

Kentucky Philosophical Association

Spring 2013 Meeting
 Transylvania University
 The Cowgill Center Rooms
 Lexington, KY 40508

Saturday, March 23rd
 8:30am – 5:00pm

8:30am-9:00am	Registration, Breakfast Cowgill Center Lobby	
	Room Cowgill 102	Room Cowgill 110
9:00am – 9:55am	Reliability and Phenotypic Chauvinism Eric Alan Mack U Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	Patience as/and Constancy: How Far Can We Go? Matt Pianalto Eastern Kentucky University
Commentator:	Alexandra Bradner, UK	W. David Hall, Centre College
10:00am – 10:55am	The Importance of Self Knowledge Minh Nguyen Eastern Kentucky University	Plato's Statesman on the Goal of Philosophical Inquiry Michael Oliver Wiitala University of Kentucky
Commentator:	Peter Fosl, Transylvania University	Daniel Sheffler, UK
11:00am – 11:55am	Temporal and Spatial Compositional Consistency: An Examination of the Time/Space Analogy Thesis Brian Carlson University of Kentucky	Can Fission Cut It: On the Cognitive Value of Thought Experiments in Personal Identity Aleks Zarnitsyn University of Illinois at Chicago
Commentator:	Meg Wallace/UK	Michael Horton, U AL, Tuscaloosa
12:00pm – 1:00pm	Lunch Location of Choice (options provided at the meeting)	
	Room Cowgill 102	
1:00pm – 2:00pm	Business Meeting: All KPA members encouraged to attend	
2:00pm – 2:50pm	Winner of 2013 KPA Student Essay Contest The Relationship Between the Soul and Plato's Forms and Whether the Soul is the Individuating Force Annie Corbitt Centre College	
3:00 – 5:00pm	Keynote Address: A Heideggerian Critique of Cyberbeing Professor Richard Polt Xavier University	
6pm	Drinks and dinner at local establishment	

Paper Abstracts

Brian Carlson, “Temporal and Spatial Compositional Consistency: An Examination of the Time/Space Analogy Thesis”

This paper begins to lay the foundation for a new combination of views in the debate about the nature of objects persistence over space and time. Perdurantist theorists commit to both spatial composition and temporal composition, while endurantist theorists do not believe in temporal composition, but remain flexible on the issue of spatial composition. I will argue that the main reason for the perdurantists inflexibility is that the perdurantist is committed to the truth of the analogy thesis: that space and time are fundamentally similar in nature. I will also argue that if one does not find the analogy thesis plausible, then one’s views on temporal composition and spatial composition need not be consistent. This opens up the way for a view that accepts nihilism about spatial composition and explains persistence via temporal parts of mereological simples.

Eric Alan Mack, “Reliability and Phenotypic Chauvinism”

In this paper I argue that any account of our reliability about logic along the lines of an evolutionary story will end up proving too much if “our reliability about logic” means that our beliefs and behavior track truth-preserving logical laws. Since any proof that a logical system is truth-preserving exhibits a special sort of circularity, rule circularity, these proofs are easy to come by even for a wide variety of logical systems. The result is that, modulo soundness, beliefs tracking mutually inconsistent logical systems can be claimed to be, say, the result of natural selection. Truth preservation cannot exhaust what we mean by reliability since it is not a feature that is unique to any logical system. Moreover, this conclusion generalizes beyond proposed evolutionary explanations for our reliability about logic. I will argue that any means of accounting for the seemingly coincidental correspondence between logical facts on the one hand and our beliefs and inferential behavior on the other will be subject to a similar underdetermination argument. I will conclude with some speculation about whether this constitutes some evidence for pluralism about logical consequence.

Minh Nguyen, “The Importance of Self-Knowledge”

Self-knowledge is valuable for four reasons. First, it improves our chances of survival because it enables us to assess our intentional states and adjust our behavior. Second, it plays a critical role in effecting cooperation because the efficient pursuit of common goals requires that one communicate to others information about one’s beliefs and desires. Third, it provides protection against psychopathologies because it enables the agent to assume responsibility for his thoughts and actions. Fourth, it enhances the agent’s self-confidence and happiness because the less he doubts that his successes are the result of his acting on his attitudes and abilities, the more self-confident and happier he is.

Matthew Pianalto, “Patience as/and Constancy: How Far Can We Go?”

