

Kentucky Philosophical Association

2017 Annual Meeting
 Saturday, April 1, 2017
 Eastern Kentucky University
 Richmond, KY

8:15-8:50	Registration – EKU Crabbe Library (table outside rooms 204D and 204G)	
8:50-9:00	Welcome	
Locations	Library 204G	Library 204D
9:00-9:50 Session 1	“Gardening as Subversion” Clint Jones, <i>Morehead State University</i> Commentator: Court Lewis, <i>Owensboro Community College</i>	“Expressivism as Quasi-defeasible Internalism” William Bell, <i>University of Missouri St. Louis</i> Commentator: Rickey J. Ray, <i>Northeast State Community College</i>
10:00-11:30	KEYNOTE ADDRESS “Practicing Philosophy” Danielle M. Poe <i>University of Dayton</i> Location: Library 208	
11:40-12:15	<i>KPA Annual Undergraduate Student Essay Contest</i> Colleen Josephine Coyle “Examining Diotima’s Speech: The Misappropriation of Women’s Voices” <i>Centre College, History Major/IST Minor, Class of 2019</i> Location: Library 208	
12:15-1:15	Lunch (on your own – see below for on campus and off campus options)	
1:00-1:35	Business Meeting: to be held in Library 204D (All registered conference attendees are KPA Members and may attend)	
1:45-2:35 Session 2	“Social Justice, Mathematics and Reductionism” Robert M Riehemann, <i>Thomas More College</i> Commentator: Christopher A. Rickels, <i>Gateway Community and Technical College</i>	“The Consolations of Instrumental Music” Matthew Pianalto, <i>Eastern Kentucky University</i> Commentator: Jerome Langguth, <i>Thomas More College</i>
2:45-3:35 Session 3	“An Investigation of Community” Joshua Anderson, <i>Lindenwood University</i> Commentator: William Bell, <i>University of Missouri St. Louis</i>	“Responsibility, Luck, and Uncertainty” Katherine Johnson, <i>Bellarmino University</i> Commentator: James Lincoln, <i>University of Kentucky</i>
3:45-4:35 Session 4	“We Should Not Take Human Rights So Seriously” Dustin Nelson <i>University of Kentucky – College of Law</i> Commentator: Katherine Johnson, <i>Bellarmino University</i>	“Meaningfulness as Sub Specie Aeternitatis: A Wittgensteinian Proposal” Rickey J. Ray, <i>Northeast State Community College</i> Commentator: Matthew Pianalto, <i>Eastern Kentucky University</i>
4:45-5:35 Session 5	“Immortality, Boredom, and the Beatific Vision” Rory Goggins, <i>Murray State University</i> Commentator: Steve Parchment, <i>Eastern Kentucky University</i>	“Empirical Content and Naturalized Metaphysics” Christopher A. Rickels, <i>Gateway Community and Technical College</i> Commentator: Clint Jones, <i>Morehead State University</i>

Abstracts of Papers (listed by session)

Session 1 (9:00-9:50)

Gardening as Subversion

Clint Jones, Morehead State University

Abstract: Contemporary society is facing a host of environmental challenges with varying degrees of severity. Many of these problems are linked to capitalistic tendencies and practices not merely as symptoms of capitalistic enterprise, but as intrinsic functions of profit generation and community and labor exploitation. In my essay I argue that the rise of community gardens and garden focused businesses, especially in communities hardest hit by industrial abandonment, are laying the groundwork for a reconceptualization and a resurgence of Marxist focused community organization and activism. By focusing on communal gardening practices I advocate for a “green Marxism” that is linked to the social philosophy of Epicureanism to produce a critique of global capitalism as unsustainable contra the sustainability of community gardening efforts.

