2015 NW Philosophy Conference
Abstracts

MARK ANDERSON, Tarrant County College
"Constitution and the Metaphysics of Killing"
Lynne Rudder Baker has offered a metaphysic of persons according to which persons are constituted by, but not identical to, their bodies. She holds that her view delivers the result that normal post-natal humans are persons, but that neither pre-natal humans nor non-human animals are, and she occasionally uses this verdict to touch on moral issues. I argue here that her method of applying her view to differentiate persons from non-persons is implausible. I also contend that the constitution view is not well equipped to justify moral views on what sorts of things are morally considerable, because moral views must be employed to apply the metaphysic in the first place.

GEORGE BACKEN, Adams State University
"The Good News of Atheism"
Atheism denies a metaphysical and epistemological theory, so a defense of atheism is the denial of theism. Three theistic truth claims will be denied: epistemological, metaphysical, and explanatory. According to theism, God causes and acts in the world, mind is fundamental, and God and God's ways can be known. But idealism is false, God is explanatorily irrelevant, and theism's methods of knowing are unreliable. But not so quickly is the end of faith, the apologist is equipped with defenses: Atheism's criticisms do not apply, since evidence for supernaturalism is different than evidence for naturalism. Emphasis on objective truth is misplaced and only promotes conflict, since religion is subjective. The atheist's life is pitiable, so should be avoided. These responses will be developed and evaluated. And to the last defense, it will be shown that life is lived better as an atheist.

KYLE BARRETT, University of Utah, Graduate Student
"For No Reason: Understanding Hume's Skepticism"
Hume is typically interpreted as a skeptic regarding our beliefs concerning future matters of fact. According to such interpretations, the nature of his skepticism is one concerned with the justification of our beliefs regarding future matters of fact. I will argue that Hume's skepticism is best interpreted as concerned with processes by which these beliefs are formed. That is, he is skeptical that reason—the processes of the understanding—is responsible for the formation of beliefs regarding future matters of fact. My argument consist of two parts: First, I will address those terms in virtue of which Hume is interpreted as being concerned with justification. I will argue that these terms can also be interpreted as having non-normative meanings and, furthermore, that we have reason to prefer the non-normative interpretation of Hume's use of these terms. Second, I will argue that by placing Hume's skeptical argument within the context of his concerns in the sections surrounding section IV of *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, we have reason to think that Hume was concerned with the process by which we form our beliefs concerning matters of fact, rather than the justification of those beliefs.

BERT BAUMGAERTNER, University of Idaho & **JAMES FOSTER,** University of Idaho
"Imperfect Observations Produce Asymmetric Signaling Roles"
We extend the use of signaling games to study conventions and language, showing that with imperfect perception there are important differences between how signals are communicated and how they are received. A signaling game consists of world states, actions, and two players: senders and receivers. Senders send a message about the world state to receivers, and receivers engage in an action according to the signal they receive. Most applications of signaling games assume that senders observe the world perfectly before they send a signal. In this paper, we analyze signaling games where senders observe the world imperfectly, as when a vervet monkey is unsure whether there is a snake or a leopard in the grass. We first develop an algebraic technique to generalize signaling games. We then use the technique to show that there are important differences be- tween senders and receivers that are not apparent in standard signaling games, particularly the effects of information bottlenecks and ambiguity.

MARK BAUER, University of Colorado-Denver
"Heretical Teleosemantics"
Teleosemantics looks to be a particularly promising approach to naturalize semantics due to its ease in handling intentional inexistence and misrepresentation. Its ability to do so reflects the fact that possessing a semantic-function only implies that some item ought to map such and such. But, the 'ought' embedded in the semantic function also presents a challenge, namely to specify what natural facts underwrite that 'ought'. The seemingly ubiquitous approach has been to appeal to historical facts to meet the challenge. I want to suggest that the addition of extra facts, historical or otherwise, is simply unnecessary. Instead, the logic of a semantic hypothesis already justifies the appropriate 'ought' assertions on naturalistic grounds. Counter to what has become dogmatic in the literature, teleosemantics has no need of history.

RYAN BEITZ, Loyola Marymount University, Graduate Student
"Earth, Statements, and Emergence in Heidegger and Foucault"
Commentaries treating Heidegger's well-known "The Origin of the Work of Art" largely fail to clearly articulate what is arguably one of the most crucial aspects of the essay—the concept of earth. Similarly, many have failed to read Foucault's *The Archaeology of Knowledge* for its metaphysical content, resulting in an even more common silence regarding the function of his notion of statements. As such, this essay shows that by reading Heidegger's "earth" in relation to Foucault's conception of "statements", we can see, first, how both characterize the phenomenon of emergence, and second, how Foucault's metaphysics ultimately goes beyond that of Heidegger's.

ELIZABETH BELL, University of Wisc.-Madison, Graduate Student
"Another Stoic Inconsistency: Propositions and Predicationals"
I argue that the Stoics are inconsistent in their treatment of the notions of general propositions and predicationals. I demonstrate this by showing that the context of the utterance when expressing predicationals is important to the Stoics but the context of an utterance of a general proposition is not. This is a problem because a predicational is a sub-type of proposition with all of the relevant similarities. I take there to be three main ways to handle this inconsistency: (1) We can concede that the Stoics held inconsistent beliefs about propositions; (2) We can blame the inconsistency on an evolution in Stoic thought or a misreport of Stoic beliefs; or (3) We can alter our interpretations of either the Stoic's beliefs about propositions or predicationals.

CLAYTON BOHNET, Gonzaga University
"Notes on the Analytic/Continental Divide: Number in Frege and Husserl"
In trying to provide a foundation for mathematics both Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) and Gottlob Frege (1848-1925) sought to transform the practice of rigorous philosophy. They did so in radically distinct ways, each of which became paradigmatic or emblematic of one of the two main branches of 20th century western philosophy: analytic and continental. This paper looks at their early published works and private correspondence regarding the problems involved in defining number and shows how their relationship was characterized more by amiability and camaraderie than rigid opposition. The paper concludes by suggesting that their relationship can act as a paradigm by which we can today imagine overcoming this division within philosophy.

TERESA BRUNO, Syracuse University, Graduate Student
"Externalism and Resonance"
Internalists about well-being claim that there is a necessary connection between what is good for someone and that person's motivation. Externalists deny that there is such a connection. Given that something could be good for me even if I am completely indifferent to it after reasoning correctly and being well-informed, it is usually assumed that externalists face a problem: agents could be alienated from what is good for them. Intuitions about alienation are in sore need of elucidation so I start by clarifying what the alienation challenge is. I argue that externalism can address alienation worries because it can secure a double-link to an agent's first-person perspective: a) a connection between many things that are good for an agent and her positive attitudes towards them, and b) a connection between the agent's well-being and the agent's beliefs. Finally, I argue that cases where neither connection obtains aren't problematic for externalism.

ALESSANDRA BUCCELLA, University of Pittsburgh, Graduate Student
"Thinking with the Body: Language and Communication from an Unconventionally Inferential Perspective"
In introducing and clarifying his idea of language learning, Wilfrid Sellars (1953, 1954, 1956) makes an important claim: there cannot be genuine conceptual activity without an already linguistically structured communicative behavior. On the other hand, psychologists and linguists seeking for a compelling picture of the origins of communication are more and more orienting themselves towards a view that, prima facie, might seems completely at odds with what Sellars claims. According to Michael Tomasello (2008, 2014), language is far from being the "basis" of human communicative, intentional, and conceptual capacities: rather, it's the most amazing of their achievements. Language, in its grammatical dimension, evolved to enhance already present, though very basic, communicative capacities, revealed in the intentional/referential use of gestures such as pointing and pantomiming. In this paper, I will argue that there is a way to avoid the tension that seems to arise when we try to combine these two views about human thinking: Sellars is wrong in assuming language as necessary for the development of inferential capacities, but nonetheless his picture of how the nature of concepts relates to our capacity to play a "language game" is clever and valuable. I will introduce the notion of embodied counterfactuals – relying on an enactive view of perception and on the notion of affordances – which might be regarded as the "missing ring" linking an evolutionary account of human cognition, and a picture of how we, starting from that, learn to master the normative structures of linguistic communication.

