminists’), argues that earlier feminist’s rejection of utilitarianism offers important lessons for contemporary feminist theorists. Simone de Beauvoir, Philippa Foot, and Judith Jarvis Thompson, thinkers who rarely agree, rather remarkably converge on the conclusion that utilitarianism, in particular hedonic utilitarianism, is inconsistent with liberatory philosophical projects. They agree on rejecting hedonic utilitarianism because it makes current states of desire the measure of moral weight. Desires shaped by unjust social structures, however, are largely conservative of the status quo. All three thinkers argue that an ethics adequate to women’s freedom must adopt an account of morality that posits an ideal other than happiness, or contentment with the status quo, because it is inimical to feminism’s advocacy for change. This argument connects with more recent feminist arguments, e.g. Kathryn Pynn Addelson’s argument about
moral revolutionaries (which, ironically, defends John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor), and Sandra Bartky’s work on the extra emotional and intellectual labor required of feminist thinkers. The collective wisdom of these women cannot be ignored: as feminisms move into the future, feminists should agree in rejecting utilitarianism.

The third paper, (‘A Defense of J. S. Mill’s Utilitarianism’), defends the historical importance and continued usefulness of utilitarianism for feminisms. The classical utilitarians were all professed feminists and advocated for women’s causes. The significance of this fact is not to be dismissed as a historical accident. In particular, Mill’s utilitarianism is a moral theory that was developed in partnership with women, and it is not just useful to feminist aims but was actually developed specifically to be useful for feminist aims (unlike Kantian or Aristotelian ethical theories). It isn’t enough for moral theories to merely be capable of doing feminist work. At this point, they actually have to do it or shut up. But can’t we give particular utilitarians their proper respect while still rejecting utilitarianism? Yes. But, this paper argues that we should consider the significance of Mill’s utilitarianism for his feminist theory. Mill stands almost alone in the history of western philosophy as a theorist who worked out the problem of induction, classification, logic, and language with feminist concerns in mind. Additionally, Mill heavily influenced American Pragmatism, another theoretical enterprise explicitly developed in conjunction with women and (in some cases) with feminist projects in mind. Contemporary analytic feminisms contain a heavy dose of Pragmatism and, it turns out, Mill. Taken together these considerations strongly suggest that rejecting utilitarianism seems hasty.

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Panel II
(In Parenthesis)

Clare Mac Cumhail (University of Durham)
Rachael Wiseman (University of Liverpool)

Q&A with former Durham undergraduate women students
performance by artist Carol Sommer

Abstract

This panel will set out the activities and findings of the British Academy-funded In Parenthesis project, launched in Dublin 2016, and will outline future plans and collaborations. In Parenthesis is an activism and research project studying the collective corpus of Elizabeth Anscombe, Philippa Foot, Mary Midgley and Iris Murdoch, a previously unrecognised all-women philosophical school. For info see womeninparenthesis.co.uk. Of particular interest: a Q&A with graduates who were centrally involved in the project at its outset; and don't miss artist Carol Sommer reading from her Iris Murdoch-inspired 'Cartography for Girls' (carolsommer.net)
Panel III

Women Challenging Pure Reason

Lily King (University of South Florida),
Ashley Taylor Potts (University of South Florida),
Garrett Potts (University of South Florida)

Abstract

Philosophy is in the midst of some serious soul-searching. The field seems to be increasingly questioning the legitimacy of its own rationalism. Phenomenology and existentialism are, no doubt, outgrowths of this reality. However, as Aristotle reminds us, old habits die hard. Though new paths forward have been explored philosophy’s myopic, rationalistic vision caused lasting effects in the Western tradition. First, it led to a de-emphasis on the value and importance of the emotions in philosophical investigations. Second, it procured an overemphasis on philosophical dogma versus philosophical praxis. In the words of Pierre Hadot, philosophy is no longer a way of life, per se, but merely a way of thinking. Both of these phenomena, the epistemology of pure reason and the de-emphasis on philosophical praxis, have led to the marginalization of women visionaries in the western tradition who did not fit within the narrow confines of the rationalistic model. Philosophical anthropologies promoting gender essentialism, suggestive of women’s inherent and unfortunate emotionality, did not help either. Thinking was deemed male and feeling female. Clearly then, women thinkers suggesting affective paths to knowledge or who were less preoccupied with locating the orthodoxa and more concerned with attenuated philosophical praxis were not considered among the philosophical elite; they did not make it in the canon. Who are some of these women visionaries and how can their epistemic quests help inform a new, or perhaps renewed, method for philosophy? And what are women in philosophy still doing now to push back on the monopoly of pure reason?

This panel will aim to address the insights of women that pushed these boundaries and challenged the content and approach of philosophical discourse in their time, particularly those who challenged philosophies of pure reason—ethical, theological, and political. The first two papers will consider forces of the Middle Ages and the Counter-Reformation era: Héloïse d’Argenteuil and Teresa of Avila. The first will consider Heloise’s philosophy of love and intentionality. It will not only be argued that Heloise influenced Abelard’s ethics, but also that this influence led to the de-rationalization of his ethical approach. This has procured what can be described as an affective intentionalism in Abelard’s ethical treatise, Scito te Ipsum. The second paper will consider Teresa of Avila’s Interior Castle. Ultimately the paper
will take seriously Teresa’s challenge to the scholastic theological tradition that surrounded her. For Teresa, knowledge of God was not contained in propositions and syllogisms but through an affective ascent. How did this disrupt the religious patriarchy and how did it de-legitimate scholasticism’s theological rationalism? This paper will seek to answer those questions. The last paper will consider American philosopher Martha Nussbaum’s *Political Emotions* as a corrective and extrapolation of John Rawl’s political liberalism. Though Nussbaum agrees that Rawls’s principles of justice are the correct foundation for a liberal society, she questions their ability to sustain dedication to justice. In other words, societies cannot sustain justice using rational principles alone; they must sincerely consider the role of political emotion to inspire and propagate justice. In all three of these remarkable philosophers we see women providing an affective and/or practical corrective to philosophical rationalism.

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