Expressivism as Quasi-defeasible Internalism

William Bell, University of Missouri St. Louis

Abstract: Noncognitivist expressivism has been criticized on the grounds that it entails a version of indefeasible morals/motives judgement internalism. A common objection to indefeasible internalism highlights cases involving an amoralist: someone who endorses some moral judgement and yet remains unmotivated to perform the morally relevant action. I respond to the amoralist objection by arguing for a quasi-defeasible internalist version of expressivism. I argue that a dispositional analysis of conative attitudes can reference the well-known phenomenon of masking as part of an explanation for how a person may sincerely endorse some moral judgement and yet remain unmotivated by it. Furthermore, I contend there is an attitude volatility problem: there is reason to think human beings often lack awareness of the relevant masking conditions, resulting in moral judgements which fail to align with the relevant stimulus/manifestation conditions.

Keynote Address (10:00-11:30)

Danielle M. Poe, *University of Dayton*

“Practicing Philosophy”

Student Essay Contest Presentation (11:40-12:15)

Colleen Josephine Coyle

“Examining Diotima’s Speech: The Misappropriation of Women’s Voices”
Centre College, History Major/IST Minor, Class of 2019

Session 2 (1:45-2:35)

Social Justice, Mathematics and Reductionism (A/V: HP laptop via HDMI (I also have an HDMI to VGA converter)

Robert M Riehemann, Thomas More College

Abstract: There are many intersections between philosophy and applied mathematics. Social decisions about drug safety or economic policy posit mathematical models to measure their effectiveness and safety. This is, unsurprisingly, only part of the issue because the decision about which measures to use—of which there are usually an infinite supply—are based on prior philosophical and ethical concerns. This paper discusses the uses of philosophy to choose such measures and considers the oft-stated (negative) critique of such measures as “reductionism.” We consider Rawls’ Theory of Justice, Hobbes’ Social Contract, and the work of the economists Amartya Sen and Kenneth Binmore, among others. In particular, we suggest that standard courses in statistics at the college/university level should include explicit information and discussion of the philosophical and ethical considerations (including appropriate references to philosophical literature) inherent in most hypothesis testing relating to health and well-being.

The Consolations of Instrumental Music

Matthew Pianalto, Eastern Kentucky University

Abstract: How can music—*especially* instrumental music lacking the explicit messages that can be written into a lyric—provide consolation? What kinds of consolation can instrumental music offer? I outline several different ways music can console that variously involve memory, pleasure, appreciation of beauty, escape, interpretation, and bodily engagement. I argue that the plurality of musical consolations helps to (further) expose flaws in both musical formalism and the psychological model of music perception and experience that treats music as (like) a “drug.” I conclude with a brief re-examination of Hanslick’s formalism, which is worth considering here because his views about how to truly understand and appreciate music seem especially antithetical to some of what I take to be legitimate musical consolations and ways of engaging with music.

Session 3 (2:45-3:35)

An Investigation of Community

Joshua Anderson, Lindenwood University

Abstract: In this paper, I look to the debate between liberals and communitarians as a useful way to help clarify and develop an understanding of the concept “community”. By considering, particularly, how liberal theorists respond to their communitarian critics it points to the ways one can begin to fill in and specify the normative content of a more formal understanding of community, on the one hand. On the other hand, it also indicates how to understand communities, in general, not merely the concept, but more so their normative standing—i.e. what is it that we want when we talk about “community”.

Responsibility, Luck, and Uncertainty

Katherine Johnson, Bellarmine University

Abstract: The purpose of this paper is to explore the significance of uncertainty as it bears on our judgments of agents’ epistemic position. I present and evaluate a series of cases to show that cognitive habits of mind like the hindsight bias impair our judgments about ignorance. Initial judgments of ignorance in cases of wrongdoing are often the result of this bias and are not grounded on genuine

moral criteria. I claim that these cases demonstrate uncertainty in ethics—especially in connection to ignorance of non-moral facts. From this, I make a bold leap to offer a rationale for what I call “educated ignorance”—when an agent chooses ignorance as his or her epistemic position. I conclude by offering some suggestions for why the project of what I call “educated ignorance” is a promising area of study to an ethics of uncertainty.