TIMOTHY BUCHANAN, Northern Illinois University, Graduate Student
"Second-Order Skepticism and First-Order Knowledge"
According to Keith DeRose and others, there are two main kinds of skeptical argument involving skeptical scenarios: arguments from ignorance, and arguments from possibility. A typical argument from ignorance takes as its key premise the proposition that we do not know that we are not the victims of a radical skeptical scenario, while a typical argument from possibility takes as its key premise the proposition that it is (epistemically) possible that we are the victims of such a scenario. In this paper, I argue that these arguments derive their force not from the fact that they are sound, but from the fact that we cannot reflectively know them to be unsound. Specifically, since we expect to have easy access to reflective knowledge that the key premises of these arguments are false unless they are in fact true, our evident lack of reflective knowledge that they are false leads us to believe that they must be true.

KEITH BUHLER, University of Kentucky, Graduate Student
"Nature is Normative: A Presumptive Case"
Is normativity natural? Are normative facts part of nature? This essay presents a case that the answer is yes. To call such a conclusion 'unpopular' is an understatement on the level of calling log cabins 'out of fashion.' Nevertheless, section 1 makes a presumptive argument in favor of natural normativity. Natural normative truths can be expressed in Aristotelian Categorical statements of the form 'all A's φ.' Such Aristotelian Categoricals are normative/descriptive statements about normative/descriptive natural facts. Believing such natural normative facts exist is the best explanation of both "teleonomical" and teleological phenomena in nature. Simply put, if all eyes see, then there are natural normative facts. And all eyes see. So there are natural normative facts; nature is normative. Section 2 replies to a battery of powerful objections to this simple argument. The defender of natural normativity must answer at least five substantive scientific and philosophical objections that frankly seem devastating. Even so, none warrant denying the appearances. Rather, much of the force against acknowledging natural normative facts comes from the power of suggestion and specious appeals to authority. By contrast, the evidence for natural normativity is fairly straightforward, and each thinker can examine it for herself.

JOE CAMPBELL, Washington State University
"P. F. Strawson's Free Will Naturalism"
This is an explication and defense of P. F. Strawson's theory of free will and moral responsibility. My aim is to explain Strawson's naturalism and to defend it against criticisms based *the core assumption*: Strawson thinks our reactive attitudes provide a rational justification for our blaming practices. An example of a *core assumption criticism* of Strawson's naturalism is Paul Russell's claim that Strawson adopts both rationalistic and naturalistic strategies to the challenges of incompatibilism and free will skepticism. Russell is correct that the rational and naturalistic strategies are in conflict but it is wrong to attribute both strategies to Strawson precisely because his naturalism precludes the adoption of a rationalistic strategy. Strawson's comments against incompatibilism and free will skepticism are not intended to provide a "rational justification" for either compatibilism or *free willism*, the view that some persons have free will. Hence, the charge that Strawson's 'argument' for compatibilism is faulty or inconclusive, raised by Russell and others, is misplaced. The core assumption behind these criticisms is incorrect. After some preliminary comments (§ 2), I explain and discuss the key components of Strawson's reconciliation project as well as the core assumption (§ 3). Strawson's naturalism is expanded and some opposing views are handled (§ 4). I aim to show that we get a clearer, more consistent account of Strawson's views on free will and moral responsibility if we reject the core assumption.

ERIC CATES, San Francisco State University, Graduate Student
"Bold Naturalism: Confronting the Problem of Intentionality"
How can minds be in touch with the world? For John McDowell, the problem of intentionality arises when one accepts two theses proposed by Wilfrid Sellars: 1) The mind's operations pertain to a *sui generis* "space of reasons," irreducible to the laws of physics, and 2) Experience, if conceived as impingements by the world on our sensory capacities, cannot serve as a rational constraint on our thinking. Like McDowell, I think that a reformulation of experience can allow it to guide our thinking. I will argue, however, that this reformulation can be constructed entirely from concepts pertaining to the "realm of law," or physics. According to the "bold" naturalism I am proposing, anxiety about a gap between mind and world is not something that can or should be exorcised. Rather, this anxiety should be embraced as an important impetus for inquiry and, in fact, a safeguard for our survival.

ANTHONY COLEMAN, Willamette University
"What Was the Paradigm Case Argument?"
I suggest that it's helpful to think of the paradigm case argument (PCA) as an attempt to combine two strategies: (a) the presentation of a paradigm of a class in response to doubts about whether any objects of the class exist and (b) an examination of how the name for that class is used in response to those same doubts. I then argue that none of the standard presentations of the PCA succeed in combining (a) and (b) in such a way that both are necessary to the argument. Since the PCA requires that both are essential, I suggest that the PCA has never been properly formulated.

ERIC COLEMAN, Loyola Marymount University, Graduate Student
"Contingency in Hegel and Schelling: Thinking Otherwise about Nature"
The influence of the *naturphilosophie* of F.W.J Schelling on the thought of G.W.F Hegel has been the subject of much commentary, but less discussed until recently is the influence of Hegelian thought on the *mature* Schellingian system of his middle-late "Identity" period. This paper shows that Schelling picks up a loose thread in Hegel's thought on the relation between Nature and Contingency, through his theogony attempting to account for the role of both in genesis. The paper then looks at contemporary responses to the problem of *contingency* in Hegel from Markus Gabriel and Slavoj Žižek, and the Schellingian influences on their thought.

BEN CORDRY, Lorain County Community College
"Sanction and Utility: A Defense of Moral Utilitarianism"
Utilitarianism is often criticized for condoning or even requiring gross injustices, being excessively demanding, and treating trivial choices as moral conundrums. If, for example, the rightness of an action is determined by maximizing aggregate utility, then, in a given case, it might maximize utility to punish an innocent person; it would seem that one can't take a break from doing "the greatest good for the greatest number" to pursue personal projects (or even sleep in); and choosing ice cream for a party is a moral minefield. Simply advocating for another form of utilitarianism, like a satisficing, rule utilitarianism, doesn't necessarily solve these difficulties. Mill held that there is a conceptual connection between moral requirements and sanctions. In this paper, I explore this connection in order to show that utilitarianism is viable theory of moral requirements.

NATHAN DAHLBERG, Georgia State University, Graduate Student
"Diagnosing Verbal Disputes in Ontology: A Response to Eli Hirsch"
Eli Hirsch proposes a method for diagnosing verbal disputes. According to Hirsch, two parties engage in a verbal dispute just in case, given the correct linguistic interpretation, each party would concede that the other speaks the truth in their own language. The correct linguistic interpretation, Hirsch suggests, is determined not only by the speaker's actual use of language, but also by how a counterfactual community of speakers, who talk like the actual speaker does, *would* use language. Hirsch applies his method to ontological disputes and concludes that many of these disputes are, in fact, verbal. Key to Hirsch's diagnosis is the assumption that, for any particular ontologist, the representative community of speakers who talk like she does consists of those who share the same ontological views. In this paper, I argue that this assumption is not only unfounded, but that a richer application of Hirsch's method gives us reason to reject.

GREG A. DAMICO, Bellevue College
"Sacrificing Virtue"
My title is something of a double entendre. My main thesis is that the action that preserves one's character or virtue can come apart, theoretically speaking, from the action that one ought to do. Thus there are certain scenarios in which what one ought to do is to "sacrifice one's virtue". Bernard Williams's celebrated case of "Jim and the Indians" is one such scenario. Coming at the thesis more squarely in the terminology of normative ethics, one can say that what I attempt to show is, first, that there is a certain conflict between what a virtue ethicist would say about certain cases and what I want to say about those cases and, second, that we must treat these cases as a sort of reductio of the position of the virtue ethicist. And so in that sense we may speak of "sacrificing virtue."

