

## Editors' Introduction

With this issue of *Florida Philosophical Review* we return to a bi-annual schedule, one that we expect to maintain given that the number of submissions to *FPR* remains steady. We continue to publish articles of the highest quality, which is demonstrated once again by the contents of the present issue. Although open to submissions in all areas of philosophy—something the contents herein surely exhibit—our journal remains selective, publishing about 15% of the submissions that we receive from around the world. Given that our journal is freely available online, we are able to reach easily an international audience, and we try to serve both this audience as well as the Florida Philosophical Association. This issue includes the past two presidential addresses of the FPA and one award-winning student essay. Following these contributions are six articles and one book review. As our readers will find, the contents of this issue are as diverse as they are stimulating, with reflections ranging from the meta-philosophical to the metaphysical, the ethical to the existential, and the logical to the phenomenological.

This issue opens with former FPA President David McNaughton (FSU) inviting us to question “Why Is So Much Philosophy So Tedious?” McNaughton laments what the professionalization of philosophy has done to the processes of philosophical thinking and writing, and he offers suggestions, both in seriousness and jest, to remedy this situation. Along the way he outlines deplorable philosophical styles, prompting valuable philosophical self-reflection for all writers (and editors!) within the discipline of philosophy.

Past FPA President Ronald Hall (Stetson) then follows by advising us to move beyond the common philosophical tendency to seek a metaphysical elsewhere, and instead delight in the ordinary and everyday here and now. He does this in “On Getting Over Getting Over the Rainbow,” in which he reads the movements made by Wittgenstein in his philosophy as parallel those made by Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz*. While reflecting on his own philosophical development, Hall (like McNaughton) prompts us to reflect on the value of philosophy and what should be a troubling observation that professional philosophers today have seemingly little to say to ordinary people. We may all need some help in returning home.

The next article is by Sean Armil, who won the Gerritt and Edith Schipper Undergraduate Award for Outstanding Undergraduate Paper in 2008. Armil’s paper, “How to Motivate the Maxim that ‘Ought’ Implies ‘Can’ to Defend the Principle of Alternate Possibilities,” provides a response to criticisms of David Copp’s work, which Armil shows to be sound.

Scott Kimbrough’s “Explaining Compatibilist Intuitions about Moral Responsibility: A Critique of Nichols and Knobe” continues the focus on moral philosophy by considering the problematic relationship between determinism and moral responsibility and the insights gained from

the growing field of experimental philosophy. Given the seemingly irresolvable debate among philosophers over free will and determinism, it is perhaps not surprising that experimental philosophy has shown that ordinary people hold conflicting moral intuitions. But should one set of intuitions—the compatibilist ones—be considered erroneous, as argued in the recent work of Nichols and Knobe? Through philosophical considerations regarding the nature of emotion and psychology Kimbrough shows that there are significant reasons to doubt this view.

Our consideration of the debate over free will and determinism is continued in the following article by Stephen Morris, who examines “The Impact of Neuroscience on the Free Will Debate.” Morris’s work centers on Daniel Wegner’s argument that contemporary neuroscience demonstrates that our so-called free, conscious will plays no role in causing our actions. Morris examines both the empirical and conceptual responses to Wegner’s view found in the work of Eddy Nahmias and Daniel Dennett, respectively. Although finding each of these defenses of free will too problematic to accept, Morris nevertheless suggests a way that a viable response to Wegner may be developed.

The next article in this issue is by Xiaoqiang Han, who asks “Why Can't We Dispense with the Subject-Predicate Form without Losing Something More?” Han considers the relationship between subject-predicate sentences and feature-placing sentences, and he argues against the philosophical view that subject-predicate sentences can be translated into feature-placing-sentences without any significant loss. Indeed, as Han shows, in a feature-placing language it is impossible to express the concept of change in any object.

Following Han’s contribution we turn to the philosophy of religion, with an article by Randolph Feezell entitled “Religious Ambiguity, Agnosticism, and Prudence.” In this piece Feezell begins by considering the pragmatic approach taken by Pascal in justifying theistic belief and he finds that it suffers from many problems. Feezell argues that it is quite possible for a reasonable person to hold conflicting beliefs about the divine, and this leads to his claim that our world is religiously ambiguous. Feezell provides a detailed explanation of what religious ambiguity involves, and ultimately he replaces Pascal’s wager with the agnostic’s wager. On the agnostic account—which according to Feezell agrees with common sense views found in many thinkers such as David Hume, Thomas Jefferson, and Bertrand Russell—whether one believes in the existence of God doesn’t matter.

The final two articles of this issue invoke hermeneutic perspectives found in two major existentialist philosophers. First, in “Heidegger's Bridge: The Social and Phenomenological Construction of Mars,” Jae Jerkins shows how Heidegger’s phenomenological analyses provide key insights to be applied to our discourse on Mars. Jerkins explains both the philosophy of place-making involved in our understanding of the “red planet” and the technological problem of enframing created by our discourse. Second, in “Nihilism and the Eschaton in Samuel Beckett’s

*Waiting for Godot*? John Valentine applies a Nietzschean perspective to the interpretation of Beckett's most well-known work. Contrary to certain contemporary readings, Valentine shows how the main characters Vladimir and Estragon can be viewed as nihilists in the precise sense found in Nietzsche's writings.

Lastly, this issue is rounded off by Ryan Showler and his review of Katrin Flikschuh's *Kant and Modern Political Philosophy*. Showler explains how Flikschuh addresses the contemporary challenge of separating the political philosophies of Kant from Rawls, and he outlines the strengths and weaknesses that may be found in this work.

We would like to thank all the contributors of this volume for their good-humored patience throughout the publication process. Also, we would like to thank Matthew Dunn, Senior Art Specialist at the Technology Office of the College of Arts and Humanities, University of Central Florida, for his professional support in publishing the journal. Lastly, we wish to thank all the reviewers of FPR for their service to the philosophical community.

Nancy Stanlick and Michael Strawser, Editors  
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