Joseph P. White, M.A., 1997-1998

Lecture Dedication

THIS LECTURE is dedicated to my colleagues and all others whose patience and persistence are tested daily in the great civilizing task of pushing back the dark frontier of ignorance. May the quest for knowledge on this vast frontier transform all of us for the Good.

Philosophy:
Adventures on the Frontier of Ignorance . . . A Truncated Tour

Joseph P. White, M.A.
Associate Professor of Philosophy

Presented in the James R. Garvin Memorial Theatre Before a Community Audience

Lecture Prologue

The history of philosophy has often, unfortunately, been marked by a propensity on the part of the populace to, either literally or figuratively, "kill the messenger." This point could be readily illustrated beginning with Socrates in the fourth century B.C. and continuing to Bertrand Russell in the twentieth century A.D. On this day, January 28, 1998, the 1997-98 SBCC Faculty Lecture seems to mark a fortunate moment where the messenger is being rewarded. I, personally, hope that that continues to be the case by the conclusion of this lecture.

While philosophical messages tend to be of great personal significance, the messages of philosophy are not personal, in a significant sense. Like the discovery that our solar system is heliocentric and not geocentric, a message which brought vehement denial, acrimony and acts of torture, it is not personal that the sun is actually at the center of our solar system. Thus, as we shall discover, the truth is not personal.

Philosophy comes from two ancient Greek words, philein and sophia which literally mean love of wisdom. Socrates, regarded by many as the patron of Western philosophy, claimed that his wisdom resided in an apparently paradoxical state of ignorance, in his knowing that he did not know. In the early Dialogues of Plato, Socrates never found an acceptable answer, as there always appeared another question. Socrates was a master of the question, a genius at bringing to light an unrealized but dubious assumption. Since questions serve to mark the frontier of our ignorance, they also serve to define the boundaries of each of our tiny domains of knowledge. It is thus the question which serves as the first step to Socratic wisdom.

At the end of the twentieth century, we find ourselves on one of civilization's grandest philosophical adventures. In our popular culture, knowledge itself has been democratized. Belief and knowledge have

devolved into synonyms on *Principles of Epistemic* Democracy*. All beliefs are treated equally: the true, the false, the foolish, the wise. Additionally, we are reaching a crescendo in the now centuries-old colossal collision of two powerful, but incompatible metaphysical systems.

For at least the past three millennia, humans have relied, typically, upon a metaphysical system of dualism to ground their various mythical and religious systems of belief. For dualists, humans are one part physical, one part spiritual, made up of both a body and a soul or mind. On the other hand, for the past four hundred years, a metaphysical system of monism, often described as either materialism or physicalism, has gained ascendance, even superseding dualism on many intellectual fronts. This materialism tends to be the metaphysical foundation of the sciences. According to this view of materialism, human beings are risen "apes," perhaps a temporary accident having blindly evolved in a brutally indifferent universe entwined in universal causality.

With such metaphysical upheaval amidst the confused chants of the credulous crusaders of*Epistemic Democracy*, as well the complete impotence of any science to generate a single-value (moral) judgment, it is no wonder that the twentieth century seems an age adrift on a perilous, uncharted sea of history. So, with the intellectual winds howling, the sea of action inevitably upon us, our ancient ship, Philein Sophia remains humanity's soundest vessel to stalwartly embark upon this grand and inescapable ***Adventure on the Frontier of Ignorance***. Welcome to a truncated tour.

*Episteme is Greek for knowledge.

Lecture Outline

Introduction

Meta-Remarks

This & The Faculty Lecture

The Act of Lecturing

Philosophy:

Adventures on the Frontier of Ignorance . . . a Truncated Tour

Speaking on behalf of Philosophy to all other Academic Disciplines

The Philosophical Attitude

Socrates' Apple Pies

Santa Claus, the Wahao and little Saddam Jones

Knowledge . . .

Another, Truncated Tour

Erotetic Logic: Knowing the Question

Epistemology: Knowing the Answer

Epistemic Democracy & Its Credulous Citizens

Epistemic Privilege: Justified, True Belief

When Metaphysical Systems Collide

. . . Yet Another, Truncated Tour

Dualism: Where is Nowhere?

Materialism: Lost Dreams?
Santa Claus, the Wahao and little Saddam Jones, Again

Volition & Value

. . . and Still Another, Truncated Tour
That Tiny Calendar of 75 Year Hence & Its Marked Moment
Morality & Respect
Eudaimonia
Fare thee well on thy adventure, Mr. Claus, the Wahao and little Saddam Jones

Epilogue

From Princeton Philosophy to a Lawyer's Fantasy

Mementos of the Adventure

In part, the problems of philosophy are unchanging; in part, they vary from age to age; and in the best philosophers of every age these two parts are so interwoven that the permanent problems appear sub specie saeculi, and the special problems of the age sub specie aeternitatus.

***- R. G. Collingwood**,*
The Idea of History

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

***- Hamlet**, (Act 1, Scene V)*

You may . . . protest that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in my philosophy. I am concerned, rather, that there should not be more things dreamt of in my philosophy than there actually are in heaven and earth.

***- Nelson Goodman**,*
Fact, Fiction & Forecast

For doubt can exist only where a question exists, a question only where an answer exists, and an answer only where something can be said.

***- L. Wittgenstein**,*
The Tractatus: 6.51

. . . ask yourself whether our language is complete; whether it was so before the symbolism of chemistry and the notation of the infinitesimal calculus were incorporated into it; for these are, so to speak, suburbs of our language. (And how many houses or streets does it take before a town begins to be a town?) . . . And to imagine a language means to imagine a form of life.

***- L.Wittgenstein**,*
Philosophical Investigations

The goal of our intellectual efforts cannot be a static, polished possession . . . in our many efforts toward knowledge, science, math, logic as in life itself, it is the process, not the terminus, that should concern us - if we are wise.

***- Bruce Aune**, Rationalism,*
Empiricism & Pragmatism

Be a philosopher, but, amidst all your philosophy, be still a man.

***- David Hume**,*
An Enquiry Concerning
Human Understanding

. . . a serious and good philosophical work could be written that would consist entirely of jokes . . . and a philosophical treatise might contain nothing but questions.

***- L. Wittgenstein**, (Malcolm's Memoir)*

Ignorance is the Root of Misfortune.

***- Plato**, The Republic*

Welcome to Santa Barbara City College's 19th annual Faculty Lecture. This honor marks one of the most gratifying moments in my career in education. I would like to thank my dear children, Nicholas and Sarah, for generously agreeing, rather ironically, not to go to school this afternoon and to thank my wife, best friend, and fellow adventurer, Dulcie Sinn, who my parents describe as the person who saved me from myself. I'd also like to thank my parents, who Dulcie describes as people who only speak the truth.

I am also genuinely gratified that each of you here today would take the precious moments of our life to spend them in this way, at this lecture with me. Some of you have traveled quite a distance to be here. Others walked across the campus. I assure you that the responsibility not to squander these fleeting moments has weighed upon me while preparing this lecture.

These feelings of honor and gratitude are very similar to those which I experience nearly every time I enter one of our classrooms here on campus and see it filled, sometimes with a hundred or more, usually young, fresh faces all waiting to study philosophy. Most of our students, as we know, live under very trying conditions, Santa Barbara housing and adolescence being what they are. Many of our students are working over 30 hours a week to support themselves. I know I would not be up here today giving this Faculty Lecture if it were not for our students. A very large part of who I am, who I have become as an adult, is the result of trying to meet the myriad educational needs of our diverse student population. So I thank you, the students, as it is always an honor, everyday, to be in class with each of you, that is, when you show up.

My gratitude also extends to our Board of Trustees, our President, Dr. Peter MacDougall, as well as to Dr. Jack Friedlander and my dean, Dr. Bruce Smith. Now I mean this only personally, but if it were not for the support of Peter MacDougall, Jack Friedlander, Bruce Smith, Jim Chesher, and so many of my outstanding colleagues, especially those generous, forgiving souls in the Social Science Division, I would quite obviously not be up here. When who one is, is so intimately entangled in such an extensive, richly woven social web, there seems an arbitrariness in singling out a particular strand for honored attention.

I must also confess that this honor of being selected as the Faculty Lecturer has left me feeling a bit embarrassed, perhaps as a result of a dose of guilt. Honesty demands that I make it quite clear that what has ultimately brought us all here today is not really me, but Philosophy. This event, at its heart, is not about Joe White, it is about our most ancient, intellectually honest, most of the time, and rigorous, most of the time, pursuits: Philein Sophia, Philosophy. The discipline which has marked humanity's love of wisdom over the past two and a half millennia.

Philosophy, in the sense which we are here concerned, consists of such studies as: Logic, Metaphysics, Ontology, Epistemology, Ethics, Aesthetics, and many others. It is this tradition in which I have been schooled. This tradition of philosophy, as just noted, is approximately 2,500 years old. You may be thinking at this moment, "Wasn't there philosophy prior to 2,500 years ago? Didn't the Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, and other ancient cultures, do philosophy or have philosophical writings?" Presently, there is no evidence that they possessed a philosophical understanding. Analogously, while these ancient cultures also apparently suffered from illness and disease, and apparently had developed variously complex and effective folk remedies, there is no record that they possessed a medical or scientific understanding of the etiology of either bacterial or viral disease and illness. Thus these ancient cultures did not think in philosophical or scientific ways as we are now able to do.

As is also the case with so many of us today, who have beliefs which rest upon philosophical assumptions, we simply may not think philosophically about our philosophical assumptions. Thinking about bacteria and viruses is relatively new thinking, much newer than philosophical thinking. As anthropology and history have shown, most ancient cultures did have a variety of religious beliefs or proto-religious beliefs which were sometimes organized into relatively complex systems, roughly comparable to some of today's religions. As we shall see shortly, there is a marked distinction between a religious understanding and a philosophical understanding.

Some writers refer to this pre-philosophical period of thought as the mytho-poetic period. Since we are presently on a truncated tour, we will not be taking an excursion through that area of our web of belief. However, if you do have an interest in the historical evolution of these forms of thought, I encourage you to either take our Philosophy Department's course in Ancient Philosophy, or Professor Chris Mooney's Western Civilization course in the History Department, since I know Chris has a personal interest in the birth of philosophical thinking. As to the history of bacteriology or

virology, I direct you to any of our fine faculty in the Biological Sciences Department here at SBCC.

Keeping in mind then that philosophy is roughly 2,500 years old and I am 46 years old, it takes little to realize that, I, Joe White, Santa Barbara City College faculty member, count for extremely little here. I assure you this is not intended as some petty display of self-effacing, false modesty. I am but a tiny messenger, who, with effort, carries a few short and rather simple messages from an immense discipline whose history is populated by some of civilization's greatest geniuses. This is, what I honestly believe, at least part of the truth of the matter here, today, to be. As I remind my students, "Always think philosophy; don't think Joe White. It's not about me!"

Introduction

Meta-Language & Meta-Lecture Remarks

As is somewhat typical of philosophers, as most of you know, they tend to be concerned with questions and problems about concepts and propositions which most of us regularly use in everyday life. Many of these concepts and propositions, such as the concepts of knowledge, truth and justice, or such propositions as, souls are immortal, or people should take responsibility for their actions, we tend to take for granted regarding both their possible meanings and multitudinous presuppositions. This surely seems the case for most of us regarding our understanding of the nature of conceptualizing, itself, or the typography and ontology of the propositions which we inevitably use in our pursuit of knowledge, or in our professional activity of education where we transfer knowledge through learning. Thus, typically, concepts and propositions are simply **used** by us as the conceptual-coin of our realm.