TED Di MARIA, Gonzaga University
"The Role of the Concept of Noumena in Kant's Refutation of Materialism"
This paper examines how prominent Kant scholars Henry Allison and Wilfrid Sellars have overlooked the role that the concept of noumena plays in the central argument of Kant's refutation of materialism. It begins with a discussion of central features of Kant's argument as presented by Allison and Sellars respectively before clarifying the role that Kant assigns to the concept of noumena within that argument and providing an explanation for why Allison and Sellars overlooked that role. It then attempts to show why Kant needs this concept in order to preserve the features of his argument that are highlighted by Allison and Sellars. It then tries to show both why this use of the concept of noumena does not violate Kant's thesis of noumenal ignorance and does not entail positing any metaphysical principles or entities.

SEENA EFTEKHARI, University of Kansas, Graduate Student
"Being a Person Matters"
In moral philosophy the concept of personhood functions as a taxonomical device for demarcating between beings with a vastly higher moral status from those beings with a lower or no moral status. This essay offers an interpretative exposition of personhood and moral status within the moral tradition by illustrating how the concepts have evolved in order to accommodate a growing number of intuitions concerning the moral status of different human beings and animals. I want to suggest that the natural outcome of this process produces a conception of personhood that can serve as an illuminating threshold concept in moral philosophy: the concept coherently distinguishes between persons and nonpersons by identifying a morally relevant bundle of sufficient properties. We can thus provide a positive answer to why being a person matters.

ANTHONY FERRUCCI, University of Washington, Graduate Student
"Reconsidering Force in Cartesian Physics"
This paper explores the problem René Descartes has in explaining the role "force" plays in his mechanics. First, I provide a brief survey of the literature to date which either tries to explain what Descartes might have meant by force, or attempts to reconcile force with Descartes' first principles. I put particular focus on John Byron Manchak's recent attempt to ground force in, what can be called, the "Res Extensa View." This argument, I maintain, is inauthentic to what Descartes claims in The Principles and The World. In this paper I defend a position similar to that of Daniel Garber: that force is literally "nowhere" at all. Also, I reject the claim by Manchak, that the major positions to date on the issue of force are reconcilable. I conclude with the position that there is not an entirely coherent account of force for Descartes because force refers to God's role as perpetrator and sustainer of motion and rest.

CHRIS FRUGÉ, University of Houston, Graduate Student
"Death and the End of Wellbeing"
Epicurus' argument that neither death nor posthumous events harm the person who dies relies on two conditions. First, a harm condition on which a harm can occur only if there is a subject who receives the harm, a specific harm that is received, and a time at which the harm occurs. Second, the existence condition on which a subject must exist at a time in order to be harmed at that time. Priorism is a popular response to the Epicureans because it appears to satisfy the existence condition while showing how death and posthumous events can harm. However, in this paper I distinguish between two ambiguous readings of the existence condition and argue that priorism only satisfies the condition on one of the readings and does not satisfy it on the one Epicureans have in mind. I end by introducing a new existence condition that supports the Epicurean view.

MICHAEL GOERGER, Central Washington University
"Friendship and the Ethics of Social Technology"
Empirical research indicates that the use of social technologies such as Facebook, Twitter, text messaging, and Skype may have an adverse effect on certain components of a well lived life, namely the formation and maintenance of friendships. In this essay I argue that social technologies have the potential to interfere with valuable friendships. These problems are particularly salient in three areas: the occupancy of common space, the intimacy of friendship, and character development. Further, because friendship and sociality are components of a flourishing life this interference constitutes an ethical problem. I argue that an approach rooted in the Greco-Roman tradition with an emphasis on the values of friendship is best able to provide a framework in which these concerns can be addressed.

CHUCK GOLDHABER, University of Pittsburgh, Graduate Student
"Does Kant Try to Refute Humean Scepticism?"
I argue that Kant's transcendental deduction is not intended to refute 'Humean scepticism,' or doubt about the application of pure concepts in synthetic a priori knowledge. I do this, first, by showing that Kant doesn't intend to the deduction to convince the Humean sceptic that the categories are objectively valid and, second, by showing that Kant doesn't intend to the deduction to make the Humean sceptic acknowledge an inconsistency in her view. I sketch the basic outline of an alternative interpretation on which the deduction's work is explanatory, i.e., to "expound and render intelligible" the understanding's a priori relating to the objects of knowledge (Axvi–xvii). On this reading, the deduction has a modestly anti-sceptical upshot: The explanation may help the Humean sceptic comprehend how the class of knowledge that she doubts is possible. I discuss the conditions under which this explanation may succeed in exorcizing the Humean sceptic's doubt.

MICHAEL GOLDSBY, Washington State University
"The Structure and Untestability of Scientific Baselines"
Science makes use of various "zero-force" and "steady-state" laws in scientific theorizing. Examples of such laws include Newton's first law in mechanics, the Hardy-Weinberg law in population genetics, and Duverger's law in political science. What is interesting about these laws is that they serve as a baseline upon which scientists build more complex models and hypotheses that are used to predict and explain phenomena of interest. This essay looks at the laws, theorems, and hypotheses that serve as scientific baselines, revealing a logical structure that each shares. It will further be demonstrated that baselines, due to their structure and our own epistemic limits, are untestable.

ROBERT HARTMAN, St. Louis University, Graduate Student
"Solving the Paradox of Moral Luck"
Two agents drive recklessly, and one but not the other kills a pedestrian. Two corrupt judges would each take a bribe if one were offered. Only one judge is offered a bribe, and so only one judge takes one. The paradox of moral luck is a puzzle about how to affirm that the killer driver and bribe-taker are more blameworthy than their counterparts and yet accommodate the insightfulness of the widespread luck-free intuition—that luck cannot affect moral evaluation. John Greco solves the paradox this way: while the killer driver and bribe-taker are more blameworthy for a state-of-affairs than their counterparts, each driver and judge is no better or worse a person than her counterpart. My project is to advance a more plausible version of Greco's solution. I refine Greco's account of a person's moral worth, and I defend the modified account against two objections that person-level moral evaluation is unacceptably vulnerable to luck.

ELIZABETH HILL, Gonzaga University, Graduate Student
"A Phenomenological Comparison of Aesthetic and Mystical Religious Experience"
The following paper explores and compares aesthetic and mystical religious experiences and ultimately argues that these experiences collapse into one another, claiming that aesthetic experiences and mystical religious experiences are one and the same. As a foundation for this assertion, I use the four criteria for mystical religious experience outlined by William James in his work, The Varieties of Religious Experience. In addition to this source, I also draw on contributions relating to Romantic aesthetics as well as personal testimony.

DAVID F. HOINSKI, West Virginia University
"The Role of Sickness in Nietzsche's Philosophy"
One of the most surprising features of Ecce Homo is the central role that sickness (Krankheit) plays in Nietzsche's life story. Probably no commentator on Ecce Homo has given this aspect its proper weight, but on my view it is central to the interpretation of the text. Nietzsche's view of sickness is counterintuitive, because sickness is naturally regarded as an essentially bad condition or negative experience. In contrast to the usual view, Nietzsche attributes a positive role to sickness in his life. Sickness helped him, he says, to become himself, and he says that if he'd never been sick, he might have missed out on the opportunity for the self-realization he claims to have achieved. Nietzsche claims that sickness gave him special powers and that it provided an occasion for other, latent powers to come into play. In Ecce Homo, Nietzsche identifies five reasons why he is grateful for his experience of sickness, which I enumerate. I proceed to examine the first two reasons why Nietzsche believed that his sickness ultimately benefitted him, discussing first how sickness freed him up to become himself and second how it turned him into a kind of dialectician, or Socratic philosopher.