Session 4 (3:45-4:35)

We Should Not Take Human Rights So Seriously

Dustin Nelson, University of Kentucky - College of Law

Abstract: A now common view argues that a state forfeits any right it has against intervention when there are human rights violations occurring within the state. Kit Wellman, for instance, claims that “even a legitimate state has no principled objection to outsiders’ intervening in its internal affairs if this interference will prevent just a single human rights violation” (Wellman, 2012, p. 119, my emphasis). I will argue, however, that states cannot be required to fully respect and protect human rights within their borders. Enforcing such a requirement would have far greater consequences. We should not, that is, take human rights so seriously. I will argue that taking human rights as seriously as suggested would lead to a permissive stance on intervention itself. I will argue further that this implication cannot be reasonably rejected.

Meaningfulness as *Sub Specie Aeternitatis*: A Wittgensteinian Proposal

Rickey J. Ray, Northeast State Community College

Abstract: Meaning *in/of* life largely meets with silence in the analytic tradition in philosophy. This paper focuses on how life seen *sub specie aeternitatis* (i.e. “under the aspect of the eternal”), from a perspective informed by Wittgenstein, can inform this realm of inquiry. Consideration of how Thomas Nagel, Simon Blackburn, and Nicholas Rescher set shape for utilizing this notion occurs. Discussion turns to various remarks by Wittgenstein on the notion of seeing life “under the aspect of the eternal” to aid in expanding the parameters wherein the question of meaning *in or of* life can be posed. The emerging Wittgensteinian proposal will be elaborated upon several comments made by Wittgenstein concerning religious believing in the *Lecture on Religious Belief* and in *Culture & Value*. The conclusion reached will be that Wittgenstein proves to be resourceful in reclaiming the importance of *sub specie aeternitatis* as a candidate for discussions surrounding life’s meaning.

Session 5 (4:45-5:35)

Immortality, Boredom, and the Beatific Vision

Rory Goggins, Murray State University

Abstract: I argue, *contra* Bernard Williams, that personal immortality is not necessarily unattractive. I base this conclusion on an assessment of Aquinas’s conception of beatitude. Aquinas conceives of beatitude, commonly referred to as the beatific vision, as a state of unity that one may have with God after death. I argue that the beatific vision is possible, and that it satisfies both of the conditions that Williams sets on the desirability of immortality. Since Aquinas’s conception of beatitude includes the notion of eternity, his viewpoint represents an important alternative to the viewpoints of contemporary defenders of the desirability of immortality.

Empirical Content and Naturalized Metaphysics

Christopher A. Rickels, Gateway Community and Technical College

Abstract: Chakravartty (2013) argues naturalized metaphysics should proceed by relying on proximity to empirical content instead of a commitment to science. Robus (2015) argues Chakravartty's account of empirical content is unsatisfying since it does not account for the theory-ladenness of observation itself. To wit, he argues for a theory relative account of observational content where naturalized metaphysicians adjudicate their claims on pragmatic values. I argue Robus's criticism of Chakravartty's account is undermined once one bolsters the argument by reference to Chakravartty's work in *Semirealism* (1998).

Additional Conference Information:

Registration: Full-Time Faculty: \$30; Part-Time Faculty and Students: \$10. Registration must be paid on the day of the conference, cash or check. Receipts will be provided. Registration fees directly support current and future conference costs.

Location, Campus Parking, and Map: Registration and all presentations will be in the Eastern Kentucky University Crabbe Library (the main library on campus); look for a sign pointing you in the right direction after you enter the library.

Parking: On weekends, the faculty/staff and commuter lots are NOT enforced. There should be plenty of parking on University Drive (which is a one-way drive off Lancaster Avenue, right next to the pedway that spans Lancaster). The Library is on University Drive.

EKU Campus Map: <http://www.eku.edu/sites/www.eku.edu/files/files/campus-parking-map.pdf>

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Lunch Suggestions: The Powell Student building offers a buffet-style lunch on Saturdays (around \$9.00); this is the best, closest option. There are some good lunch restaurants on Main Street, including Babylon (Mediterranean), Purdy's (coffee and sandwiches), Café Meeples (sandwiches), and a local pizza place, Apollo Pizza, is on 2nd Street. There are several fast-food restaurants on the Eastern Bypass near campus.

Contact Information (incl. accommodations): For recommendations for those seeking overnight accommodations, as well as any other information about the conference, please contact the KPA President (preferably by email):

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