Since philosophical questions arise about the use of concepts and propositions, philosophical problems are sometimes described as meta-problems, and the language of philosophy is described as a meta-language, a language **about** language, or thinking **about** thinking. So the history of philosophy is very much a history of the evolution of our meta-language, our meta-thought and our understanding of various meta-problems. Philosophy marks civilization's growing self-consciousness, to paraphrase Professor A. J. Ayer. However, this is not to claim that all meta-language is of philosophical interest, but that distinction and discussion is presently beyond our truncated tour here.

This philosophical preoccupation with meta-issues has created in me the need to initially make just a few meta-lecture remarks or **remarks about this specific** Faculty Lecture, **about our annual** Faculty Lecture program and finally a few meta-remarks **about the activity of lecturing**, itself. I will make these meta-lecture remarks **prior to** making my remarks **in** my faculty lecture.

Meta-Lecture Remarks

on This Faculty Lecture

When I was first informed by the Faculty Lecture Committee last spring that I had been selected as the 1997-98 Faculty Lecturer, I glanced around the room, looking at those smiling faces of my colleagues and thought, "Yeah, right!" After all, I had just been deceived by this very group as to why I was supposed to be meeting with them. Actually, when I had first arrived, somewhat breathless, arms filled with lecture material from a just concluded class, the group collectively deceived me a second time, asking that I go find Ms. Lana Rose. Dashing out and not finding Lana in her office, I returned to the committee room, where Lana was waiting for me. After these two consecutive deceptions, they told me I had been selected Faculty Lecturer and I was suddenly supposed to believe them, some of whom are widely known for being pranksters. Suddenly, through some instantaneous metamorphosis, they had all become truth-tellers. Since philosophers tend to be skeptical, the committee's persuasive powers would be tested.

Smiling, it all seemed to me like some sort of ha ha set-up. When they realized I wasn't persuaded, they insisted they were, in this instance, telling the truth. They assured me that adults sometimes lie for purposes of entertainment and that was okay.

When nearly convinced it was not a prank, I thought, well, since SBCC has recently had so many programs dealing with Cooperative Learning, Collaborative Learning, Models for Accommodating Diverse Learning Styles, Learning Communities, Distance Learning, Alternative Forms of Instructional Delivery, Technology-Mediated Instruction, as well as my regularly hearing around campus the now popular denigrating phrase, the Sage on the Stage, as a description for the traditional lecturing method, I thought the Faculty Lecture program itself is being eliminated. Next year our campus will have an entirely new program, probably the Faculty**Facilitator** of the Year. That must be it! I am the last, actual lecturer the committee could even find on this campus. Everyone else had evolved into facilitators. But that was not the case either, they assured me. So, I can only say to you, members of the Faculty Lecture Committee and all others involved in my mysterious selection, thank you.

Meta-Lecture Remarks
on The Faculty Lecture Program

A lecture, as I have been giving them these past few years, involves, even requires, the asking of questions on the part of students, or more generically, an audience. An attempt at rapport with students in my class is an essential goal of my lecturing. However, Q and A and rapport are not part of the traditional format for these annual Faculty Lecture events.

It seems to me that this event is much more like a sermon than a classroom lecture. In a sermon, unlike a lecture, the congregation is typically in a very passive role, as they are not expected to ask questions during the sermon. Neither is the congregation to request from the priest, rabbi, minister, shaman, or whomever clarification or to query whether what has been said is even true. There are no demands for proof or evidence. If the congregation leaves perplexed, perhaps questioning their faith, the sermon has

probably failed. If students leave a class perplexed, or even perhaps confused in an important pedagogical sense, the lecture may have been a roaring success. The students may have been awakened from their dogmatic slumber, as we sometimes say in philosophy.

This event today seems to be one steeped in some reverence. Amongst the approximately 500 of you in attendance here, your expectation may not be that of being challenged, perplexed, or, in the best of cases, awakened from some dogmatic slumber. However, I do hope something said here will be provocative at some level so that we might capture an important quality of what doing philosophy is so often all about. Thus, I will try to be provocative but, as we all know, trying and succeeding mark quite sharp distinctions.

This seeming discrepancy between what I was honored for as a regular faculty member, working daily in the educational trenches, and what I am doing up here now as the 1997-98 Faculty Lecturer reminded me early on, in preparing for this event, of a certain case involving someone I greatly admire. This person and his roughly similar experience has persistently haunted me these past seven months as I've reflected and prepared. What happened to this person has also provided me with a profound appreciation for the efforts and performances of the previous eighteen faculty lecturers here at SBCC.

While my professional life does not begin to approximate the world-class, trans-historical level of excellence so consistently demonstrated in the work of Mr. Michael Jordan of the Chicago Bulls NBA team, what happened to him nonetheless haunts a little, academic messenger-guy like me. It would take a rather oblivious person to not be familiar with the basketball prowess of Mr. Jordan. One is so often struck speechless at the incredible display of nearly inconceivable finesse Mr. Jordan so effortlessly displays in an extremely strenuous profession. Mr. Jordan seems a Hercules, a demi-god, but his excellence is not what haunts me. His athletic genius, I marvel at. I am profoundly appreciative as a fan. What haunts me is Michael's baseball career.

With an unequaled record in basketball, Mr. Jordan started a professional baseball career, quite justly it could be argued, in the major leagues, in*THE SHOW*, with the Chicago White Sox. Hardball is tough and so, after Michael's first few appearances on the diamond, it was gingerly suggested, that perhaps a bit of warm-up was needed for Mr. Jordan in triple A ball, the next level down from the majors, just below *THE SHOW*. But triple-A baseball proved a bit much as well, what with all of those curve balls, sliders, 90 + mph fastballs. Perhaps learning a few baseball basics at the next lower level, double-A baseball, would put Mr. Jordan on the right track, then back up to triple-A, then finally back to *THE SHOW* with the Sox. Alas, Mr. Jordan had left his court and entered the diamond where finally, in double-A baseball, he didn't manage to hit over 200. His fielding was marginal. Shortly thereafter, Michael Jordan left baseball and returned to basketball, where again he proved to be one of the most formidable of forces to reign on the court. (*Note*: I was recently told that Phil Jackson, the Chicago

Bulls' coach, has a graduate degree in philosophy. No wonder Mr. Jordan refuses to play with any other coach.)

I think I speak for many of the previous faculty lecturers here at SBCC when I say that there is a feeling that we have left the court and have been asked to perform on the diamond when we are given this wonderful annual award. I assure you there is much trepidation in coming up here and doing this. I have found much solace in the courage and high level of excellence demonstrated by those faculty lecturers who have preceded me from classroom-court to the Garvin main stage-diamond. If I strike out, if I drop the ball here today, well, at least we can all take pride in the last 18 years of outstanding hits and runs. So, let's play ball!

Meta-Lecture Remarks
On Lecturing
(A Case of Applied Philosophy)

Somewhere around my junior year in high school, the activity of learning, at least in some classes, history and Latin stand out, began to take on a sense of adventure. I started to look forward to those classes and became fascinated with reading the texts. I actually befriended the teachers of those classes. I now suspect that a small part of that new-found sense of adventure was a reflection of my own growing maturity. By the time I was in college, so many more of my classes seemed to have this sense of adventure about them.

Perhaps most striking of all for me were my first philosophy classes. It was farewell pre-law, signing on for at least some adventure on the frontier of ignorance aboard *Philein Sophia*. (The word "philosophy," apparently introduced by Pythagoras, comes from the two Greek words, "philein" and "sophia," meaning love of wisdom.)

During these early voyages, I was not only introduced to David Hume's and Bertrand Russell's writings, but I would also watch John Kenneth Galbraith on television, as he would describe the history of economics, and Jacob Bronowski's series, *The Ascent of Man*. All of these thinkers, whether or not I actually agreed with them, seemed steeped in a sense of learning as an adventure. It seemed that a person with a sense of adventure was an explorer, actively seeking out new frontiers on seemingly boundless intellectual frontiers.

Uncertainty and risk were inherent to discovery as the true adventurer not only accepted but even embraced such vicissitudes. She expected both her will and her understanding to be challenged, even greatly challenged, if indeed she had embarked on a great adventure. These challenges and tests would force her to grow, to adapt, to define and redefine herself. In the end, such an adventurer was inevitably transformed by the adventure. Such transformation resulted, in the case of an academic adventure, in acquiring wisdom with its cosmopolitan sophistication. A great journey is what every adventurer essentially seeks, with all of its risks, uncertainty and finally its abiding transformation of one's self.

In addition to lecturers as adventurers, I seemed to come across quite a number of other sorts of lecturers. There were those I'd describe as *pilgrim lecturers*. They trudged along ever-familiar paths, always well intentioned but always seeming burdened by some sort of heaviness which they carried dutifully. They were not pursuers of novelty or discovery, but rather persistent, silent trudgers getting on down the well-laid path. There were also those lecturers that seemed like *fuhrers*. At times these sorts of rigid, arrogant characters seemed to accumulate in particular departments, but let's not dwell upon the sadistic. I would describe the larger other-group of non-adventurers as *alienated lecturers*.

The alienated lecturers seemed to fit squarely into what I was at the time learning about Karl Marx's theories. Though I am unsure whether there are any alienated faculty at SBCC, I met many in my time of undergraduate and graduate education. Please remember that alienation is not a condition peculiar only to faculty or academics, like being pedantic tends to be. Alienation, in its limited use here, is a relationship, or state of being, in terms of a person's working life.

I'd like to quote briefly from one of Marx's finer passages on alienation. Since a certain provincial hubris presently celebrates the battering of poor Karl Marx, treating him like some gaudy piñata at a bourgeois birthday bash, this piece on alienation serves as a nice reminder that Mr. Marx's work went well beyond the too often silly intellectual caricature of his work we find so often bandied about, particularly by American businesspersons. To quote briefly from Mr. Marx's *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts. . .*

What constitutes the alienation of labor? First, that the worker . . . does not fulfill himself in his work but denies himself, has a chronic feeling of misery rather than well-being, does not develop freely his mental and physical energies but is physically exhausted and mentally debased. ***The alienated worker, therefore, feels himself at home only during his leisure time, whereas at work, he feels homeless*** *. . . Alienated work is not the satisfaction of an intrinsic need, but rather is only a means for satisfying other needs. Its alien character is clearly shown by the fact that as soon as there is not a physical or other compulsion, the work is avoided like the plague. (**Note**: emphasis added)*

This alienated attitude manifests itself regularly in our everyday language through such expressions as "Hump Day" for Wednesday, and "TGIF." For the alienated, Sunday evening is a time of dread and despair, while Friday morning gives them the momentary feeling of a new life about to begin. The alienated long for weekends and holidays, not simply as an opportunity to refresh themselves, but to escape home and be themselves, as Marx, with his typical metaphorical flair, describes. The alienated lecturer counts the days until the end of a semester, perhaps even counting the days until retirement. Exhausted by his alienation, he longs to do nothing. If only he could win the lottery, then he would never have to work; then he could really get down to doing nothing. Does it seem to you that beer and lottery commercials are specifically directed to those suffering from the malaise of alienation?

The unalienated worker, which includes the adventurer, embraces his or her work as genuinely fulfilling. Their work defines to a very large extent, though typically not completely, who she or he is. Their labor becomes a source of self-respect, even pride.

In the case of the adventurer, there is an actual need for the adventure, a need to be at work. Typically, she looks forward to being on the adventure, being in the classroom, having the interaction, and perhaps most importantly, giving the lectures, speaking with the students. Being at work can be exhilarating, while leisure, itself, or being in port, will sometimes make the adventurer restless, fidgety, anxious. The adventurer shrinks visibly from the thought of doing nothing. The craving to do nothing on the part of the alienated is initially perplexing to the adventurer, but finally it elicits only pity.