ANTHONY HOLDIER, Colorado Technical University
"The Pig's Squeak: Towards a Renewed Aesthetic Argument for Veganism"
In 1906, Henry Stephens Salt published a short collection of essays that presented several rhetorically powerful, if formally deficient arguments for the vegetarian position. By interpreting Salt as a moral sentimentalist with ties to Aristotelian virtue ethics, I propose that his aesthetic argument deserves contemporary consideration. First, I connect ethics and aesthetics with the Greek concepts of kalon and kalokagathia that depend equally on beauty and morality before presenting Salt's assertion: slaughterhouses are disgusting, therefore they should not be promoted. I suggest three areas of development since Salt's death that could be fruitfully plumbed to rebuild this assertion into a contemporary argument: (1) an updated analysis of factory farm conditions, (2) insights from moral psychologists on the adaptive socio-biological benefits of disgust as a source of cognitive information, and (3) hermeneutical considerations about the role of the audience that allow blameworthiness for slaughterhouse atrocities to be laid upon the meat-eater.

LACI HUBBARD-MATTIX, Washington State University, Graduate Student
"Pronatalism in Assisted Reproductive Technology Ethical Discourse"
Foucault's conceptualization of discourse holds that in discourse there are two sides that exist in opposition creating a false binary. The reality is that there are multiple sides and possibilities that are ignored. Discourse as a productive power produces a certain conception of reality. For discourse this means that "[t]he manifest discourse, therefore, is really no more than the repressive presences of what it does not say; and this 'not-said' is a hollow…" (Foucault 25). Often what is most important within a discourse is what is "not-said." The discourse surrounding Assistive Reproductive Technologies (ART) is pronatalist by because of what it leaves 'not-said.' It sets up a false binary. The discourse ignores the possibility of not having children. By juxtaposing the discourse surrounding ART in ethical discourse with the discourse (or lack of discourse) surrounding sterilization I will demonstrate that what is being 'not-said' produces a pronatalist reality.

GRAHAM HUBBS, University of Idaho
"Debt and Moral Confusion"
According to David Graeber, a "profound moral confusion" runs throughout the history of thought about debt. It seems wrong to be in debt, but if one is in debt, it is wrong not to repay the debt. On the other hand, if it is wrong to make one effectively into a slave, then it also seems wrong to put another in any debt that does so, but if one puts another in such debt, the former is wronged by the latter if the latter fails to repay. If we want clarity on Graeber's "profound moral confusion," then we do well to distinguish between two different conceptions of debt, which I shall call contracted debt and neighborly debt. Contracted debt, I believe, is fundamentally debt between strangers, and its corresponding form of justice exists to provide social structure to a fundamentally unsocial relationship. The unsocial character of the underlying relationship is, I argue, the sine qua non of the moral confusion surrounding debt.

DAVID P. HUNT, Whittier College
"Fatalism for Presentists"
Arguments for fatalism, whether logical or theological, presuppose future-contingent truth; denying this presupposition allows one to escape these arguments at their very first step. This move is especially useful against theological fatalism, since logical fatalism commits a notorious modal fallacy and can be defeated without it. Since theological fatalism, as I argue, is really an aporetic problem, everyone (and not just theists) has an interest in defeating it. Presentists have available to them a principled reason for denying future-contingent truth, and some presentists (though not all) avail themselves of this reason. At the same time, presentists need to accommodate truths about the past; if presentism cannot do this, it's a nonstarter. I look briefly at presentist defenses of truths about the past offered by Tom Crisp, Michael Rea, and Dean Zimmerman. Zimmerman suggests that truths about the past can be grounded in basic backward-looking properties. I raise doubts about this strategy and argue that similar doubts can be raised against the other two proposals; more significantly, I show that even if any of these moves succeeded, parallel moves for grounding truths about the contingent future would succeed equally well. Presentism, it seems, does not provide the hoped-for silver bullet against theological fatalism.

JAYCOB IZSÓ, Portland State University, Graduate Student
"Foucault, Simon Springer, and Post-neoliberalism"
With the publication of Foucault's lectures at the Collège de France over the past decade, scholarship in Foucauldian governmentality has reemerged as a critical area of contemporary political and philosophical discourse. These lectures have had an even more pronounced effect in their treatment of neoliberalism and the development of post-neoliberal research in the wake of the 2008 global financial crisis. One of the most versatile neoliberal scholars and post-neoliberal critics to come about is Simon Springer, who recently has taken to offering dynamic accounts of neoliberalism and its potential ends via a Foucauldian method. While Springer's research is certainly novel, compelling, and useful for furthering research into neoliberal govermentality; I believe it to fall short of a rigorous Foucauldian account of neoliberalism and its future.

FRANK JANKUNIS, University of Calgary
"Constructed Niche Theory and Intrinsic Objections to Geoengineering"
The generally recognized strategies for responding to anthropogenic climate change include mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions and adaptation to a changing climate. Increasing attention is being paid to a third option, geoengineering. Geoengineering may be defined as intentionally using technology to alter the Earth's climate so as to avoid and/or alleviate harm from climate change. In this paper I focus on moral arguments against geoengineering. I divide moral complaints against geoengineering into two categories: intrinsic complaints and extrinsic complaints. Intrinsic complaints contend there is something inherently wrong in geoengineering regardless of the consequences. Extrinsic complaints are consequentialist complaints about geoengineering. I argue against intrinsic complaints categorically on several grounds, but most importantly by contending that they are premised on an incorrect concept of our relation to the natural environment.

ANDREW V. JEFFERY, Green River College, Pierce College
"Is Temporal Dense Ordering Analytic?"
It has been a commonplace since A. N. Prior invented tense operators in the 1960s to assert that by combining the basic temporal operators in various ways, we can, at least approximately, express certain more complex tenses. Typical examples include the past perfect and future perfect tenses. At the same time, standard tense logics usually employ S4-style equivalence rules dictating that multiple iterations of the operator can be reduced to one instance. The sematic puzzle that then arises is that, for instance, the past- and future-perfect tense seems to be treated as formally equivalent to the simple past and future tenses, which seems semantically counter-intuitive. After laying out the basics of tense logic, this paper briefly considers how this seeming paradox might be approached.

ED KAITZ, North Idaho College
"Epictetus and Embroidered Slippers: Does Luxury Corrupt Social, Moral, and Political Life?"
Philosophers as far back as the 6th century BC thinkers Xenophanes in the West and Lao Tzu in the East have taken strong views on the effects of luxury on social, moral, and political life. Xenophanes was harshly critical of pampered citizens in his native Colophon "dripping with the scent of artificial oils" who invited the city's eventual destruction. Similarly, the *Tao Te Ching* argues that "exotic goods ensnarl human lives" and that the Taoist Sage should "take care of the belly, not the eye." Later thinkers such as Epictetus equated leather sandals with "due measure" in one's behavior and "embroidered slippers" with unhealthy excesses. These mostly negative views of luxury continued in the West to inform the thought of many Greek, Christian, and Roman moralists. However, early Enlightenment thinkers such as Mandeville, Montesquieu, Jean-Francois Melon and Voltaire, riding the tide of increasing commerce and wealth vigorously defended the value of luxury and its tendency to foster industry, a strong work ethic, sociability, and ultimately, humanity. Later thinkers such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau would forcefully challenge many of these claims. Perhaps the most astute attempt to consider both sides of this debate however belongs to David Hume. Hume's widely read and influential essay "Of Refinement in the Arts" was mostly aimed at the severe moralists and serves mainly as a defense of luxury and its attendant social virtues, but Hume was also highly critical of what he called "vicious luxury." In this paper I intend to examine Hume's arguments in light of the intense and dynamic 18th century debates over luxury and hopefully shed some light on contemporary controversies concerning the issue of "how much is enough?"

MATTHEW KATZ, Central Michigan University
"Concepts, Generality, and Digital Representation"
In Knowledge and the Flow of Information, Fred Dretske argued that conceptualizing information requires transforming an analog representation into a digital representation. His discussion, however, rested on an idiosyncratic account of the analog–digital distinction. In this paper I defend the claim that conceptualization requires digital representation, but in terms of a more commonly accepted account of the analog–digital distinction. The argument rests on the view that concept possession requires meeting Gareth Evans' generality constraint. In particular, I'll argue that meeting the generality constraint demands digital representation, so if conceptualization requires meeting the generality constraint, then it requires digital representation.