We often think of patience as virtuous waiting. However, many historical accounts of patience do not even mention waiting as a part of its definition, and instead offer more general characterizations of patience as a form of endurance or tolerance, related to the virtues of constancy and self-possession. It is with this kind of understanding of patience that Gregory the Great was able to declare that, “patience is the root and guardian of all virtues.” This is in keeping with the remark in Luke 21:19, “In patience possess ye your souls.” I will suggest that even if we fail to share Gregory’s theological

commitments, we can still make sense of the idea patience plays a profound, even if underappreciated, role in the good life.

Michael Oliver Wiitala, “Plato’s *Statesman* on the Goal of Philosophical Inquiry”

In Plato’s *Statesman*, the Eleatic Stranger claims that the overarching goal of the inquiry into statesmanship, in which he and Young Socrates have been engaged, and the goal of philosophical inquiry in general, is to learn how to become “better dialecticians in relation to all things.” The Stranger’s earlier comparison between philosophical inquiry and learning how to spell suggested that learning to give a proof or demonstration (*apodeixis*) of something was like learning to spell a word. I argue that the Stranger’s subsequent claim that the greatest and most valuable things cannot be adequately displayed in any image, however, marks a disanalogy between learning to spell a word and learning the demonstration of something. While there is only one way to spell a given word correctly, the greatest and most valuable things, since they cannot be adequately depicted, cannot be sufficiently captured by any one demonstration.

Aleks Zarnitsyn, “Can Fission Cut It: On the Cognitive Value of Thought Experiments in Personal Identity”

Far-fetched thought experiments traditional methodology in the philosophy of personal identity. But why would anybody serious about the fundamental questions about ourselves should turn to such stories, given that there is no agreement on whether what we are asked to imagine is even possible. On the other hand, we do not in the same way fault ‘literary counterparts’ of the philosophical thought experiments – literary fictions utilizing similar scenarios – for lack of realism. One might think that this is so because literary fictions engage us in exploring the ethical, socio-political, practical dimensions of our lives, while metaphysicians are tackling the more abstract questions of personal identity. But the distinction is not as straightforward. But if so, I argue, there are useful lessons for thinking about the cognitive value of thought experiments in reflecting on the cognitive value of literary fictions. This helps avoid the starting tension of learning from the far-fetched cases, but only if we are prepared to think differently both of the scenarios themselves and of the questions we can address using them.

Meeting registration fee

Payment of meeting registration includes membership in the KPA

- \$20.00 meeting fee for faculty and unaffiliated scholars
- \$10.00 meeting fee for graduate students
- No registration payment for undergraduate students

Location Information

The Cowgill Center is the building off the semi-circle near North Upper Street. The best parking will be behind the Little Theater at the corner of West 4th Street and North Upper Street.

- http://www.transy.edu/about/campus_map.htm
- http://www.transy.edu/about/buildings/map/campus_map2012.pdf

Local Eateries

Third Street Stuff and Coffee

<http://thirdststuff.com>

257 N. Limestone
Lexington, KY 40507
(859) 255-5301

Coffee shop hours:

Mon. - Sat. : 6:30am - 11pm
Sun. : 8am - 11 pm

Doodles Restaurant

<http://www.doodlesrestaurant.com>

262 North Limestone
Lexington, Kentucky 40507
(859) 317-8507

Hours:

Tuesday-Sunday 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Closed Mondays

The Grey Goose

<https://www.facebook.com/GreyGooseLex>

170 Jefferson St.
Lexington, Kentucky 40507
(859) 233-1500

Hours:

Mon - Wed: 11:00 am - 10:00 pm
Thu: 11:00 am - 11:00 pm
Fri - Sat: 11:00 am - 12:00 am
Sun: 11:00 am - 10:00 pm

Stella's Kentucky Deli

<http://www.stellaskentuckydeli.com>

143 Jefferson Street
Lexington, KY
(859) 255-3354

Hours:

Open every day, 10:30am - 4pm for lunch
Wednesday - Sunday, 5pm - 9pm for dinner
Saturday & Sunday, 10:00 am - 2pm for brunch

Wine and Market

<http://wineandmarket.com>

486 West Second St
(Corner of 2nd and Jefferson)
Lexington, KY 40507
(859) 225-0755

Hours:

Monday - Saturday 10-8pm
Sunday 1-6pm

George's Deli

<http://www.urbanspoon.com/r/65/1457500/restaurant/Downtown/Georges-Deli-Lexington>

161 N. Limestone
Lexington, KY 40507
(859) 254-6741

Hours:

Mon - Fri: 11:00 am - 2:00 pm
closed Sat. & Sun.

The Courtyard Deli

<http://courtyarddelilex.blogspot.com>

115 Cheapside Street
Lexington, KY
(859) 252-3354