Such attitudes as these do, as previously suggested, bleed into one's language, into one's speech-acts and at a level more subtle than those previously mentioned expressions of "Hump Day" and TGIF. A greater understanding of how language is used, specifically in terms of speech-acts, will give us a further insight into what I think are some of the most significant and effective dynamics in lecturing and why certain acts we perform in and by our speech-acts have a significant impact upon student motivation and thus successful learning.

Lecturing is such a complex activity that those who do not do it tend not to have a knowledge of, or in many cases, an appreciation for the myriad demands of this particular type of activity. We are all familiar with the popularly touted fact that, for most people, the intensity of fear associated with public speaking is comparable to that of the fear of death. My students have become physically ill before giving a single scheduled, brief presentation in front of the class. This frightening aspect of public speaking alone gives one a glimpse of a small part of the overall challenge of giving daily, multiple lectures.

Nonetheless, one can almost hear the Pavlovian response to the claim, "But you really love to be up there lecturing." (Here's my favorite: "For you, it's easy!") If this faculty lecture of mine goes well, no doubt some of you may think the same thing. "He does it so naturally." Trust me, even with all of the hours spent in preparation and practice, this one was not easy. It never ceases to amaze one how often those who are not part of a process so quickly judge how easy those who are part of that process have it. It seems our own burden is always the heaviest while that of others floats slightly above their shoulders. As Mr. Knopfler sang, "That's the way **you do it**, get **your money for nothing and your** . . ." etc. However, fear and whining are not my primary concern here.

Lecturing, in its standard form, involves speech-acts, a variety of acts, as a matter of fact. Basically, my present use of language, these speech-acts which make up this lecture, are intended, quite obviously, for purposes of communication. In using language to communicate, more activity occurs than most of us, I think, may appreciate.

First, in simply saying something, we quite obviously **do** something. We make noises, but in speaking we also make noises of a certain sort, noises within a recognizable syntax and grammar. These recognizable syntactical and grammatical noises are finally intended to be meaningful; that is, they are intended to say something about something. Our speech-acts thus have a semantics. Presently, I am not simply mimicking other

speech, like a parrot, nor am I a computer program simply simulating speech, nor a tape recording replaying speech. Rather, I am attempting to use language to talk about certain aspects of language.

Speaking meaningfully, in this sense, constitutes what philosophers of language, who study speech-acts, have come to call the **locutionary act** of speech-acts. Because the locutionary act of speech-acts involves the making of meaningful remarks, it is not surprising, since curriculum within most academic departments at this particular level of higher education is rather uniform, that the locutionary acts of different faculty within a department would be very similar, in some cases nearly identical. Basically, such faculty are all talking about the same thing. Dialect and idiom are relevant to discussing speech-acts, but not relevant here to this discussion of the locutionary act.

However, I believe the more fascinating and suggestive characteristics of speech-acts in lecturing, and thereby learning, are to be found in what theorists refer to as the **illocutionary acts** and **perlocutionary acts** of our speech-acts. Thus it may not be the saying **of something** (the locutionary act) that is of significance in lecturing, but what **we do IN** saying something (illocutionary act) and then **do BY saying** something (perlocutionary act) in our lectures that are of greatest pedagogical significance.

To illustrate, when I was told a few moments ago, "Everyone is ready," there was spoken a meaningful English sentence which referred to all of you and your state of readiness, perhaps your state of gleeful eagerness. That alone, all things considered, would be the locutionary act of that particular speech-act on this occasion. However, the illocutionary act of that speech-act, "Everyone is ready," was intended **to inform** me of your state, as well as serve as **a request** for me to start this event by my taking my place here on stage. Thus **IN** saying, "Everyone is ready," in this particular context, the **illocutionary act of informing** and putting forth **a request**occurred, or perhaps the illocutionary act of that speech- act was actually**an order** and not a request, but my nervousness caused me to miss some nuance, some inflection.

Seemingly, the locutionary act can remain unchanged, while the illocutionary act can vary quite dramatically. Thus had one of you whispered to the person next to you, "Everyone is ready," it would have been rather peculiar for that locution, in that context, to have performed the illocutionary act of a request for that person next to you to get up on this stage and get this event underway. Rather, the illocutionary act of your locution might have been simply to inform or advise the person next to you of your eagerness for this event to get underway, assuming you are not a terrorist or a prankster, in which case the illocutionary act of your locution would have probably been quite different, yet again.

Once I was told, "Everyone is ready," I understood **the request** and proceeded to walk out here and begin. My walking out here was **the effect of the perlocutionary act** of that speech-act as the locution was thus**additionally intended to actually get me moving**. Had I not walked out, had I frozen and refused to come out here, then the

perlocutionary act of the speech-act would have failed, but the illocutionary act of a request or command would not have necessarily failed.

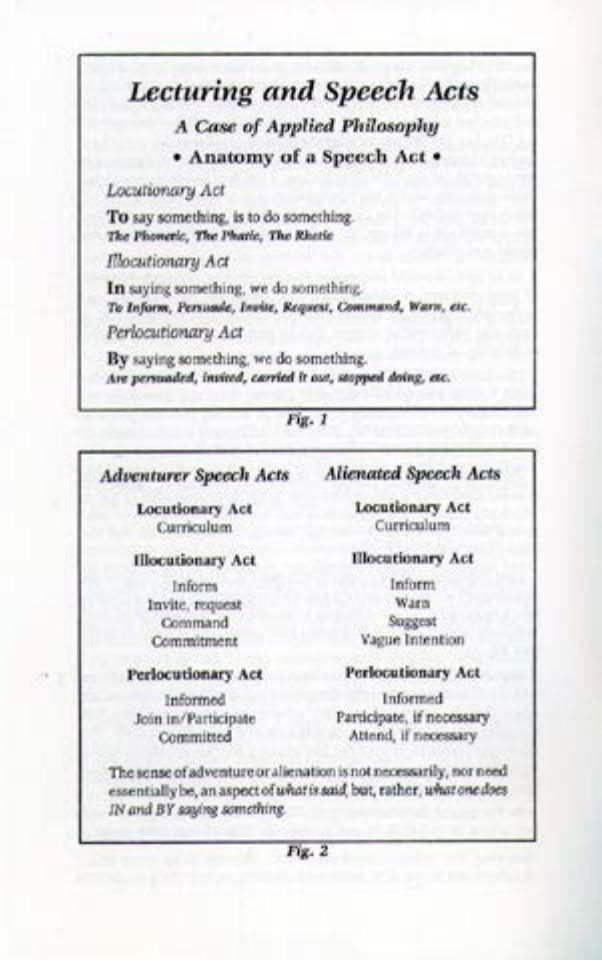
One more quick example, for my students. Suppose you have just arrived at a party and your friend, the hostess, tells you as you approach her, "The keg is on the porch." Here is, first, a locutionary act in which a particular type of container, typically for beer in this culture, is referred to as being located in or on a typically flat constructed area usually outside and attached to some domicile. Now the illocutionary act of this speech act, "The keg is on the porch," might be not only **to inform** you as to where the keg is located, but more significantly **to invite** or even **to encourage** you to partake of the contents of the keg. A smile or a wink in our culture could obviously accent the illocutionary act. If you respond, "Cool!", which may or may not be a remark about the ambient temperature, and you proceed out to the keg, the perlocutionary act of "The keg is on the porch" was effective.

As an aside, it would also appear that the effective socializing process of peer pressure is often exercised through the illocutionary and perlocutionary acts of speech-acts, but that is another issue not of particular philosophical interest, though perhaps of some psychological or sociological interest.

However, in this keg example, the same locution, "The keg is on the porch," could also, given a different context, have the quite different illocutionary act of **warning you** not to go directly onto the porch as others might then find the keg. Thus the illocutionary act of a speech-act is to some significant extent **independent of** the locutionary act.

I'll leave it to you to sort out, for purposes of further illustration, the possible illocutionary and perlocutionary acts in the following locution, which you might hear your spouse or significant-other call out upon your arrival home on a Friday evening, "Honey, I'm in the bath and the champagne is chilling."

I use these distinctions in speech-acts **(see Fig. 1)**because I believe the illocutionary and perlocutionary acts within the speech-acts of lecturers, who approach learning as either an adventure or as alienated labor, tend to follow certain patterns and thereby have certain effects upon students **(see Fig. 2)**.



The adventurer and the alienated may both employ the same locutions, which will be largely defined by the subject matter of their disciplines, but when they are in the grip of their adventure or their alienation, the illocutionary acts of their speech-acts may well differ significantly. The adventurer extends, through her illocutionary acts, **an invitation**to join in the learning process. The alienated lecturer's speech-acts **warn of** an onerous, perhaps essentially pointless, but necessary burden ahead.

In the case of the adventurer, the illocutionary acts often go beyond invitations to requests, if not commands, that the student actively participate in the course with a sense of seriousness and urgency. For the alienated there is a grudging tolerance of time on task, and, as we all know, we'd rather be someplace else doing something else, or perhaps doing nothing.

When education is an adventure, information is not simply provided-but rather fascinating insights and the wisdom that will transform the neophyte into the erudite. Such insights are expected to be thoroughly incorporated into the student's belief system, as opposed to the simple acquisition of useful, though profoundly irrelevant, information which is only needed to pass an exam. The adventurer conveys not only a sense of importance and urgency to joining the grand intellectual journey, but expects loyalty, camaraderie. One will not abandon one's mates once the trek commences. Education, like all adventures, thus possesses intrinsic value. It is undertaken not simply to get somewhere else, but for its own sake. In the end, the belief that all participants will be personally transformed for the better, fulfilled by the adventure, is paramount. For the alienated, all remains the same except classes do finally end and one finally gets to do what one really wants to do. "Maybe like just hang out, you know."

Given their different illocutionary acts, the accompanying perlocutionary acts of the adventurer and the alienated will accordingly widely differ. If successful, the perlocutionary acts of the adventurer's speech-acts bring about the undivided attention,

even fascination, on the part of the student, as he or she actively joins in. On the part of the alienated lecturer, the perlocutionary acts will suggest that a student show up because it is necessary to get a grade, at least a passing grade. Since learning only has intrinsic value for the alienated, there is conveyed a tolerance for not wanting to be in class. The alienated share a joy when natural disasters require that classes be cancelled. **Significantly, all of this communication may occur without any explicit remark, locution, to the same effect being made. It may all be very effectively communicated through the illocutionary and perlocutionary acts of the various speech-acts.**

If so much of the effectiveness of learning and student motivation comes through the illocutionary and perlocutionary acts in our speech, then perhaps some additional attention should be given to the issue of the educational effectiveness of all of the new and developing technologies. Since computers and other technological delivery systems are limited in how they can convey information, essentially only capable of expressing certain locutions along with an extremely limited number of the most elementary illocutions, it would appear that educational technologies are profoundly limited, not simply in practice, but in principle, for being highly effective in educating at a very sophisticated level. Perhaps, at this point in our history, only humans can effectively educate humans.

For the academic adventurer, the vast frontier of ignorance is our seemingly permanent intellectual condition. While we collectively make headway as individuals, its vastness grows daily. The adventurer thus does not find the worth of adventure in being able to brag that she has visited, indeed knows, every port of call in myriad detail, a claim every true adventurer knows to be the mark of the charlatan. Rather the adventurer has journeyed out upon the frontier, learned and been tested by travails and thereby transformed into a more cosmopolitan sophisticate. I think this sense of an adventure's transformation and wisdom was nicely captured by T.S. Eliot in The *Little Gidding* . . .

We shall not cease from exploration

And the end of all of our exploring

Will be to arrive where we started

And know the place for the first time.