CHRISTOPHER C. KIRBY, Eastern Washington University
"Moral Expertise in the Zhuangzi"
This essay will be a scholarly attempt at distilling a proto-ethical philosophy from the Daoist classic known as the Zhuangzi. In opposition to mystical/ relativistic/ skeptical interpretations of the text which characterize it as amoralistic, I will identify elements of a naturalistic moral philosophy in the so-called "knack passages" of the Zhuangzi which many western commentators have tended to gloss over. Building on existing scholarship which focuses on the praxeology of the text, I argue that three themes found in the Zhuangzi – aporia, attunement, and embodiment – can support a novel, but robust view of moral expertise within the text.

THOMAS KIVATINOS, City University of New York Graduate Center, Graduate Student
"Metaphysical Foundationalism and the Fallacy of the Argument from Transference"
Metaphysical foundationalism is the view that it is necessary that reality has a fundamental or "foundational" level at which fundamental entities exits that "ground" all derivative entities. Here I assess a specific argument in favor of this view. On the "argument from transference," one must agree to metaphysical foundationalism in order to avoid the commitment to a vicious regress. As the argument goes, the existence of derivative entities is transferred to them from the entities which they are derivative of. So, because this transference process could not be an unending one that goes on infinitely, there must exist some entities which are not derivative and thus there must be a fundamental level of reality which contains these non-derivative entities. To thus deny that there is no fundamental level of reality and hence deny metaphysical foundationalism is to be committed the vicious regress associated with an infinite transference. I show that this argument fails and thus defend the plausibility of the view on which reality need not have a fundamental level.

CHEVAN LINDSAY, Georgia State University, Graduate Student
"A Contextualist Reading of Nietzsche's Perspectivism"
Nietzsche's claim that all knowledge is perspectival is intended to be true unconditionally. If they are right, however, we are left with what Welshon has called the 'paradox of perspectivism'. Simply stated, the claim that it is not the case that there is at least one statement that is absolutely true across all perspectives can only be absolutist, and is, as such, incompatible with perspectivism's claim that all claims are perspectively true, thereby rendering perspectivism incoherent. Against these commentators, I argue that we ought to turn to a contextualist theory of justification in order to avoid the paradox and to remain faithful to Nietzsche's account. Contrary to Welshon, I do not ascribe this theory to Nietzsche, as he does, but rather claim that contextualism is fruitful for understanding Nietzsche's methodology in *The Genealogy*.

DARCY McCUSKER, University of Washington
"Expertise and Gender in Science"
Alvin Goldman in his 2001 paper, "Experts: Which Ones Should You Trust?" attempts to give a novice, or layperson without substantial technical knowledge, a way to evaluate the expert testimony of scientists. Goldman believes that the novice both can and should use the sources of information he lays out to decide between two opposing experts, with no mention of any social characteristics of the expert that might affect the ability of the novice to use the criteria. However, the insights of psychology should make us doubt the idea that testimony takes place in a vacuum; the novice and the experts are not without gender, race, class, or other social markers that might affect the interaction. In this paper, I will show that at least some of Goldman's criteria will fail to help a novice decide which of two competing experts to trust. Specifically, the use of indirect argumentative justification and the use of meta-experts' rankings of the experts are most susceptible to influence on the basis of gender. If Goldman's criteria fail to help the novice decide between two experts, then Goldman loses any force behind the implication that the novice should use the criteria.

MICHAEL McFALL, University of Wisconsin-Fox Valley
"The Ethics of Childrearing and 'A Theory of Justice' "
The ethics of parental childrearing is complicated in a liberal pluralistic society, and this made more complicated when religion is considered. As part of a larger project, I here examine the ethics of Christian childrearing. I argue that Christian parents can seek to transmit their beliefs to their children and examine some boundaries. I first examine John Rawls's *A Theory of Justice* and modify his veil of ignorance scenario. I then engage Rawls' developmental moral psychology and how it relates to the ethics of religious upbringing. After exploring Rawls's account of self-respect and how it relates to love, I conclude by examining the importance of parental love and how this is tied to intimacy and privacy.

GARRET MERRIAM, University of Southern Indiana
"The Paradox of Innocence: The Death Penalty and Miscarriages of Justice"
It has been argued by Hugo Adam Bedau and Michael Radelet that as long as we have a death penalty we will execute innocent people, and that such a miscarriage of justice means we should abolish the death penalty. I argue that, on the contrary, if we abolish the death penalty more innocent people will be punished for crimes they did not commit: miscarriages of justice will actually increase. This is a result of the 'surplus oversight' that attends capital cases. Extra appeals, more lawyer hours, Innocence Projects and such are given to death row cases in considerable excess of that given to non-death row cases. If we abolish the death penalty we will inadvertently cause more people to spend the rest of their lives in prison for crimes they did not commit. Paradoxically, if we want to avoid miscarriages of justice, we have a reason to keep the death penalty.

ANDREW MOLAS, York University, Graduate Student
"The Role of Therapeutic Empathy in an Interpretative Epistemology"
Towards the end of "I Know Just How You Feel: Empathy and the Problem of Epistemic Authority," Lorraine Code argues that, in order for empathy to have a greater role in our understanding of the perspectives, and situations, of other people, an "interpretative epistemology" which is based on an intersubjective, dialogical practice between individuals is the more promising approach because it "eschew[s] the spectator tradition for a participant model in which listeners participate as fully as speakers, and neither the listener nor the speaker position is fixed" (Code 134, 135). Focusing on her discussion of therapeutic empathy, in particular, I will outline the reasons Code gives for why empathy is important to develop and, despite some objections against empathy as a practice within a healthcare context, why she thinks that an interpretative epistemology is conducive for empathetic knowledge to establish itself.

JANICE MOSKALIK, University of Washington, Graduate Student
"Against Ill Will"
In this paper, I argue that ill will toward another can never be justified, even as a part of blame: attitudes of ill will – those attitudes that include a desire that bad things befall another or that another deserves harsh treatment – are never morally permissible blaming attitudes. I challenge the notion that we can justifiably blame with ill will on the basis that to hold such attitudes toward another constitutes a fundamental failure of respect for persons. I argue that retributivist views that rely on respect to defend blaming with ill will are mistaken, as affording moral agents proper respect in fact precludes reacting with ill will toward wrongdoers. Appropriate blame – even for the worst sorts of wrongs – always entails at least some goodwill toward the wrongdoer. So this is a reformative project, in a sense, since many will intuitively think that attitudes of ill will must be permissible when reacting to the worst sorts of wrongs, and thus disagree with me.

JONAH NAGASHIMA, University of California-Riverside, Graduate Student
"Grounding and the Luck Argument Against Libertarianism"
Libertarians about free will think that some people act freely, and since free will is incompatible with determinism, free will requires indeterminism. According to luck objections to libertarianism, this thesis is self-undermining. If indeterminism is true, then whether or not you perform any given action is a matter of luck, and luck precludes free will. Neal Tognazzini has recently argued that this objection is best cashed out via metaphysical *grounding*—free actions must be *grounded* in some relevant past state. In reply, I raise two objections. First, I argue that Tognazzini's demand for grounds is unmotivated: the intuitive demands that free actions require explanation (metaphysical and otherwise) can be captured by weaker claims that don't undermine libertarianism. Second, I argue that Tognazzini's argument cannot utilize grounding to show how determinism precludes luck. So, waiving the first objection, Tognazzini's argument has only limited utility; only impossibilists about free will can utilize it.

CHRIS NELSEN, Clark College
"A Problem for the Equivalence Principle"
In this paper, I discuss the equivalence principle, a principle that claims that if P and Q are logically equivalent propositions, then any truth-maker for P is also a truth-maker for Q. Although this principle is widely accepted within truth-making theory, it is problematic. Specifically, it is problematic because it entails that every truth-maker makes true every truth, and that if a proposition is necessarily true, then any existing truth-maker is a truth-maker for that proposition. This presents a problem to truth-maker theory itself, because it eliminates the possibility of any unique truth-makers, and are counter to our perception of what a truth-maker should be. In this paper, I develop and discuss the implications of such problems.