Now, since this present event here at the Garvin Theatre is not occurring in a typical classroom and these many locutions I am now and have been using are all really quite new to me, never having used many of these locutions previously, I fear that I may fail to convey to you, through the illocutionary and perlocutionary acts of my speech-acts, the sense of adventure which I feel and believe permeates my daily lectures, as well as the discipline of philosophy and learning, in general. So, be that as it may, let's attempt to venture out onto the frontier of ignorance and see what we shall discover.

Philosophy
Adventures on the Frontier of Ignorance (a Truncated Tour)

At the outset of preparing this portion of the lecture, I wondered what would be the most appropriate, relevant, poignant and yet fairly succinct thing I could say, on behalf of philosophy, to such a diverse group of academics and intellectuals as are gathered here today. After all, the academic disciplines represented here cover such diverse areas as the natural and social sciences, and there alone we find various physicists, biologists, chemists, geologists, geographers; then there are the sociologists, psychologists, political scientists, economists, historians, anthropologists and each with their sub-disciplines. Ahhh, so much diversity! There are also the arts, the fine arts, the performing arts, etc., and the humanities, and business and physical education and nursing and again each subdivided, with the subdivisions themselves subdivided, and of course we can't forget mathematics and on and on and on.

I worried as to what philosophy could say to such a heterogeneous, academic audience. Then one night, rather recently, thank goodness, the answer just hit me. There it was, the seemingly perfect thing that would be relevant, succinct, a sort of common thread running throughout all of the disciplines. So, I, Joe White, somewhat presumptuously speaking on behalf of the great, ancient discipline of philosophy, say to all of you, my fellow academics: "YOU ARE INDEED WELCOME!" You are welcome for all of those Ph.D.s, your Philosophical Doctorates. You're sorta, nearly, philosophers.

Some of your disciplines have done very well, and here we might mention the accomplishments of the natural sciences, particularly physics and chemistry and all of their various offspring, grandchildren of a sort, who have grown so strong in their empirical and applied mathematical methods, strong in explanation, predictability, and to some extent, discovery. For example, since just this past fall, it appears that we can now reasonably believe that our universe is actually about 15 billion years old and there's about 20 % less stuff in it than initially thought. Also, it seems reasonable to now believe there won't be the Big Crunch, either. Ah, there is so much here to be thankful for and, given such discoveries, doesn't it seem peculiar that people single out and charge philosophy with yielding useless knowledge?

However, let us not forget chemistry and biology. Why just this last year we welcomed Dolly, the cloned sheep, to the world. I read recently that in Chicago an entrepreneur, a Dr. Seed, has expressed a commitment to cloning human beings. Immediately, many politicians and scientists reacted, claiming that we shouldn't even consider such research. **SHOULD**we clone humans? Well, one thing is for sure, that is certainly not a scientific question. We'll have more to say shortly about laying that sort of philosophical track for the locomotive of science to travel or not travel upon.

Regarding the social sciences, it would seem they have a more diverse set of methodologies upon which they rely, and predictability in many areas doesn't quite function for them as it does in the natural sciences. Thus the warrant of some proposed

social scientific explanations remains a bit of a challenge. Nonetheless, many of the social sciences are still quite young, and vitality is on their side. It would appear that counseling psychology, a grandchild of sorts, has had some, how shall we put it, challenging, if not wacky ways or methods while growing up in the late 20th century. Nonetheless, while counseling psychology seems something of a juvenile in the history of knowledge, it will probably end up learning a good bit from an older sibling, like physiological psychology and perhaps a cousin, like neurology. Nonetheless, the social sciences have generated quite a number of very prolific and astute **Ph**ilosophical **D**octorates.

Given the long, even ancient, path that mathematics and philosophy have traveled together variously chasing truth, math seems more like a sibling than an offspring of philosophy. However, it remains the case that mathematicians are also awarded a Philosophical Doctorate and not a Mathematical Doctorate. I guess it just goes to show . . .

It would be a delight to be able to take the rest of our time and list so many of the proud accomplishments of various Ph.D.s throughout academia and thus let everyone know, on the part of grand, old philosophy, just how proud philosophy is of your individual, compartmentalized contributions to humanity's great, ever-growing body of knowledge. For the Philosophical Doctorate is given out in all of these diverse areas of academia to those who have successfully, more or less, ventured out onto the frontier of ignorance, and through their various discoveries of some truth, pushed that frontier back a bit farther.

So, again, I say to all of you academics in academia on behalf of philosophy, YOU ARE INDEED WELCOME! Finally, we should note here, that our words, "academic" and the institution known as academia is derived from the name of **Plato's** school, the Academy. **Plato, the philosopher**, one of **founders of Western philosophy**.

So how did philosophy come to play this ubiquitous and prominent role in our intellectual and cultural history? In short, ATTITUDE. In its most ancient form, beginning essentially with the Greeks, there has been an intellectual attitude which consists of **a sense of wonderment driven by rationality**. This attitude has come down to us through the centuries as philosophy. The sense of wonderment is marked by the asking of questions and rationality is marked by the realization that knowledge and belief are not synonyms.

One must remember here that there is a fundamental distinction between rationality and rationalization. While rationality and rationalization can both be persuasive, only rationality depends upon logic and gets us closer to the truth. Rationalization, on the other hand, helps maintain a level of psychological comfort, irrespective of the truth.

Since philosophy is so often confused in the popular mind with religion, it might be instructive to contrast this original philosophical attitude with the religious attitude. Since the dominant Western religious tradition is the Judeo-Christian tradition and, fortunately

for us, Islam also traces its lineage back through the Judeo-Christian sacred texts, we get to include here a huge proportion of the world's population and present political hotspots in this brief, albeit truncated, discussion of these contrasting attitudes.

I suspect the best place to start in this context is with the Bible's Old Testament, with Genesis specifically, the Fall of Man, Chapter 2, verses 15-25 and Chapter 3, verses 1-24. This translation is from the original tongues, the version set forth in 1611 A.D. . . .

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden but of the tree of the ***knowledge of good and evil****you shall not eat for the day that you eat of it you shall die . . .*

Then the Lord God said, "It is ***not good*** *that the man* ***should*** *be alone; I shall make him a helper fit for him. . . along comes wo****MAN****. Eve.*

Chapter 3: Now the serpent was more subtle than any other wild creature that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat of any tree of the garden'?" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden, but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die. For the Lord God knows that when you eat of it your ***eyes will be opened****, and you will be like God,* ***knowing good and evil****.' So when the woman* ***saw that the tree was good*** *for food, and that it was* ***a delight to the eyes****, and that the tree was to be* ***desired to make one wise****, she took of its fruit and ate and she also gave some to her husband, and he ate. Then the****eyes of both were opened*** *and* ***they knew*** *that they were naked and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons.*

And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife ***hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.*** *(Note: Did Adam and Eve hide among the trees of the garden or was the presence of the Lord God hidden among the trees? A case of amphiboly.) But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" And he said, "I heard the sound of thee in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, I hid myself." He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The man said, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate. "(Adam's illocutionary speech-act: blame the woman; plead: I'm a victim; request: She should be punished and not me.) Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent beguiled me, and I ate." (Eve's illocutionary speech-act: blame the serpent; plead: I'm a victim; request: Punish the serpent. Not me.) (****Note****: And the rest of us still complain to this day that people won't take responsibility. Playing the victim seems to go back quite a way.)*

As this Biblical story continues, the serpent, Adam and Eve are all cursed in various, personal ways; then even we, their purported offspring, inherit a number of afflictions as well, including the taint of Original Sin, according to some accounts.

There is much to ponder in this Biblical story; perhaps first and foremost might be just how bright these two people were, since their first major insight upon gaining knowledge of good and evil seemed to be their discovery that they were naked. Had they discovered the Law of Gravity or that the system of morality is indeed deontological, that would seem much more impressive than to realize they were naked. You would also suspect that a talking snake would have sent up a red flag, but they probably didn't have flags back then though it does appear that they had aprons. Anyhow, it's their experience of temptation, their desire, or at least Eve's, woman's, desire, for knowledge

of good and evil, her desire for wisdom and then God's ensuing litany of punishments for seeking that wisdom that is of concern for us here at this time.

Now allow me to quote briefly from another ancient text, this one from our philosophical tradition. A text not nearly as old as Genesis and one whose pedigree is much more clearly understood. This selection is from Aristocles' classic work, *The Republic*. You probably know Aristocles by his popular nickname, Plato. Again, another seemingly ancient practice still found today as most people today know Sting, only as Sting, or Madonna, only as Madonna. Anyhow, the particular selection I want to read to you is taken from a piece known as the *Allegory of the Cave*. Socrates is discussing with Glaucon the nature and worth of the soul's **achieving wisdom** and**knowledge of the Good**. The parallel in these stories emerges immediately.

Socrates begins by describing a group of people who have been locked in place their whole life at the bottom of a cave. Situated some distance behind them, but in this cave, is a fire and between the fire and their backsides walks a group of people carrying various objects which in turn cast shadows on the wall of the cave in front of these cave dwelling prisoners. The voices of the people carrying the objects echo off of the wall at the bottom of the cave so that the prisoners come to think these shadows and echoes **are reality**. As we pick up the story, Socrates tells Glaucon, and I quote . . .

. . . Suppose one of these prisoners was set free and forced suddenly to stand up, turn her head, and walk with eyes lifted to the light; all these movements would be painful, and she would be too dazzled to make out the objects whose shadows she had been used to seeing. What do you think she would say, if someone told her that what she had formerly seen was meaningless illusion, but now, being somewhat nearer to reality and turned towards more real objects, she was getting a truer view?

And suppose someone were ***to drag her away forcibly up the steep and rugged ascent and not let her go until she had hauled her out*** *into the sunlight, would she not* ***suffer pain and vexation at such treatment****, and when she had finally come out into the light, would she not find her eyes so full of its radiance that she could not see a single one of the things that she was now told were real? She would need, then to grow accustomed before she could see things in the upper world for what that actually are . . .*

Once her sight came to her, she would delight in all that she saw and begin to draw the conclusion that it is the Sun that produces the seasons and the course of the year and controls everything in the visible world, and moreover is in a way the cause of all that she and her companions used to see at the bottom of the cave . . .

Every feature in this allegory, my dear Glaucon, is meant to fit our earlier analysis. The prison dwelling corresponds to the region revealed to us through the sense of sight, and the fire-light within it to the power of the Sun. The ascent to see the things in the upper world you may take as standing for ***the upward journey of the soul*** *into the region of the intelligible, the world of knowledge . . . In the world of knowledge, the last thing* ***to be perceived*** *and only with great difficulty is* ***the Idea of Goodness****. Once it is perceived, the conclusion must follow that, for all things, this is the cause of whatever is right and good . . .* ***Without*** *having had* ***a vision of*** *the Idea of* ***Goodness no one can act with wisdom****, either in his own life or in matters of the state.*

Then when she calls to mind h er fellow prisoners and ***what passed for wisdom*** *in her former dwelling-place, she would surely think herself* ***happy in the change and be sorry for them*** *. . . Would she not . . .* ***endure anything rather than go back to her old beliefs and live in the old way?***

Here we have two classical statements of humanity's relationship to the Good, to the pursuit of wisdom and importantly how that relationship transforms our individual lives. Both stories rely heavily upon the metaphor of sight, of the eyes being opened to wisdom as both stories are focused upon gaining a knowledge of the good. Interestingly, each, in its antiquated way, does have a different view of human nature. Most of us today are rather skeptical of there being anything like human nature given our 20th century experiences in the social sciences, in Existentialism and with the discovery in Analytic Philosophy of the notion of Family Resemblance regarding the meaning of concepts. Essentialism, the view that there are things with essences, and in the specific case of humans that there is such a thing as human nature, has not faired well in the twentieth century. I suspect it has been intellectually abandoned.

For Plato, humans are reluctant to leave the comfort of their familiar surroundings, their familiar beliefs, even when they're at the bottom of a cave and experiencing only shadows and echoes. People must be forced, dragged out of their complacency into the light, to gain knowledge of the Good. On the other hand, Genesis portrays knowledge of good and evil as quite tempting, even tantalizing. Humans, at least women or Eve, desire knowledge of the good, of wisdom so much that the suspiciously Freudian snake manages rather effortlessly to beguile thoroughly innocent Eve. Bottom line, in Genesis, giving into the desire, the temptation for knowledge of Good and Evil marks the fall of Man, the loss of paradise and punishments heaped upon endless generations, who, themselves, seem quite innocent concerning this particular original sin, at least according to our moral system. However, that too is another issue beyond our present tiny truncated tour.

For Socrates and Plato, as philosophers, as **lovers of wisdom**, knowledge of the Good is life's goal. The unexamined life is not worth living, as Socrates made a life of claiming. Better dead than living ignorantly at the bottom of a dark cave, foolishly mistaking shadows for reality or even living in paradise with all of life's amenities except wisdom. As John Stuart Mill was to put the point in the 19th century, "Better Socrates dissatisfied than a pig satisfied."

The philosopher's passionate commitment to wisdom, to knowing the Good, resonates throughout Socrates' life all the way to his death as he reasons that it is the right, the good thing, not to escape from his prison cell. He makes it quite clear that he does not want to die, but as a lover of wisdom, reason takes priority over his appetite to live longer. You may or may not agree with Socrates' reasons, but that reason is his guide, one cannot disagree.

In short, we are all extremely fortunate that neither Socrates nor Plato found their way into the Garden of Eden. They would have bolted directly for the tree of knowledge of Good and Evil and shook that poor tree until all of its apples had fallen to the ground. Then, as innocent Eve strolled around on that momentous afternoon in that bountiful garden, she would have been drawn in not by some wily snake but by the delightful aroma of hot apple turnovers, apple pies, apple cobblers, dumplings, apple sauce with

cinnamon. There, at the stripped tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, would have stood the smiling Greek Philosophers in their aprons, one would hope.

Let us further suppose that at that moment, under that tree, Socrates and his young protégé heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day. The Lord God would probably have asked, "Have you eaten of the tree of which **I commanded** you not to eat?" We know specifically, from Plato's dialogue, *The Euthyphro*, that Socrates at this very point would have put down his apple juice, smiled at the good fortune of such an encounter and **asked**, "Please clarify for me, if you **can**, sorry, if you **would**, Lord God, shall I understand your command as being right, that is, one which I or we should obey, **because you commanded it** or **did you command it, because it is right?**"

One of many Socratic questions that was heard round the intellectual world, to borrow a phrase. For this question seemed to place religious commands in one of two unacceptable categories: **(A)** that of being**arbitrary, dictatorial orders**; or **(B)** implying that **morality is actually independent of religion**. Given Socrates' question, a whole barrage of feelings and emotions are raised and further questions immediately present themselves, as may be the case with your own thinking at this very moment. The pious may feel affronted by such presumptuousness. Such questioning of a God is for some blasphemy and blasphemy was actually one of the charges against Socrates. Surprise? It is at this intellectual junction that religion and philosophy part company. Religious piety commands at some point intellectual silence and obeisance while philosophical curiosity, seduced by wonderment, adventurously pursues the questions, ever hoping to further illuminate the darkness of ignorance with reason.

Questions, so many questions, are not only the trademark of Socrates but significantly, **questions are the conceptual instigators of knowledge itself**. Socratic wisdom was the result, so Socrates claimed, of **knowing that he did not know**. To know you don't know seems paradoxical but what Socrates **did not know** were the answers, what he did know, and knew, he knew, were the questions. He was a master of the question. **For questions mark the frontier of our ignorance**. Our individual frontiers, as well as humanity's collective frontier.

In my own case, I sometimes feel like I am drowning in questions, and thus ignorance, when I read some of the extensive contemporary research regarding human consciousness which is being generated in the neurosciences, the cognitive sciences and the philosophy of mind. A small part of this research I will remark upon in a moment. When one further realizes that the problem of understanding consciousness is but one small area in philosophy of mind and philosophy of mind is but one area of philosophy which is but one area of academia, one quickly realizes that as humanity's collective knowledge pushes outward daily onto the frontier of ignorance, our own individual frontiers of ignorance grow daily in some perverse inverse ratio. That is, the more we know collectively, the less we know individually. No one individual could ever keep up.

I suspect that some of our contemporary socio-psychological concerns over the prevalence of such experiences as: powerlessness, valuelessness, alienation and jadedness, which seemingly plague the populations of modern industrial societies, particularly the youth, who now seem more prone to suicide than at any previous historical period, may be related to this sense of drowning in our isolated rising seas of ignorance. Since our individual claims to knowledge mark our relationship with reality, this Age of Information, with its relentless growth, is a daily reminder of how ignorant each one of us individually are. With our collective knowledge growing so quickly, we each daily know less in relationship to this collective comprehension of reality and thus our individual holds on reality relentlessly grow ever smaller.

Thus, for some of us, this perverse inverse ratio of growing collective knowledge versus growing individual ignorance may generate the previously mentioned conditions of alienation, jadedness, powerlessness. For all of us, it should create an awareness of how interdependent we are daily becoming, a reminder of the Greek view that we are social beings and not some sort of rugged, self-sustaining, independent individuals thrust into a society by some unfortunate historical circumstance. For the adventurer, particularly the young, this growing body of knowledge marks more worlds to be explored though ever tempered by that melancholy reflection that one simply cannot visit all possible ports. Part of our responsibility as educators may indeed be to try and instill and/or simply nurture in our students this empowering sense of the intrinsic value of the adventure itself.

For the adventurer on this frontier of ignorance, all effort begins with a question. As some have argued, any claim to truth or falsehood is only possible in the context of a question being asked. In philosophy, the study of questions falls within **Erotetic Logic**. As we now know, the question we ask, configures, or to a large extent determines, the very nature of the answer we get. In determining the nature of the answer, this does not yet concern the issue of the actual truth or rational acceptability of some answer. The nature of the answer we get will in its turn determine what method will elevate some answer to that privileged status of knowledge as opposed to its remaining simply opinion or even superstition. Determining which answers count as genuine knowledge has in part, traditionally and formally, been the domain of Epistemology along with Inferential Logic and their related disciplines.

As to the nature of questions and how they shape their answers, let's first briefly consider the ambiguity of the question raised when someone asks, "why?" or uses some comparable cognate. Here we are not concerned with the sometimes simple repetitive, perhaps pointless, "why's" of a young child. Rather the "why's" of our concern are the contentful, the pointed, "why's" which small children sometimes ask, adolescents often pointedly ask and many adults make a living by asking. We should also note that the facile distinction sometimes drawn between questions of a what or how nature being "scientific questions" as opposed to questions of a why nature being in some sense "philosophical" questions really cuts no interesting conceptual distinctions.

These superficial grammatical differences fail to differentiate adequately the significant semantic or conceptual differences since one can as easily ask, "How did George Washington die?" or "What caused George Washington's death?" or "Why did George Washington die?" and, given a specific context, each of these How, What and Why questions could come to mean the same thing with the same answer being sufficient for each. Our truncated tour will not allow us to explore the actual semantic distinctions for marking such differences in question types which these superficial grammatical remarks unsuccessfully intend to make.

Nonetheless, to briefly consider two broad distinctions, when someone asks a contentful "Why?" such an inquiry may mark either a request for a Justification or an Explanation. Since Justification and Explanation are distinct critical activities, each having its own criteria of warrant, the conceptual distinction between them is most typically found in the difference between requesting **an account for some claim already accepted as true (an explanation)** versus **requesting some proof for the truth of some claim (a justification)**. In the case of explanation, a biologist might ask, "Why are the mitochondria in these cells not functioning?" or "What has caused these mitochondria to cease functioning?"

An historian might ask, "Why did George Custer attack Sitting Bull and his warriors at the Little Big Horn?" In both cases, a claim is initially **accepted as being true**. In the above case of the biologist that the mitochondria are in fact not functioning while in that of the historian, that Custer did in fact attack Sitting Bull. Explanations attempt to **account for** the truth and good explanations actually do, it seems, account for the truth. On the other hand, if a fellow biologist asked, "Why do you believe these mitochondria are not functioning?" or another historian, "Why do you believe that Custer attacked rather than his having been attacked?" These are now the why's of justification. They mark a request for reasons to **prove or establish the truth of a claim**. Once a claim's truth is established or sometimes simply accepted, only then does the critical activity of explaining take place.

While explanations are not justifications, since the critical cognitive activities involved in each are directed to very different intellectual goals, nonetheless a good justification may sometimes serve as a good explanation and vice-versa but, again this is not necessarily the case. For example, if someone in a mental hospital believed he was Napoleon, we may have an excellent explanation for his delusion regarding brain anatomy and/ or physiology, perhaps all the way down to a detailed explanatory hypothesis concerning neural transmitters, brain tumors and the like, but such an explanation for this person's belief in being Napoleon does not constitute a justification for the truth of his belief that he actually is Napoleon. Good explanations are thus not necessarily good justifications and vice versa.

If this conceptual distinction is not kept clear, then in a difficult context, perhaps an emotionally charged context, a person can get into serious intellectual befuddlement or simply be intellectually assuaged for the wrong reasons. For example, if someone were asked "**Why** do you believe that there is God?" or "Why are you opposed to abortion?"

and you responded**BECAUSE** that is what **I was raised to believe**, such a response may indeed provide **an excellent explanation for having such beliefs** but being raised a certain way **does not necessarily carry any legitimate justification for the truth of a belief**. My students are so often ignorant of this distinction that their intellectual satisfaction over discovering a seemingly satisfactory explanation for their moral beliefs, "Well that is how I was raised," leaves them oblivious, thus intellectually vulnerable, to the issue of justification and truth. Typically they espouse a position of Moral Relativism since an explanation cannot resolve conflicts regarding the truth of beliefs. Thus we are sometimes relieved of doubt, cuddled with feelings of intellectual security, when our ignorance blocks us from knowing what conceptually we are actually doing-explaining or justifying. And again we are reminded of Plato's remark that ignorance is the root of misfortune.

Historically, the study of justification, as it involves reasoning, is now called Inferential Logic, and is commonly accepted to have started with Aristotle, who seemed to have said nearly all that needed to be said until the great breakthroughs of the late 19th century and continuing on through our own 20th century. Some writers have claimed that the computer revolution of the late 20th century had amongst its essential historical determinants the discovery and development by Frege, Russell and Wittgenstein of the formal, symbolic systems of the two-valued logics and their refinements which dominate logical studies today.

The history of Explanation as opposed to Justification does not seem quite so linear. An interesting and suggestive example from our own past shows how the implicit logic of the Why of Explanation further defines its domain of potentially acceptable, meaningful answers. When the bubonic plague swept through Europe in the middle of the 14th century, the inhabitants had known it was slowly making its way from the middle east trade routes. No one was doubting the presence of the Black Death. But **why** were so many thousands of people, seemingly innocent men, women and children perishing in such a painful, horrible manner? This was a why seeking an explanation.