ROB NOGGLE, Central Michigan University
"Impossible Obligations, Moral Loopholes, and the Non-Identity Problem"
The non-identity problem (NIP) occurs when a person suffers a harm that could only have been prevented by preventing that person from existing. Although it seems wrong to bring a child into existence in a harmed condition, if the harm could only have been prevented by preventing the harmed person from existing, this judgment is difficult to defend: It is difficult to see how a person can be wronged by something that could only have been avoided by his non-existence. I attempt to solve the NIP by claiming that it is wrong to knowingly make it impossible to do what would otherwise be morally required. Since a parent is morally required to protect her child from harms, it is wrong to bring a child into existence knowing that this obligation is impossible to fulfill. Unlike others who have made similar proposals, I argue that this idea is best integrated into the "victimless wrongdoing" approach to the NIP, which denies that the wrongdoing consists exclusively in violating an obligation to the child who lives a less good life than some other child could have lived. I suggest the wrongdoing in the NIP involves exploiting moral loopholes to do something otherwise reprehensible.

TYLER OLSSON, San Francisco State University, Graduate Student
"Retrieving the Philosophical Way of Life"
In the paper I compare some ancient philosophical texts to a contemporary academic philosopher's meta-philosophical view. The purpose of this is to draw a distinction between 1) the ancient way of conceiving philosophy as a way of life, i.e. a way of living that incorporates ascetic and spiritual practice along with critical thinking, and 2) the contemporary academic conception of philosophy as an abstract activity which consists in the highest-order of critical thinking. I use the modern western conception of religion as an analogy to demonstrate the extent to which this change in thought reaches. I end by making a pedagogical suggestion that we should be more careful with how we teach ancient philosophy so as to recover the "spiritual" dimension of philosophy.

DUGALD OWEN, Fort Lewis College
"Introspective Justification"
This paper explores the structure of reasons required by strict adherence to the epistemic internalist's guiding intuition: For a belief to be justified for a person, that person must (1) be aware of a reason for it; (2) believe that the reason is true and (3) that it supports the belief; and (4) be justified in holding the beliefs required by (2) and (3). Opponents of internalism have argued that the fourth condition, a recursive demand requiring reasons for reasons, apparently to infinity, renders internalism untenable. I show how to satisfy the four conditions and argue that the resulting structure, though formally coherentist, differs significantly from traditional forms of coherentism and further captures what is correct in foundationalist and infinitist theories of justification. Through a satisfactory account of the structure of justifying reasons, epistemic internalism is vindicated.

MATTHEW OWEN, Heritage University
"The Causal Pairing Problem & Hylomorphism's Simple Solution"
Paper Session 4J
The causal pairing problem is substance dualism chief problem regarding mental causation. At the root of the pairing problem is the allegation that mental causation is incoherent on dualism because there is no way for immaterial minds to be causally paired with their supposed effects. This allegation is false, and I shall demonstrate why in this chapter. My aim is to demonstrate that on the Aristotelian-Thomistic hylomorphic view of the mind (hereafter, 'hylomorphism') there is an obvious and coherent explanation for why a particular mind is causally paired with its effects. Assuming that hylomorphism is a substance dualist position, it provides a simple solution to dualism's alleged causal pairing problem.

PETER OWENS, Loyola Marymount University, Graduate Student
"Hard Choices: Power and the Possibility of Alternatives in Serbia"
In this paper, I will examine the terms that VP Gagnon and Eric D. Gordy use to describe Slobodan Milosevic's Serbian Socialist Party of the 1990's and what Foucault calls its *raison d'etat.* Gagnon calls the Serbian strategy "demobilization" and Gordy names it "the destruction of alternatives." I will argue that, while Gagnon and Gordy's assessment of the political, economic, and social situation in Serbia are sound, only Gagnon's term for describing these overall methods, "demobilization," is consistent with a Foucaldian understanding of the nature of power; I will suggest the alternate term "overpowering of alternatives" for Gordy's "destruction of alternatives." Further, I will propose that the manner in which we talk about power exercised on individuals and populations must take into account Foucault's metaphysics of power in order to have an appropriately rich and nuanced understanding of the ways that individuals and populations respond when faced with an overwhelming power differential.

CLINTON PACKMAN, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Graduate Student
"Epistemic Teleology, Reliabilism, and the Problem of Epistemic Trade-Offs"
Epistemic teleology is the view that the normative status of a cognitive act or attitude depends on that attitude's relationship to a particular goal: the promotion of the epistemic good. It's alleged by some that any theory of epistemic justification that assumes epistemic teleology will suffer from a fatal defect: it will permit intuitively illicit epistemic trade-offs (e.g. Berker (2013a, 2013b) and Fumerton (2001)). But process reliabilism seems to be committed to epistemic teleology and able to put a principled prohibition on these illicit-seeming trade-offs (Ahlstrom-Vij and Dunn (2014)). In this paper I argue that contrary to appearances, reliabilism is not committed to epistemic teleology and that combining reliabilism and epistemic teleology fails to give a promising solution to epistemic teleology's trade-off problem.

SEUNGBAE PARK, Ulsan National Institute of Science and Technology, Republic of Korea
"Defense of Mathematical Inferentialism"
I defend a new position in philosophy of mathematics which I call mathematical inferentialism. It holds that the abstract world does not exist, and that a mathematical sentence is true if and only if all of its concrete consequences are true. Mathematical inferentialism secures the objectivity of mathematics and explains the successful use of mathematics in empirical science without postulating the existence of the abstract world.

ANA PEDROSO, University of Wisc., Graduate Student
"Protagoras' Measure Doctrine"
In the *Theaetetus*, Plato discusses Protagoras' theory that "man is the measure of all things." In this paper, I have two aims. First, I want to discuss Protagoras' doctrine. What is it about? How should we interpret it? More precisely, I bring to the table three possible readings of the Measure Doctrine, namely: local truth relativism, global truth relativism and global truth subjectivism. Next, I make use of Burnyeat's (1976) article to show that even on its most cogent interpretation (global relativism), the Measure doctrine can be turned against itself - i.e. it is self-refuting. The elucidation of its self-refuting nature is relevant insofar as this fact could be used to justify Plato's position of hostility towards Protagoras' doctrine.

WAYNE P. POMERLEAU, Gonzaga University
"Were Kant and James (Philosophical) Brothers?"
We reasonably think of the philosophical systems of Immanuel Kant and William James as being diametrically opposed. There are ample textual passages in the latter's writings to support that view. As James condemned the Kantian system for its transcendental idealism, leading towards a priori absolutism and abstract "intellectualism," Kant would have deplored Jamesian pragmatism as leading to an empiricist's relativism regarding truth and value. Thus, these two great philosophical systems are fundamentally at loggerheads. And yet there is considerably more common ground between them than one might suspect. This paper explores several areas in which the views they developed, on the basis of their mutually opposed foundations, surprisingly agree.

MATTHEW RELLIHAN, Seattle University
"Searle on Perceptual Intentionality"
In his recent book and in his previous work, John Searle defends direct realism against the view that we are never directly aware of physical objects in perception. I hope to show in what follows that something that is both reasonably close to direct realism and reasonably close to the view Searle defends is in fact defensible. The first caveat is necessary because my case for direct realism will really be more of a case against the-case-against-direct-realism—together with a defense of something that is not obviously not direct realism. The second caveat is necessary because Searle's stated view is inconsistent and therefore indefensible. However, a view which is both consistent and reasonably close to direct realism can be had if we simply abandon Searle's project of explaining perceptual intentionality in more basic terms.