Since the Middle Ages marked a period in our Western history where religious beliefs permeated the understanding, the natural explanation came from trying to understand God's intentions. Given the purported powers of this particular deity and its ubiquitous role in human and natural affairs, the explanation for this plague must be found in God's displeasure, abandonment and/or intention to punish humanity. As diaries from the period report, people turned their desperate attention to a search for the appropriate sacrifice, offering or prayer which might appease their God, change his, her or its mind, and stop this horrible Black Death.

Sometime later, a few centuries actually, the inhabitants of Europe again asked, "Why?" the plague and the explanation sought this time did not concern the intentions of a deity but rather the **natural causal relationships** between the presence of a bacteria in the saliva of fleas, which fleas in turn traveled on rats, and thereby spread the bubonic plague. In myopically looking for natural causal relationships alone, humans conceptually shifted their search for types of explanations and in this shift developed

new methods, indeed methods which have grown highly sophisticated and which have variously come to be known as scientific methods. As these scientific methods grew in explanatory power and fostered so many technological innovations, as well as actually effecting a positive change in dealing with plagues and illness in general, the power and efficacy of the traditional religious explanations began to diminish and have continued to lose ground up to the present. Rainbows were no longer simply God's covenant with man but rather concentric bands of refracted and reflected light rays in suspended water droplets. Because the Scientific and Religious systems seemingly rest upon incompatible metaphysical foundations, we have one of the modern era's spectacular intellectual collisions. It would thus appear, given the incompatibility of these metaphysical views, that someone has false beliefs.

Seeing how a question will narrow, sometimes radically, the very type of answer considered meaningful, there nevertheless still remains the need to understand what criteria determine warranted answers within this now limited range. Some explanations are good and some not so good. Some justifications or arguments are good and some not so good or as we might say, in this latter case, some arguments are fallacious.

Rather ironically, though perhaps it is the result of ignorance, some have charged philosophy in getting stuck with only questions and never having any answers. Socrates might respond, "And so, what is your point?" (Still, another question!) While the history of philosophy would indicate that answers are not only forthcoming, it turns out that philosophy is that discipline that has added substantially to our understanding of what an acceptable answer must be. The acceptable answers are those which we have come to describe as constituting knowledge as opposed to mere opinion. From ancient times to the present the study of, not simply the gaining of, knowledge has come under Epistemology, from the Greek,*episteme*: to know. As the Greeks demonstrated so long ago, knowledge and belief are not synonyms.

Each semester, with each new batch of Introduction to Philosophy students, one inevitably hears the contemporary populist mantras, "There is no truth." And, of course, it is quickly followed by the claim, "And that is true." Or, "No one really knows." And of course, "And I know that." Everyone's opinion counts equally. Everyone has his or her own beliefs and these beliefs are true for him or her. This is what I shall refer to as the position of Epistemic Democracy. The principles of Epistemic Democracy seem to take something of the following form . . .

We hold all beliefs to be self-evidently true. That each us has been endowed with many beliefs and if you really, really, really believe something, then, by golly, that belief is true.

For the Epistemic Democrat belief and knowledge are synonyms. There also seem to be radical Epistemic Democrats who find even the claims of science mere fabrications of some culture or gender or both while other, perhaps less radical, Epistemic Democrats are somewhat more selective perhaps only dumping western medicine or different systems of evaluation.

However, rather than coining academically esoteric terms like Epistemic Democracy for my classes, it has been my experience that a much more effective pedagogical expression, which is closer to the student language, to the vernacular, is to talk instead of intellectual sluts, people who will sleep with any idea.

There are many possible explanations as to why Epistemic Democracy, a form of misology, presently holds sway in the popular understanding. Aspects of it, I suspect, could be traced back, at least in part, to American culture's righteous reverence for individuality as well as the culture's ever so selective suspicion of authority. However, accounts or explanations of Epistemic Democracy are not in our present perview. Rather, we need to turn to philosophy to understand why truth is not personal, and why knowledge and belief are not synonyms. Some reflection, a bit of justification, should take us a long way here.

Let us consider a set of illustrative examples by first considering the case of Santa Claus. That jolly elf, Mrs. Claus, their elf cohorts and their immense annual undertaking all mark for me some of my finest, most vivid, childhood memories. Once December would sneak in, it seemed you could just feel Christmas slowly arriving. With my siblings, I would go to see Santa, watch him on television, and meet strangers, kind old grandmas, who would query us in department stores as to whether we've been been good or bad. It was a magical time that seemed to permeate one's entire existence with excitement, hope, fear, purpose, joy and even a sense of generosity which tended to fade around December 26. The world was ordered, you knew its major players and they were well intentioned.

For a second example, this one from the adult world, consider the present day Warao people of the Orinoco Delta of Venezuela. The Warao believe that the Earth is a saucer and they inhabit the very center of this saucer. Surrounding the saucer is an ocean in which the giant Snake of Being lives. Another monster, a four-headed serpent, lives beneath the Earth itself. Much of a Warao's life is spent in pleasing the spirits who rule this land and in trying to transcend its boundaries. (*Intoxication*. R. Siegel, Dutton. p. 83.)

My final example is about a young child I will call, Saddam Jones. This is a fictitious name but his story is true. I changed this child's name because the premise used to justify the horrendous actions taken against this child applies beyond the context of his specific story. The child's actual name would too closely identify a particular context so I named him Saddam, to give a middle eastern sense and Jones to keep him with a garden variety American, hence multi-cultural, name.

On December 2, 1982 (as you can see this has intellectually haunted me for sometime), the parents of Saddam Jones pleaded guilty to involuntary manslaughter in the beating death of their three-year old son, Saddam. The parents were instructed by members of their church, temple, cult, mosque, whatever you wish to call it, that children required discipline in order to get into heaven; in particular, corporal discipline was necessary. If children went unpunished, then their souls would probably go to hell. So, given some

seemingly minor infraction, Saddam's father, with his mother holding him, proceeded to paddle the three year-old boy while encircled by members of their faith. After an hour or so of this punishment, the boy expired from internal hemorrhaging. When asked by the judge how a father could beat his three year old son to death by paddling him, Saddam's father responded, **"A butt is nothing compared to an immortal soul."**

A butt is nothing to an immortal soul. What an incredible remark. When I first read the article, I was stunned. So much seemed unquestioned. As a matter of fact, I think the three examples I gave you-Santa Claus, the Warao and Saddam Jones-all share something in common, ignorance. Ignorance of the complexity and sublety of reality. In short, ignorance of the truth. This is not to say that these various beliefs don't in their various ways serve a variety of personal, societal, even cosmic purposes and those purposes may indeed be personally self-fulfilling. These sorts of issues are all quite distinct from whether or not some belief or proposition is actually true or at least reasonable to believe.

Let's return to Santa. We all passed, by at least our fourteenth year, that moment in which the truth about Santa, his unreality, was **discovered**. However, accepting the Santa story as a child was not that irrational. After all, your parents, grandparents, siblings, and kind strangers systematically lied to you. Additionally, there actually are small people, maybe not elves per se, and there are animals that do fly, including mammals. So given the conspiracy of adults and our ordinary everyday experiences, Santa is actually an extremely subtle test of rationality for a child. Nonetheless,**there is no Santa**. Mom, dad and cash or credit bring the presents. **Thus the literal belief in Santa is a false belief**. And, it's not personal.

Now the Warao have a rather peculiar set of beliefs and accompanying rituals regarding, what the Greeks called, physis, that is the study of nature, the term from which we get our word, "physics." The Warao have created an imaginative, though it seems rather hostile world, but I could be mistaken about the hostile aspect. However, I do not believe I am mistaken that literally the earth is not a saucer with a four-headed monster living below it. The Warao are stuck, like the Santa Claus believing child, with false beliefs. It's not personal nor culturally relative nor gender specific nor race relative really. It seems to be reality, really. However, if such descriptions about chubby elves and four-headed monsters are only meant metaphorically, then let's move on as truth may not be our primary concern.

The case of three year old Saddam Jones, unlike the previous two examples, really opens, in a terribly urgent fashion, a Pandora's Box of philosophical questions. The philosophical presuppositions of the case raise not only issues about knowledge, specifically its nature and limits, but metaphysical issues about the nature and stuff of Reality, as well as myriad moral issues starting with Retributive Justice, or the just balance between wrong-doing and punishment, as well as issues concerning the nature and extent of responsibility, particularly how responsible children are, how it is that what we ought to do implies that we can actually do it, in addition to an understanding of the duties and obligations of being a parent. In short, there are too many unanalyzed

philosophical presuppositions in Saddam Jones' case for me to even begin to list them all at this time. For the remainder of this lecture, let us consider briefly whether Saddam's father possessed anything like knowledge regarding souls, butts and their worth.

How does Saddam's father **know** that a butt is nothing compared to an immortal soul? His harsh behavior would certainly indicate he **believes** it, but so do the actions of a child on Christmas eve, when cookies and a Budweiser are left for Santa's pending visit, indicate the child's belief in the reality of Claus. However, as is obvious, having a belief is not sufficient for having knowledge. But what if you really, really, really believe? What if you are ready to maim, divorce or kill over your ever so strongly held belief? Well, your belief may still be false and you might just be blinded by a passion like poor Othello. So it seems quite obvious then that false beliefs do not count as knowledge. If you believe Ronald Reagan IS now president then you do not KNOW who the president actually is right now. Thus one's beliefs must be true in order to, at least initially, claim to have knowledge but is there anything else beyond true belief that is needed to move one into that privileged epistemic status of possessing knowledge?

Let me ask you the following questions: Is anyone here a close friend of Bill Clinton? Anyone known Bill most of his life or could serve as a good or legitimate witness to aspects of Bill's personal life? Is anyone here a friend or acquaintance of Paula Jones or Monica Lewinsky? No, well then let me ask this rather personal question about Mr. Clinton and let's see if anyone here KNOWS the answer. So, ponder, if you will, do you KNOW whether or not Bill Clinton is a U.S. citizen? You roll your eyes, you think, of course, he is.

Now **how** do you **KNOW** that Bill Clinton is a U.S. citizen? Either enthymatically or explicitly you would tell me or think, well Joe, all U.S. Presidents are U.S. citizens, Bill is a U.S. President **therefore**, Bill is a U.S. citizen. Bravo! Yes, IF what you claim about U.S. Presidents and Bill Clinton being a U.S. president are true then Bill **must** be a U.S. citizen. While the details of Mr. Clinton's life are really of no philosophical interest to us here, this example nonetheless serves to illustrate an important epistemological point. While **your belief that Bill is a U.S. citizen may be true**, for you **to additionally claim to know that it is true**, you **gave me some justification, proof or an argument**. If I am rational, that is, if I can think logically, then, as a logician would say, I can follow your syllogism, a two premise, deductive argument, and if, as you claim, the premises are true then you infer that the conclusion must be true.

The premises: All U.S. Presidents are U.S. citizens, and Bill C. is a U.S. president, therefore, **you know** that **the belief**, Bill is a U.S. citizen, **is** in fact **true**. Without those first two beliefs, which are your argument's premises, the belief about Bill's citizenship remains **only a belief**. With those reasons provided, you have an argument, a justification for knowing the truth of the claim that Bill is a U.S. citizen. If you believe that Bill Clinton is a philanderer, what justification do you have? How strong is your argument? Is your inference inductive or deductive? I suspect, given the nature of such a case, there is no argument or justification available which approximates the strength

of our argument regarding Mr. Clinton's citizenship. Given the recent reports of an affair between Mr. Clinton and a White House intern, we can see how extremely weak, if not fallacious, arguments can nonetheless fan tremendously powerful emotional states which individuals are already disposed to hold.

Given our ever so truncated present tour, we thus see that justification is also apparently necessary for knowledge. But as remarked previously, there is good justification and bad or fallacious justification. So if you asked someone, perhaps jokingly, "Is Joe White a U.S. President?" and you were told with grave seriousness, "Yes, indeed he is the President." Amazed, you might inquire further, "How do you KNOW that Joe is a U.S. President?" If the response came, "Well, all U.S. Presidents are U.S. citizens and Joe White is a U.S. citizen therefore I know that Joe White is a U.S. President," you would no doubt smile as such intellectual gullibility and sloppiness.

Most of us here, whether or not you know me personally, would not in the least be persuaded by such reasoning. We would not accept the conclusion as part of our knowledge. While this example may be intuitively obvious to you, Aristotle would have additionally pointed out that the argument involves the formal fallacy of Failing to Distribute Its Middle Term. Thus the rational person concerned with acquiring knowledge realizes that some forms of justification or acts of reasoning will not do the logical job that is necessary for getting at the truth.

The delicacy and subtlety of the difference between good reasoning and bad reasoning can be seen where the above fallacy of Failing to Distribute Its Middle Term occurs even if an argument's conclusion and all of its premises or reasons are true as in: All U.S. Presidents are U.S. citizens, Bill Clinton is a U.S. citizen thus Bill Clinton is a U.S. President. Again, here is a case where the reasoning or justification is rotten or fallacious so we do not in fact have knowledge that Bill Clinton is President as a result of this justification or reasoning. If we reason like this and our beliefs turn out to be true, we are simply lucky.

If you would like to study the distinction between good and bad reasoning, you might want to take either Philosophy 110 or English 111 as these two courses provide an introduction to some of the informal methods of critical thinking. However, if you'd like a truncated, introductory tour of symbolic logic, you could take Philosophy 205. Thus, coming down to us over the centuries, from at least Plato, is what is accepted as the traditional definition of knowledge. Genuine knowledge seems to at least require Justified True Belief. Hence, K=JTB. As apples alone do not make an apple pie, neither does belief alone make for knowledge. Even lucky guesses coincidentally yielding true belief, do not give one knowledge. So much for the credulous citizens of Epistemic Democracy.

As to children and Santa Claus along with the Warao and their four headed monster, none of them possesses knowledge regarding those specific beliefs, since their beliefs are false. However, what can we claim to know about Saddam Jones' immortal soul and butt? As to his butt, most of us wouldn't have a problem, trusting at this point to the

deliverances of our senses. After all we can see and feel butts. Now as to a soul, that marks a most fascinating issue in the history of philosophy, fascinating in part since souls are neither seen, smelled, touched nor tasted. The nature and existence of the soul marks an issue which both the religious and the scientific communities have variously handled but which remains to this day a philosophical issue as we shall now see.

The soul is central, perhaps essential, to most, if not all, of the world's major religions as well as, it would seem, most all "religious" cults. The soul or self has quite a varied history in that it may be redeemed, saved, damned, incarnated, reincarnated and/or channeled depending upon whether you are Jewish, Christian, Moslem, Hindus, Confuscianist, Buddhist or any number of analogous variations. Most of these religions thus hold some claim that the soul or self retains its vitality and identity after the body perishes. In some cases, the soul is claimed to also be immortal. Typically, for most of the world's religions, we humans are made up of both body and soul. While our bodies are physical and of the earth, our souls are not physical and belong to some sort of spiritual realm. Whatever refinement a religion may wish to add to the history of the soul, all of these views tend to rest upon a philosophical view within the area of metaphysics known as Dualism.

The more prevalent form of Dualism assumed by religious systems claims that there are two quite distinct realms in reality apparently populated by two quite distinct types of things. There is the physical realm, which includes such things as galaxies, black holes, DNA and butts, and the spiritual realm, which may include such things as souls along with a melange of gods, angels or a God and other various spirit entities. There are also typically, for most religions, principles of evaluation which give priority to the spiritual realm and prescribe behavior so as to redeem, save or at least benefit the soul. Hence, there is a context for Saddam's father's belief that the value of an immortal soul is so much more than a butt. But are his beliefs reasonable and do souls actually exist?

In many cultures, metaphysical dualism was accepted as a given though philosophical problems arose very early. However, with the rise of modern science, the philosophical problems took on a more popular and practical turn. Science has typically been and is not usually considered to be a system sympathetic to dualism. Rather science has traditionally taken a position of metaphysical monism, there being only one type of thing, and that being variously described as either Materialism or Physicalism. Thus what we, in the late twentieth century, have inherited intellectually are incompatible metaphysical systems which have been in a process of collision for the past couple of centuries. For philosophers, we live in an exciting time of discovery because this collision is still in process with its final outcome not yet fully known. This metaphysical area on the frontier of our ignorance ironically stretches right into that which is closest and perhaps dearest to us. It is the mystery of the nature of consciousness and self-consciousness.

Rene Descartes, the father of modern philosophy, argued for Dualism in part to show, at that time, that the new science, had its legitimate domain, the physical realm, as did The Church, meaning the Roman Catholic Church, have its domain, the spiritual. Descartes

not only articulated one of humanity's clearest and strongest defenses of metaphysical dualism, but also, inadvertently, it would seem, aided in isolating metaphysical dualism's fatal flaw.

Briefly, our soul or, as Descartes preferred, the self, is a private, nonspatial, mental thing whose essence is thinking. Hence our thoughts and experiences are neither triangular, nor are they spatially extended though they are temporally extended. The physical realm on the other hand is extended in space, can be experienced publicly, in principle, and does not think. While galaxies, DNA, butts and so much of reality lack a soul, we humans are creatures which are both body and soul. A human being is then a combination of two distinct metaphysical things but the question naturally presented itself, as Descartes realized, where exactly do these two distinct metaphysical things actually interact?

Descartes claimed body and mind/soul causally interact. While this seems quite intuitive, as there seems to be innumerable examples to illustrate this causal interaction, one is still pressed to account for where exactly does this causal interaction occur. As it turns out, the question of "where" in this context is a very peculiar question. To ask, where the soul effects the body and the body effects the soul, regarding their causal interrelationship, seems to be asking a spatial question of at least one part of a relationship which is not itself spatial. To ask where a soul or mind interacts with the body seems to ask a nonsense question since the soul or mind is not a spatial thing, as was claimed above. It seems analogous to asking, "Does your car weigh more than Tuesday?" While your car has weight, Tuesday marks a day of the week and days of the week do not have weight in any comparable sense. Dualism's history of futile attempts, some quite clever and ingenious, to resolve this problem of interaction between body and soul has come to be regarded by our time in the late 20th century as indicative of a fatal flaw in this entire metaphysical position.

Obviously for humans, their purported mental lives do have some bearing upon their physical lives. But perhaps, there is actually nothing like a soul or abiding self that does actually exist, as David Hume so powerfully argued in the 18th century. Perhaps the soul is a psychological fiction which our imaginations have created out what is actually a bundle of perceptions. Perhaps our mental-object language has bewitched our intellects into accepting some form of substantive metaphysical dualism as a result of its parasitic evolution out of our material-object language. Abstractness, fear and a deep psychological need for necessity may have perpetually deluded us about dualism's semantic vacuousness. Nonetheless, as the discoveries and explanations of science grew in power and sophistication, and as its offspring, technology, flourished, yielding its own revolutions, the view of metaphysical materialism expanded, further undermining the relevance or need for the traditional religious explanations and metaphysical claims about dual realities. By the 19th century religion had seemingly become the opiate of the masses and man a risen ape, no longer a fallen angel.

Metaphysical materialism, while evolving in subtle ways, continues to be the dominant metaphysical view in academia up unto this very day. Essentially stated, stuff exists

which appears to be arranged largely, though perhaps not exclusively, by a variety of natural forces creating an intricate network of causal relationships. Humans, and all that we are, are indeed the result of this stuff interacting in a variety of these complex causal relationships. We are in a sense evolved, acculturated, socialized star dust, a seeming accident to the blind, indifferent processes of nature and history.

Such a vague description of what we are, while cognitively appealing at a vague level of generality, has yet to yield any adequate theorizing comparable to evolutionary theory in biology or the theories of relativity in physics. Thus adequate, widely accepted theories about consciousness have yet to be articulated. Welcome to the 20th century and welcome back to the frontier of ignorance. Today, while it is widely accepted that brains are correlated with conscious states, the nature of that correlation is not understood. If it is causal, then many conceptual, not scientific, questions appear to arise. One of the primary questions facing contemporary researchers on the frontier of consciousness is that of the **Problem of Qualia**.

The existence of qualia, subjective, first person experiences which include: colors, tastes, smells, temperatures, pains, pleasures and the like appear to continuously elude all of our recently proposed models of the brain and consciousness including the popular computational models about brains being computers, identifying mental states with specific brain or neuron states or mental states with configurations of brain or neuron states, be they neural nets or neural columns.

Consider the occurrence of color, specifically the color blue, or choose your favorite. According to Prof. Gerald Jacobs at UCSB's Neural Science Institute and one of our planet's experts on color perception, colors are an illusion. Colors do not exist in the world but are part of our experience of the world. But at what point does such experience, or this experience of color, occur in the causal process of perception. You can see from these wonderful pictures of synapses**(see Figs. 3, 4, 5)** showing the anatomy and physiology of the nerve cell, the neuron, that no matter how their electrical-chemical processes work there remains the question of how color experience actually occurs.

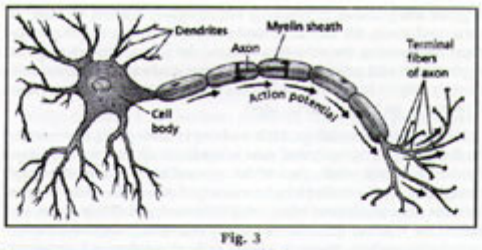


Fig. 3

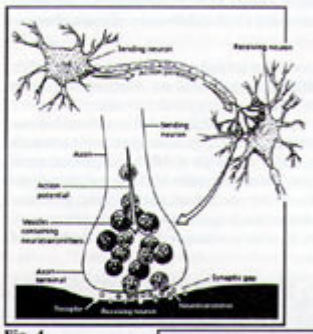


Fig. 4

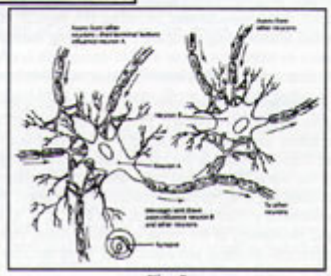


Fig. 5

How does blue emerge from neural processes? While souls are not part of the language of this research, there is much debate, with little consensus, as to whether consciousness or the qualia composing consciousness occur at the individual neuron level, the neural-net level, in columns of neurons or at the sub-neural level. However, these brain processes, in all of their anatomical and physiological complexity, are finally described, the theory which accounts for the possibility of our being able to dream in images, in which we seemingly experience qualia without their typical causal sources, should prove extremely fascinating and a major theoretical breakthrough for us in finally coming to know what we are and how we are aware. But at this point, there seems no place inside our skulls for dream-images or any images to exist.

Some theorists have claimed that while we sleep our brains remain active and generate various states correlated with belief states with the imagistic aspect of dreaming filled in once we wake up. The purported imagistic experience of night dreaming being analogous to that of daydreaming. Perhaps our having to reconceive what we are and what the nature of our experience actually is, will require us to be even more adventurous on this frontier of ignorance than we had previously ever conceived or imagined. Given these difficult and unresolved issues, Saddam Jones's father's remark about an immortal soul, I fear, not only reflects a profound degree of ignorance but a seemingly terrifying depth of epistemic obliviousness on his part.