EVERETTE RICHARDSON, Loyola Marymount University, Graduate Student
"Fanon Contra Sartre: Beyond the Veil of Double Consciousness"
Addressing the plight of Black people who were forced to endure the debasing attitudes and treatments of a white supremacist culture, W.E.B. Du Bois, in his conceptualization of double consciousness, posits a conflicted self, constituted of proud ancestral Black roots conjoined with a social construction more chattel than human. This dualistic self encapsulates the anguish of a Black person denied his or her personhood and dignity, adulterated by the contempt of the dominant white society. Although Du Bois establishes terms to represent the existential problem, his analysis and correctives fall short of a definitive solution. Modes of assimilation and varieties of achievement that preserve the conflicted terms of double consciousness express a problem that can only be resolved, according to Franz Fanon, a subsequent critic of Du Bois's philosophy, by completely eliminating one of the terms—the category of colonial superiority. Fanon's existentialist critique leads to a deeper understanding of the human, teleologically suspending traditional philosophical constructs, and, through Black Consciousness, advances a politically attuned approach to a definitive solution.

MAJA RODELL, Gonzaga University, Graduate Student
"Towards a Phenomenology of Childhood Witnessing: Merleau-Ponty's Philosophy of Childhood as Propaedeutic"
I argue that a phenomenology of childhood perception would better equip adults to empathize with children and to evaluate what children need. Children who witness domestic violence are entitled to this epistemic rigor as a matter of justice. The assumption that childhood perception is inferior adult perception misunderstands the child's distinctive perceptual experience. Young children claim their own perceptual world that, while different, is just as vivid as that of the adult. Maurice Merleau-Ponty's 1949-1952 Sorbonne lectures on childhood provide a helpful starting point for a child-centered approach, because his embodied phenomenology is well equipped to recognize the experiences of those who cannot articulate their experiences within frameworks that assume an adult actor. If Merleau-Ponty's child psychology is outdated, the larger thrust of his project retains its value insofar as the phenomenological approach meets childhood experience on its own terms. Following Merleau-Ponty, I argue that children who witness domestic violence are not passive watchers and are more vulnerable than the misnomer "witness" implies. Rather, child victims are intimately bound up in the intentional net of violence itself because the child's relationship to the world and others is synesthetic and syncretic.

BENJAMIN ROSSI, University of Notre Dame, Graduate Student
"Excuses and Blame-Based Theories of Moral Wrongness"
Many moral theorists argue that the concept of moral wrongness is connected to, and can be understood in terms of, the concept of blameworthiness. This tradition has its earliest roots in Mill's Utilitarianism, and can be found in the work of, among others, Alan Gibbard, Stephen Darwall, and John Skorupski. Their ambition is to offer a non-circular analysis of the concept of moral wrongness in terms of blameworthiness. While these views have been criticized on various grounds, it has not generally been thought that they encounter difficulties accounting for moral excuses. Indeed, it is often that by including a disjunction in the analysans—for example, S's A-ing is morally wrong if and only if S is either excused or blameworthy for A-ing—these analyses can adequately account for moral excuses. But in attempting to account for moral excuses, these views wind up being either false or circular.

HENRY SCHILLER, University of Texas-Austin
"Does the Computational Theory of Mind Collapse into Behaviorism?"
In this paper, I respond to Godfrey-Smith's (2008) particular version of what is known as computational triviality. Computational triviality is the idea that any system can be shown to trivially implement any computation, and it has major implications for the computational theory of mind, which takes mental states to have the properties they do as a matter of a computation being implemented by the brain. Godfrey-Smith argues that we can take objects like walls and rocks to be trivially running any finite state automaton (FSA) because we can map disjunctions of their physical states to the abstract states of any given FSA. In this paper, I argue for what I call the swapping constraint: in order for a computational system to be considered legitimate, the individual physical states that are mapped to abstract FSA states must be swappable to the effect that the contingency tree representing the physical states is unaltered. This sets stricter parameters for the types of things that may be considered computational. The paper proceeds as follows: (1) I explain Godfrey-Smith's triviality argument. (2) I introduce the swapping constraint, and then (3) address two potential problems with this view: a) aging in physical systems like the human brain, and b) the phenomenon of neural plasticity (which is similar to random access memory). However, I show that these features of cognitive systems are actually hidden advantages for the swapping constraint. Finally, in (4) I argue that this account can be combined with more general anti-triviality arguments made by Chalmers (1996), in order to serve as an "all-inclusive" argument against computational triviality.

JONAH N. SCHUPBACH, University of Utah **& DAVID H. GLASS**, University of Ulster
"When Do Hypotheses Compete?"
This paper precisely articulates the conditions under which hypotheses compete with one another. The Bayesian account defended here goes beyond standard approaches by (1) illuminating cases of competition between consistent hypotheses via two distinct paths and (2) providing a measure of the degree to which hypotheses compete. Moreover, this account is shown to connect in interesting ways to the concepts of rebutting and undercutting defeat, incremental confirmation and explaining away.

SHUHEI SHIMAMURA, University of Pittsburgh (Visiting Scholar)
"Externalism, Dry Earth, and Inferentialism"
Some philosophers argue that externalism about mental content, given our ability to know our own thoughts by simple reflection, leads to absurdity. The aim of this paper is to propose a new way to resist such a reductio argument. For this purpose, I attempt to reconstruct the argument in its toughest form based on the thought experiment of Dry Earth, a variant of externalists' favorite Twin Earth. As I will show, this reductio argument relies, in its crucial step, on the semantic assumption that a would-be natural kind term is meaningless if it lacks a referent. Although this assumption is widely accepted in literature, I argue that it is avoidable if we stop sticking to referentialist semantics. I show that there is an alternative pragmatist theory of meaning that is essentially externalist but does not make the problematic assumption described above.

JEREMY SKRZYPEK, Saint Louis University, Graduate Student
"Is Koslicki's Account of Material Objects Redundant?"
In The Structure of Objects, Kathrin Koslicki articulates and defends a Neo-Aristotelian hylomorphic account of material objects, according to which the form or structure of a composite material object is one of its proper parts. Perhaps surprisingly, it is never specified in that work whether the structure of an object is itself an object, a relation, or a property. In this paper I argue that Koslicki's account is not only incomplete, but potentially problematic. In particular, I argue that whichever ontological category Koslicki places structure, her larger view risks collapsing into some already well-entrenched metaphysical account of material objects.

JIM SLAGLE, University of Portland
"Epicurus's Argument against Determinism"
While Epicurus is known for trying to defend the possibility of freedom from within the framework of atomism, one thing that is less known is his specific argument against determinism. Epicurus argues that in order to argue for determinism, the determinist must appeal to reasons which the critic should accept, but determinism excludes the possibility of reasons. Thus, the determinist must presuppose that determinism is false in order to argue that determinism is true. In this essay I will put this argument in the historical context of atomism and Aristotle's critiques of it, before pointing to some contemporary variations of the same argument, including those that would apply equally to Epicurus's own atomism.

PHIL SMITH, George Fox University
"The Promise (or Peril) of Hope"
Three philosophers--Robert Pasnau, Louis Pojman, and Adrienne Martin--suggest that hope can be part of a rational good life. All three like hope, but their confusing use of other important words (especially "belief" and "faith") obscures the fundamental similarity of their view. This paper sorts out Pasnau, Pojman, and Martin's vocabulary and describes their agreement. While agreeing that hope can be part of a flourishing human life, I point out a certain peril attendant to hope, a peril which may in the end be a promise.

GORDON STEINHOFF, Utah State University
"Federal Environmental Impact Statements: Overly-Inflated Needs Result in Needless Environmental Harm"
According to federal regulations, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) must include a statement of the purpose of, and need for, a proposed action. Unfortunately, the regulations do not provide guidance concerning how to determine the need for a proposed action. Typically, the declared need includes items that are not genuine needs. They are necessary conditions for achieving desired goals, necessary conditions that are missing at the time the action is planned. That the declared need includes such necessary conditions is an extremely important problem. According to the courts and agency policies, the combined "purpose and need" determines which alternatives must be evaluated in an EIS. The result of federal agencies inflating the need for a proposed action by including within it such necessary conditions is that alternatives that would provide genuine needs with little environmental impact are not evaluated and have no chance of being selected. Far too often the environment is needlessly harmed. I will present criteria for identifying needs developed by philosophers David Braybrooke and Garrett Thomson. Borrowing from their criteria, I will develop a principle that federal agencies should follow as they formulate the need for a proposed action. If adopted, this principle would help eliminate overly inflated needs, leading to more environmentally sensitive decisions.