As to further limits of our powerful scientific methods and prior to more exploration on the frontier of ignorance, humans must inevitably stop the locomotive of science to lay yet more philosophical track regarding, most glaringly, our judgments of value. Here we

discover the complete impotence of scientific methodology. While Biology now brings us cloned sheep, questions arise as to whether or not we SHOULD be cloning at all and whether or not we SHOULD clone humans? We have powerful medicinal technologies and pharmaceuticals but their costs require us to allocate them. How OUGHT we to allocate scarce medical resources? In short, the domain of evaluation, the questions of ought, right and goodness mark a clear limit to the scientific enterprise as no scientific method can generate a value judgment. Science's domain remains limited to a subset of descriptive propositions, to a subset of the facts and their relations.

The domain of evaluation and our capacity for choice mark another area of intimate familiarity to each of us but an area over which so many of us, individually, as well as collectively, remain ignorant. Again, keeping in mind that this is a truncated tour, let's briefly touch upon some central issues which seem reasonably well established within philosophy regarding the nature of evaluation.

As to the role of knowledge and reasoning regarding value judgments, it appears widely accepted that **not all value judgments are moral judgments**. Since morality constitutes a type of evaluation, that is one value amongst many, one of the first questions to present itself is, "What is morality?" or "What is it to judge morally as opposed to legally or self-interestedly?" In my classes, students often confuse this question with the question, "Why be moral?" which is itself in turn confused with the related questions:" Why should **we** be moral?", "Why should **I live a moral life**?" and "Why should **I be moral on this particular occasion**?"

Overall, morality has come to be regarded as that type of evaluation where we attempt or intend to show respect for each other, "each other" presently consisting, typically, of human beings. However, some animals, some philosophers have argued, deserve moral respect and it would appear that much of the popular debate on abortion reflects differing views regarding the moral status of the fetus. These issues aside, amongst our many diverse value judgments, morality is that type of evaluation in which we may infuse some sense of respect or equality in our relationships with one another and the institutions by which we organize our social lives. Thus the moral point of view seems to require an impartiality which thereby distinguishes it from the partiality of our self-interested evaluations, whether such self-interested evaluations are short or long term, narrow or enlightened.

Additionally, it seems that to evaluate one's actions from a moral point of view might involve one, at least in principle, if not in practice, in conflict with one's self-interest given morality's impartiality and self-interest's partiality. (*Note*: Self-interest and selfishness should not be confused here.) Thus one may face hard choices between moral evaluation and self-interested evaluation when these conflict and we may then experience one type of temptation.

The issue of one's happiness is directly related to this issue of sacrificing self-interest as well as the previously mentioned questions involved in the problem of "Why be moral?" Thus the questions, "Why should I live a moral life?" or "Why should I be moral on this

particular occasion?" may raise some very difficult practical questions pertaining to one's happiness and the duty or obligation to act morally.

Happiness, as I am using that term here is not to be confused with a particular emotion like joy nor simply a feeling like pleasure. Rather, I use the term happiness, as I believe the Greeks used the term Eudaimonia. Eudaimonia or happiness in this sense is a description relating to the fullness or completeness of a whole life. Perhaps, as Plato claimed, we cannot know the value of life, and thus the good life or eudaimonia, until we have some understanding of death.

When we look 75 years into the future and ponder what we may be doing on 1/28/2073 at 3:00 p.m. we realize that life, as we presently know it, will have ended for the vast majority of us. We know that each of us has a very specific moment waiting for us between this fleeting moment and 3:00 p.m., 1/28/2073. At that precise moment we will expire, die. I wish all of you a good death. For me that might consist of something like the following:

In my late 90s, somewhere around 2047 to 2049, I will find myself in a nursing home. I will hopefully be able to still shuffle about an hour or so a day and hopefully on my final day there will be a beautiful, bright sunny blue sky. I hope to be awakened from a nap by my great grandchildren, as my children and grandchildren have come to visit. If I'm really lucky my wife will still be alive. We will hold hands. But I can almost hear the great grandkids, "Grandpa wake up. Look! You're slobbering on yourself again. Gross!" I'll listen to the stories of their busy lives, their frustrations, their victories, their awards, their disappointments, their hopes and their dreams. They will be full of life, ever so animated and the little children, ever so readily distracted. My own children will be adults, themselves grandparents, their own histories now etched upon their faces. They will have grown wise.

Smiling, I will realize at some moment that I will not make it on this day to lunch. I will not be getting out of bed. This is my day, my moment of dying. No more meals, no more afternoons, no 4:00 o'clock tea, no more nights of dreamy sleep. My life has finally come to its inevitable end. I will squeeze my wife's hand with all the strength which my tired, old body can muster but I will remember those times when I held and loved her with so much strength. A farewell tear will roll down my cheek as I must now say good-bye to her forever. And those sweet voices of my family will fade a bit to the background as I glance out my window to see that blue sky, hear the leaves rustle in the breeze and smell the freshness of the outdoors. At that moment, I hope I can honestly say quietly to myself, "It was a good life. I lived it fully. I have no regrets. I hope you remember me as a good person, as someone who tried to the very best of his abilities and talents. Who genuinely loved and was so fortunate to have been loved." Then, at some precise instant, I, like all of you, will be no more of this earth. I will expire.

It is to this sense of "Yeah, it was a good life" that the terms happiness or eudaimonia are intended to apply. This sense of a good life is obviously beyond simply having fun or having a life simply filled with pleasure. It is about a full life, a life which will include the

frustration and joy of achievement, the deferred gratification of ambition, the simple moments of holding a child's hand, of seeing the excitement of that first philosophical insight in a nineteen year old, watching generations grow, experiencing the sorrow, the grief of having previously lost one's parents, perhaps siblings and no doubt lifelong friends but these sorrows need not take away from one having a good life so long as they come at the proper time and in proper doses. However, in my case, I believe this sense of the goodness of my life could be genuinely jeopardized by the premature loss of one of my children. And the risk only seems to increase with additional generations of grandchildren.

This broad sense of the good life, I believe Aristotle captured profoundly in his claim that **eudaimonia is that activity of the soul in accordance with virtue**. There has been much written on Aristotle's theory of virtue as well as on virtue in general. Again, since this is a truncated tour we cannot visit that strand of our web of belief. I encourage everyone to take a course in Ethics and reflect long on the nature and role of virtue. However, given our present limitations, I would like to conclude this lecture with a few general remarks on the notion of activity in Aristotle's definition of eudaimonia.

First, eudaimonia involves activity and not passivity. The do nothingness of the alienated or the goal of winning the lottery so that one could essentially do nothing will not bring one happiness though it may bring one some temporary contentment or relief from the malaise of his/her life. To do is an essential part of Aristotle's insight into a happy life. To be happy one must minimally embrace a life of activity. While Aristotle claimed the primary activity to be that of rationality, I do not dispute this but only wish to emphasize the notion of being engaged, of embracing activity in life. This alone is a major step for many of us.

Second, Aristotle's notion of activity places an emphasis upon **how one lives** and **not primarily on what one owns**. While what one owns obviously has an effect upon how one lives and vice versa, happiness is not essentially about what one has, but rather how one lives with what one has. This view is also expressed in the cliche that one cannot buy happiness. In talking with students, I find many have a goal of owning a lot of square footage, mansions, summer homes, boats, expensive automobiles and, at some level, believing that once such things are possessed they will be happy. Yet they readily admit that there is no natural or social law which guarantees happiness, once you own THE STUFF. The owning of stuff has a much more complicated relationship to happiness than that of simply possessing the stuff. Such consumerism superficially identifies happiness with the what in life as opposed to the how of living.

One essential component of the happy life appears to be self-respect, but self-respect is not something that can be purchased either. Rather self-respect must be achieved, and achievement comes about in the **how of doing** something. To continue on with this discussion regarding the how of living, we would need to turn to the nature and role of virtue as well as Aristotle's discussion of rationality. While we cannot have such a discussion presently, as previously mentioned, we should note that to achieve self-

respect one must act well, do good, and the higher or the grander the good achieved, the greater one's self-respect, so it would seen.

Finally, as I discuss with my students, happiness or eudaimonia is not something that you should anticipate happening to you at some distant, future time. If you think you will be happy once you finish your schooling, once you get that certain job, once you meet that special person, once you have that Ferrari, then your happiness may be resting too securely on the horizon of your future. If this is the case then I fear, there is a chance that happiness will forever elude you as the horizon of your future will constantly recede. If, all things considered, you are performing that activity of the soul in accordance with virtue at this time then you should be happy now. If you aren't happy now and you see some vague sense of happiness happening to you in the future then you may have confused happiness or eudaimonia with some specific emotion or feeling.

In an important sense, life doesn't get any better than it presently is for most of us fortunate creatures who have at least the basic amenities. Reflect upon eudaimonia and be wary of simply chasing the STUFF in order to elicit certain fleeting feelings and/or emotions. If this was the right place for you to be and, prima facie, this lecture is what you should have attended, then I suspect you are in a state of eudaimonia and it may not get much better than this.

In closing, I would like to quote from an article that appeared in *The New York Times* this past December. The article reported the findings of a study that was recently conducted concerning philosophy graduates from Princeton University's class of 1977. There was a quote from a Mr. Behmke that I found best summarized a large part of what I think regarding this honor of being named the Faculty Lecturer as well as being a faculty member here at SBCC and above all working with all of you. I hope no one is offended by this. I quote from the *Times* article...

Mr. Jay M. Behmke, 42, a 1977 Princeton University graduate with a major in philosophy, did what so many philosophy majors do: He became a lawyer. But he built a career with a twist. After a few years in corporate law . . . Mr. Behmke moved to American wine country and became the chief financial officer at a winery. He then opened a law practice in Sonoma County, California, representing vineyards. Asked about the value of his studies in philosophy Mr. Behmke remarked, "Some days I'm sorry I didn't go on as a professor. . . But I do have a fantasy of making a fortune, retiring early and teaching philosophy."

Hold that fantasy Mr. Behmke, it's a good one. And to all of you here today, thank you for your presence and for your kind attention.

THE END

BIBLIOGRAPHY

J. L. Austin: *How To Do Things With Words* (Harvard University Press, 1975).

A. J. Ayer: *Philosophy in the Twentieth Century* (Vintage Books, 1984).

A. J. Ayer & Jane O'Grady: *A Dictionary of Philosophical Quotations* (Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 1992).

R. G. Collingwood: *The Idea of History* (Galaxy Books, 1956).

H. G. Frankfurt: *The Importance of What We Care About* (Cambridge University Press, 1988).

Robert M. Harnish (ed.): *Basic Topics in the Philosophy of Language* (Prentice Hall, 1994).

W. T. Jones: *A History of Philosophy: The Twentieth Century to Wittgenstein and Sartre*(Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1975).

Daniel Kolak: *Wittgenstein's Tractatus* (Mayfield Publishing, 1998).

Richard Mason (ed.): *Cambridge Minds* (Cambridge University Press, 1994).

Ray Monk: Wittgenstein-*The Duty of Genius* (Vintage Press, 1991).

G. E. Moore: "What is Philosophy?" from *Some Main Problems of Philosophy* (George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1953).

Paul Moser & Dwayne Mulder: *Contemporary Approaches to Philosophy* (Macmillan Publishing Company, 1994).

Jeffrey Olen: *Persons and Their World* (Random House, 1983).

Hilary Putnam: "Why Is A Philosopher?" from *Realism With A Human Face* (Harvard University Press, 1990).

John Rawls: *A Theory of Justice* (Harvard University Press, 1971).

John Searle: *The Mystery of Consciousness* (New York Review of Books, 1997).

Stephen Swartz (ed): *Naming, Necessity and Natural Kinds* (Cornell University Press, 1977).

G. H. von Wright: *Ludwig Wittgenstein-Value & Culture* (Blackwell, 1980).