TODD TREMBLEY, Highline Community College
"If There Is No God…: Theism and the Dignity of Reason in Plato's Republic"
This paper poses the meta-ethical question of the normativity of reason. In other words, what is it that gives reason the authority to command that certain things be done come what may? I first present a variety of subjective reasons for affording reason the dignity of command from Plato's Republic and Kant's Groundwork before arguing that these are impotent to explain why we should do the right thing even when our own lives are on the line. I then survey the reasoning presented in the Republic to show that for Plato reason possesses the dignity of command because it is also the ruling principle of the universe. Since only theists can affirm that this is true, moral arguments for God's existence are a substantial challenge to atheism.

CRAIG VANDER HART, Wenatchee Valley College
"Mackie's Objection to the Free Will Defense without Metaphysical Commitments"
Alvin Plantinga recently commented that most philosophers of religion accept the free will defense as a successful objection to the logical problem of evil. But I do not think the debate is over. In this paper, I will defend J.L. Mackie's objection to the free will defense primarily against the attempts to refute it by Alvin Plantinga and Peter Van Inwagen. Mackie's original version appears committed to a theory of free will, i.e. compatibilism, or at least to some form of determinism. I reformulate his classic objection without such commitments. I operate on minimal commitments that I think the theist would accept. I argue that even if compatibilism is false, assuming God is the creator of the world, it seems God already has imposed limitations on human free will for there exist a great number of things I am free to envision, but not free to perform. In other words, my argument concerns the nature of the desires we have, not the metaphysical assumptions about freedom. If my argument is sound, then it would have been possible for God to create a world of free creatures with significantly less or no moral evil in it, thereby defeating the free will defense.

ROBERT VAUGHAN, Washington State University
"Why Is Memory Not a Virtue?: On the Role of Memory in Friendship According to Aristotle"
This paper investigates key aspects of Aristotle's theories of perception, memory, friendship, and virtue in order to address the question of whether or not memory plays a role in friendship that can be considered virtuous or vicious. By pointing to moments in the *Nicomachean Ethics* when Aristotle specifically references memory in relation to friendship, I demonstrate that he relies on perceptual faculties to overcome distance that can fall between friends and damage the virtuous friendship. Aristotle explains the function of memory when distance is unavoidable, claiming that it serves the purpose of maintaining aspects of the friendship while failing to do so in a sustainable way. Given the structures of perception and memory as Aristotle conceives of them, I argue that there are resources in his own texts that suggest thinking of memory in terms of virtuous activity—that is, of being able to remember more or less well in order to maintain a virtuous friendship. This aspect of a possible connection between memory and virtue is most appropriately categorized as a virtue of character, and developing the character trait pertaining to a knowledge of when, what, whom, and how much to remember is a crucial component of virtuous friendship.

ALONSO VILLARÁN, Universidad del Pacífico (Lima, Perú)
"Kant's Highest Good: Assessing a Hispanic Maximalist Defense"
Kant's idea of the highest good—a world where virtue is rewarded with happiness—has an important place in his ethics. So much, that the idea is found in most of his major works, including those devoted to the fundamental questions: What can I know? What should I do? What may I hope?—the two first *Critiques*, and the *Religion*, respectively. Many criticize Kant for proposing the ultimate marriage of virtue and happiness. In the English literature, the 'critics' are led by Beck who—in his *Commentary* (1960) of the second *Critique*—put into question the moral importance of the concept. Beck's critique motivated Silber's response: 'The Importance of the Highest Good in Kant's Ethics' (1963). Thus, the 'Beck-Silber controversy'. This paper pays attention to the parallel development of such controversy in the Spanish world. More specifically, I make a critical assessment of one of the most original defenses developed in such literature: that of Gómez Caffarena (1989), who speaks of two sources in Kant's ethics—respect (the moral law) and utopia (the highest good). In addition to getting a taste of the substantial Spanish contribution, the reader will also learn what a proper defense of the highest good requires.

TIMOTHY WEIDEL, Gonzaga University
"Moving Towards a Capability for Meaningful Labor"
Martha Nussbaum argues that the capability approach to human development is grounded in an intuitive conception of what a life worthy of human dignity entails. This image is coupled with a conception of truly human functionings as a measure for development. It is not enough to establish what goods people require, but rather to consider what they can actually *do* or *become* with those goods. Nussbaum acknowledges that the philosophical grounding for her list of central human capabilities is influenced by Aristotle through the early Marx. Despite admitting this influence, I argue that Nussbaum's incorporation omits a central facet of Marx's image of truly dignified humans: the importance of meaningful labor. This omission seriously undercuts the possibility of the capabilities approach providing persons with a life worthy of human dignity. After an explication of Marx's understanding of a fully human life, I will discuss the limits of Nussbaum's capabilities list with respect to the topic of meaningful labor. In the spirit of her statement that the list is revisable, I offer a friendly amendment in the form of a capability for meaningful labor, and consider what political actions may need to be undertaken to ensure for all people a capability to labor meaningfully.

MAX WEISS, no affiliation
"Propositional Attitude Reports as Indirect Speech Acts"
This paper aims to describe propositional attitude reports in a more substantive way, focusing on the use of reference. Pulling from the literature of indirect speech acts as described by J.L. Austin and J. Searle, the main points are to describe a belief statement as an indirect speech act by means of fulfilling shared conditions. It is also desired to establish a new dimension and understanding of propositional attitude reports, taking special care to highlight the importance of appropriate reference in order to advance and promote more concise and accurate communication when discussing beliefs.

IVAN WELTY, Willamette University
"Illustrating Tractarian Ineffability"
Wittgenstein's claim, in Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus, that logical form is ineffable has struck even sympathetic readers as implausible, while others who accept the claim seem to have embraced obscurantism or quietism as its natural implication. In this talk I try to demystify Wittgenstein's claim by means of simple examples and illustrations, then consider, if briefly, whether he might, after all, be right.

SUNGWON WOO, University of Maryland
"An Impossibility Result for the Best System Analysis"
I show an impossibility result for the Best System Analysis (BSA). According the BSA, laws are regularities in the best system maximizing scientific virtues such as simplicity, strength, and accuracy. I will argue that the procedure of determining the best system as such is susceptible to the well-known impossibility theorem in social choice, and that the conditions of the theorem cannot be abandoned in system choice. Some escapes from the similar impossibility result have been suggested in the literature on scientific theory choice, but I show that they are not available for system choice mainly due to the epistemological and metaphysical gaps between theory choice and system choice.

J. A. YORK, Northern Illinois University, Graduate Student
"On Sandy's 'Open' Question"
Peter Railton's "Moral Realism" offers a reforming definition of good-for-a-person through his concept of objectified subjective interest, where what-is-best for a person is (non-morally) determined by what they would want for themselves were they to have full and vivid knowledge of a given situation and not be irrational (i.e., they will pursue what they want). When an agent A does less than best for himself, Railton's view assumes more information would have helped. Connie Rosati critically points out that in selecting for himself, A simultaneously selects what sort of person to be. She holds that the potentially biased value set each person has may make referring to others (friends or advisers) more attractive to some agents. My response, in partial defense of Railton, is that Rosati's critique excludes (what she would call) the 'best' course of action as a robust possibility that I can choose. Under her view, the 'best' course of action for me now is already something that I may not be able to select because of my current nature. I hope to elucidate how Rosati's open-question objection to Railton's reforming definition of personal good actually exposes a larger lacuna in her own interpretation of the options, and presents no viable alternative.